



# TOURISM

by Bill Nehmy

**BN:** Welcome Susie, please can we start with your early years, where you were born, went to school, your early plans and aspirations?

**SG:** I grew up in the Adelaide Hills, spending my early years in Bridgewater, which was very different to how it is now. We were on a one-acre block with plenty of space around us to explore.

I spent most of my spare time playing sport (tennis and hockey) and didn't really have a clear idea about what I wanted to go on to do. A career counsellor fortuitously suggested that agricultural science might be a good fit for me and I was immediately drawn to the idea of working in a field that could both make a difference and allow me to spend time working outdoors.

I went on to complete my degree and have been working in agriculture ever since and am incredibly grateful for the opportunities that it has provided.

**BN:** The Adelaide Hills plays a key role with SA fruit including apple, pear, strawberry and cherry production. Please elaborate on the development of visitor experiences, including the cherry map.

**SG:** Our region is indeed a major producer of many of our favourite fruits and is renowned for the quality of fruit grown.

More than 85 per cent of the state's apples, pears, cherries and strawberries are grown in the Adelaide Hills, with that fruit finding its way into homes all around Australia as well as some international markets.

Increasingly we are seeing a demand for the public to visit orchards and buy direct from the grower. Pick your

own experiences are becoming increasingly popular, with the Cherry Map and Fresh Cherries App being a positive way to direct visitors to fruit picking opportunities.

Pick a Pink Lady Weekend is extremely popular during apple season and this year Pome Fest, a new event to celebrate the end of apple and pear harvest, brought in a new dimension, with the opportunity for visitors to undertake orchard and packhouse tours outside of the harvest season.

While the fruit industry is still largely geared up towards selling fruit through traditional supply chains, we are gradually seeing more interest in broadening into value adding components such as agri-tourism and this is certainly an emerging opportunity for the industry.

**BN:** What do you think is the most significant tourism opportunity waiting to be realised in the Adelaide Hills?

**SG:** I'm not sure that there is one single opportunity, but probably a suite of opportunities. Without a doubt there is significantly more traffic coming into the area than ever before, with wineries and cellar doors, eateries, mountain bike trails and walking trails the key attractions (along with the stunning scenery). I think there is an opportunity to



*Susie Green of the SA Apple and Pear Association*

build on this offering, providing a diverse range of experiences that will keep people in the area for longer. Certainly, the fruit industry can have a role to play here.

**BN:** What advice would you give a young person in respect to finding the right career and to have an enriching life?

**SG:** Long gone are the days where you have a career for life. Things are changing very quickly and all the forecasts say that there will be many jobs in the future that we don't even know exist today.

So my advice would be to not get too hung up on finding the perfect job or perfect career. Often you don't know what something is really like until you give it a go, so the best thing is to jump in and give something a chance and you will soon figure out which elements you like. Having a sense of purpose in what you do certainly helps in making things far more rewarding.