

Strath abattoir set for September opening

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THE Strathalbyn Abattoir is on track for a September re-opening.

The abattoir closed in 2020, but producers from the Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island were still desperate to find somewhere to take their animals for processing closer to home.

The Regional Development Australia Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island (RDA AHFKI) branch was essential in gauging appetite for the site's re-opening, and the Fleurieu Community Co-operative has been working hard since to get things off the ground.

Co-operative general manager Grant List said the abattoir was on track to open in September.

"The feedback we've had on it is huge, everyone is all excited about it opening - it will be a good thing," he said.

"At the moment we've got engineers on site to get maintenance underway.

"We've gutted the inside of the plant but we've got a fair bit of refurbishment to do before equipment goes in."

Some of those refurbishments include raising the roof and installing a new roof, ceiling, walls, and floors, along with revamping the stock yards and holding yards, so everything meets Australian standards and animal welfare standards.

"All the modifications are due to start sooner rather than later," he said.

"We're at the pointy end of the stick, we're ready to start getting people in there to work."

He said the intention was

to start the operation small, processing up to 300 small stock and up to 50 cattle per day.

The site's capacity, though, is 500 small stock and 80 cattle.

"We want to get up to that capacity as soon as possible, but we want to get the workforce right first," Mr List said.

RDA AHFKI regional development manager Steve Shotton said the branch was keen to help with the operation as much as possible.

"We've locked in a meeting regarding their staffing - to find out what their plans are, what skills they need, and whether we can help," he said.

In the weeks before the state election, the former state Liberal government put forward \$1.5 million to help fund the \$3.5 million worth of restoration works that need to be complete before the abattoir is opened again.

The \$3.5 million bill will cover repairs and upgrades of facilities, new facilities to be built, and an automated abattoir booking management system to be installed so operations can start.

Member for Hammond Adrian Pederick said at the time that the re-opening would be a "boost for local farmers and a boost for local jobs both during the restoration and on-going".

"This will have a range of benefits including increased meat quality from less transport, lower costs and the potential to create higher value products," he said.

For more information about the Fleurieu Community Co-operative, visit www.fccoop.com.au/home.php.



LOOKING AHEAD: Fleurieu Community Co-Operative general manager Grant List surveys the yards at Strathalbyn. PHOTO: BRYAN LITTLELY