

Small-scale and multi-faceted

Danny Kinnear's farm near Daylesford reflects his strongly-held principles of looking after the land, farmers and animals, and reconnecting his customers with the food they're eating.

Danny started farming in 2013 after finishing an English and psychology degree in Melbourne. He leased 2.5 hectares and a house, bought a small flock of laying hens and ducks and a couple of poddy calves, and planted out fruit trees and seasonal vegetables.

The farm is already financially viable, with Danny value-adding by transforming the free range eggs from his chooks into Portuguese custard tarts and brownies, which he sells direct to customers at farmers' markets.

"I started selling to markets in 2014 and then ran a crowd-funding campaign to build a food van that is on track to be ready later this year," he said.

"The van includes a kitchen, which will give me greater mobility and sales flexibility."

Danny's business is "paddock-to-plate". He's involved in every step of the process from feeding the chooks to collecting the eggs, making the custard and the pastry and then selling the finished products directly to customers.

"I love food and quickly realised that to get the very best tasting food, you pretty much either have to know the farmer or be a farmer yourself," he said.

"I especially love how you literally get to eat the fruits of your labours."

"My aim is to buy nine hectares later this year and build an on-farm restaurant that will mainly use produce grown here and from the local area, as well as providing seasonal vegetables, eggs and meat to the local community."

Another of Danny's goals is to operate as an "incubator farm", offering employment and pathways for young people looking to enter the agricultural industry.

"I'm passionate about helping other young farmers overcome the barriers to having or accessing land, the regulatory burdens for small-scale farms and financial viability," he said.

"I am a strong believer in regenerative agriculture playing a huge role in mitigating climate change, that is, putting carbon back into the soil and using more resilient practices such as rotational grazing, cover-cropping and agro-forestry."

www.dannysfarm.com.au

Photographs: Juanita Broderick

