

# Media Release

**Friday 19 May**

## **DJAARA TO BUILD MASSIVE YABBY FARM IN NEW ENTERPRISE**

Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA) today launched a new food and fibre enterprise, DJAKITJ, which means 'dining room' in Dja Dja Wurrung language, at the group's new property near Bendigo.

Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter said DJAKITJ is developing several projects around native Australian ingredients – including possibly the largest yabby farm in the southern hemisphere.

“This is a significant milestone for us,” Mr Carter said.

“For the first time, DJAARA has invested its own funds - \$1.6 million - to buy our own land back so we can set up this exciting business.

“The enterprise has been a long-held dream. DJAKITJ is all about dhelkunya beng – nourishing the body.

“We've spent a year finding the right property, and purchasing this land has been a commercial decision to develop an agricultural business.

“This is a step on the road towards self-determination – a step towards a strong and diverse economic base for Dja Dja Wurrung People. Along with business profits, the farm will also create employment opportunities.

“We are delighted to be working with the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) who are supporting Dja Dja Wurrung self-determination by providing funding for capital costs to establish the yabby farm.

“Support from the ILSC has been crucial. Not only have they made the operation possible; they have guided DJAARA through the process. We're looking forward to a continued and fruitful partnership over the coming years,” Mr Carter said.

ILSC Group Chief Executive Officer, Joe Morrison, said the ILSC is proud to take part in the DJAKITJ launch on Djandak Country.

“This is a fantastic achievement for DJAARA who have worked hard to bring this project to life”, said Mr Morrison.

“Assisting First Nations people with the return and management of their Country is at the heart of the ILSC. This project is particularly exciting for us as it demonstrates the ILSC's ability to partner in bringing lands and waters back together through the return of water rights to Dja Dja Wurrung People.

“The ILSC has provided more than \$3.5 million in grant funds to ensure that DJAKITJ will continue to strengthen the Dja Dja Wurrung People's connection to Country and we look forward to the further opportunities it will lend the community, bringing them closer together,” Mr Morrison said.

DJAKITJ Business Manager Dan Duggan said construction of the yabby farm is scheduled to begin in the second half of this year, with the first harvest anticipated in late 2024.

“The scale of the operation is really going to be something special, with more than 50 yabby ponds, a brood stock and hatchery facility as well as research and development areas for both aquaculture and native plants and bush foods,” Mr Duggan said.

**ENDS -**

**For more information, please contact:**

**Mariaa Randall | Communications Relationship Manager DJAARA |  
| M: 0481 831 514 | E: [communications@djadjawurrung.com.au](mailto:communications@djadjawurrung.com.au)**