



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## **PRIZED WAPENGO OYSTER FARMS JOIN THE AUSTRALIA'S OYSTER COAST FAMILY**

*6 July 2021* – Two multi award-winning oyster farms located in Wapengo Lake and Nelsons Lagoon are the latest additions to Australia's Oyster Coast, a vertically integrated oyster business raising the bar to improve oyster quality and supply across Australia.

The company's executive chair Mike Lukin said the purchase of the farms from John Blankenstein of Mimosa Rock Oysters and Warwick Anderson and Lee Primmer of Kingfisher Oysters strengthens the supply of premium oysters from Wapengo Lake, a popular estuary famed for its supremely sweet Rock Oysters and pristine environment.

“Acquiring these farms from two award winning farmers aligns with our focus on consistent supply of high quality oysters. That John [Blankenstein] is joining our management team speaks volumes about his trust in us, and in the Appellation brand. It also means that his stewardship will continue,” said Mr Lukin.

Mr Blankenstein's passion and many successes has earnt him an impressive industry reputation since beginning his oyster journey five years ago. Recent accolades include four gold medals at the 2021 Sydney Royal Agricultural Show and being named as a 2021 State Winner in the *delicious. Produce Awards*.

As farm manager, Mr Blankenstein will continue running a tight ship and delivering the high standards he is known for. By his side is assistant farm manager Banjo Anderson, previously of Kingfisher Oysters. The duo will be supported by the entire Australia's Oyster Coast farm to fork family.

It's a welcome change for Mr Blankenstein who has worn the many business caps of an oyster farmer; family man, farmer, grader, shucker, compliance officer, sales manager, marketer, educator, and advocate.

“My relationship with Australia's Oyster Coast stems back to Mimosa's conception. As a shareholder farmer I have forged relationships built on trust and dependability. The acquisition of Mimosa strengthens my ties with the entire team whilst providing the support required to allow me to reach my full potential,” said Mr Blankenstein.

The acquisition of reputable Kingfisher Oysters from Australia's Oyster Coast board member Warwick Anderson and his wife Lee Primmer further strengthens supply from this popular estuary that enjoys huge demand from the country's fine dining restaurants for its premium grade Rock and Angasi oysters.



"To hand over the reins to Australia's Oyster Coast with John as the steward is a perfect fit," said Mr Anderson.

"Lee and I have continued to supply very high quality Sydney Rock and Angasi oysters to Australia's Oyster Coast since we joined the company in 2015, building a strong link with customers who love the very special characteristics of our Wapengo product."

"John embodies our core values to be the best oyster custodians possible, caring for our environment and continually improving our operations to deliver consistently better oysters to the Australian market."

Kingfisher Oysters have maintained an excellent reputation in the market winning local shows in Bega and Pambula and many gold and silver medals at the Royal Agricultural Show in Sydney over the past five years.

Mr Lukin said that these latest acquisitions attest to the strength and agility of the business following bushfires, floods and COVID-19 restrictions. Following the acquisition of its Bermagui farm last financial year, these latest purchases maintain the company's position as the largest vertically integrated Rock oyster business.

~Ends~

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#### **About Australia's Oyster Coast**

*Australia's Oyster Coast is a vertically integrated oyster business. From working directly with farmers, as well as farming ourselves, to building relationships with wholesalers and retailers including chefs who serve our oysters at our country's finest restaurants and everyone in between, we are passionate about supplying the best possible oysters to the Australian market and beyond*

*As a vertically integrated business, we ensure the highest standards from farm to fork, responsible for growing, procuring, grading, marketing and selling oysters. Oysters have many reasons to be celebrated, from their environmentally friendly benefits as one of the most sustainable farming industries in the world, to their impressive health benefits, rich nutrients and vitamins and bringing people together over food - to their amazing merroir, flavour diversity and culinary experience.*