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MURRAY RIVER ORGANICS SOWS FIRST EDIBLE ORGANIC HEMP CROP LARGEST OF ITS KIND IN AUSTRALIA

Murray River Organics (ASX: MRG) ("MRG") today announced it had started sowing the first organic hemp crop on its organic certified Nangiloc property.

The planting will result in the largest organic edible hemp crop in Australia with MRG seeking to capitalise on growing demand in global markets for hempseed.

MRG Chief Executive Valentina Tripp said: 'Growing demand for organic hemp-based foods is an emerging trend in the food industry due to the popularity of vegetarian based diets, such as vegan, and increasing consumption of plant-based protein. Hempseed is becoming the go-to product for health-conscious Australians looking for the next superfood and is lauded as a complete protein, containing all essential amino acids.'

A 30g serving of hemp seeds contains around 11g protein, similar to grass fed beef and more than almonds, and due to its protein composition is far more digestible and is high in antioxidants, vitamins E & C, calcium and iron.

The global market for organic hempseed is currently estimated at being worth more than \$6 billion with numerous new products still in the development cycle. As well as being in demand as a standalone superfood, hempseed is being used as a protein infusion to a range of other food categories to boost their health and wellness credentials. Hemp now appears in products such as kombucha, chocolate, cereals, protein powder, snacks, cooking oils and even hemp infused spring water. As a highly versatile ingredient with a pleasant flavour, the usage of hemp in new product development is endless.

Ms Tripp said: "The domestic retail market for consumable hemp products is growing rapidly and there is strong interest from MRG's international customers for unique Australian Healthy Organic Hemp products. As part of our strategy to develop market leading purpose driven organic brands, MRG has branded hemp products currently in development under the Murray River Organics brand."

Hemp is one of the crop options identified for the MRG's Nangiloc property which has 2300 hectares of arable, vacant and organically certified land to be developed over the next ten years and the potential to deliver more than \$100 million in revenue.

The initial organic hemp pilot will cover 32ha, expected to produce approximately 30 tonnes of harvested seed with the potential to rapidly scale this to produce over 100 tonnes per annum.

The hemp crop will be harvested in March with MRG targeting 0.7-1.0 tonnes per hectare.

Working closely with hemp industry specialists, the hempseed variety sown was selected for its suitability to the Sunraysia climate and growing conditions.

Sunraysia benefits from being a unique climatic region which allows for multi cropping cycles through the year in rotation with other potential grains of value to MRG's vertical food processing business.

It offers a perfect organic production environment for this type of crop, complimenting MRGs existing stable of DVF and fresh produce.

Valentina Tripp said the potential of growing organic hemp on MRG'S farms aligned with the Company's strategy of producing highly nutritious, organic crops commanding premium prices and she was optimistic about broader opportunities in hemp.

"We are extremely supportive of the Victorian Government's Hemp initiative in setting up a cross-party taskforce to investigate the industrial use of hemp and identify opportunities to grow the industry. While the current focus in Victoria is on hempseed used for food, the taskforce is examining a variety of potential applications across a diverse range of products including textiles, bio-composite plastics, paper, automotive, construction, bio-fuel, oil and cosmetics."

MRG will participate in the taskforce related R&D as part of its large-scale pilot for organic hemp.

The Company is particularly interested in the use of hemp for products such as composite biodegradable plastics as environmental sustainability is a key platform for its research programs and is committed to initiatives that can replace or reduce the use of single use plastic.

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Murray River Organics Group Limited (ASX: MRG) is a leading Australian producer, manufacturer, marketer and seller of certified organic, natural and better-for-you food products. We service the organic, natural and healthy food and snack market globally.

For further information please visit www.murrayriverorganics.com.au

*EBITDA-SL means Earnings Before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Impairment, less SGARA (fair value revaluation of Self-Generating and Regenerating Assets (agricultural produce)) and adoption of AASB16 (New Leasing Standard).

