

By **ANDREW MARSHALL**

THERE'S a note of excitement in Terry Buckley's delivery when he talks about the many elements required to grow neatly shaped potatoes with straight sides which square off at the base. Getting the daily watering and fertiliser regime right and maintaining a light, fluffy soil bed to ensure even growth for his potato crop is something the fifth-generation potato grower is only too happy to talk about.

He's also more than happy to join with farmers Australia-wide as part of a world-first program that tracks and scrutinises the supply chain serving up ingredients to McDonald's fast food outlets.

Customers are being urged to find out more about where their meals originate and how different ingredients are produced by using an internet link that literally tracks food lines from the restaurant patrons are visiting back to the farm and bakery origins of each French fry or burger serving.

The TrackMyMacca's smart phone application was launched this month as part of a six-month initiative by the quick service giant to encourage patrons to take a 'fun' glimpse behind the scenes at where their food really comes from.

The process links selected menu lines back to more than a dozen farmers including beef and poultry producers, fishermen, horticulture croppers growing salad ingredients such as lettuce and pickle cucumbers, and bun suppliers at bakeries across the continent.

"It's a starting point in rebuilding a relationship that has been lost

Following Macca's track back



Potato grower Terry Buckley, Mt Gambia says the Track My Maccas idea is a starting point in rebuilding a relationship that has been lost between most consumers and producers.

between most consumers and producers," said Mr Buckley, whose family grows up to 20,000 tonnes of potatoes a year for the French fry market. "I think the concept is something to be encouraged – farming is more about good news stories than bad news.

"And it's not just about growing crops or livestock, either. This place has seen amazing bird life and

biodiversity in recent wet years.

"Agriculture's achieved a lot to be proud of, especially when you realise how much methods have improved from the 1970s and '80s."

Mr Buckley crops about 900 hectares on the South Australia-Victoria border, north-east of Mt Gambia with his fiancée Jackie, his brother Wayne, and parents Jeff and Fay. Their enterprise is one of

about 15 local operations growing about 130,000t of potatoes, mostly processed by McCains, which in turn supplies raw French fries to McDonald's.

McDonald's customers who choose to follow the smart phone app link can track their freshly served chips back to video segments from farms such as the Buckley's property.



How Macca's tracker works

CUSTOMERS download the TrackMyMaccas application to a smart phone which can scan the speckly tracker image on the packaging of five specific McDonald's menu lines.

Once the app has identified the food, it pinpoints the customer's store location and traces how product delivered to that site was sourced, including specific processing sites and the production locality.

In most cases, the tracker identifies individual farmers representative of McDonald's suppliers in their locality.

For more details visit www.trackmy-maccas.com

