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# Milkman delivers good ol' service

**Claire Heaney**

FOR those of us old enough to remember, the home delivery of bread, milk and other foodstuffs was often a cause of much excitement.

Sometimes there would be cream buns or raisin bread as a special school lunch treat. Or bottles of milk with fresh cream under the foil lid.

But, even more than that, the delivery man became a part of our extended family.

It's by tapping into some of these feelings of nostalgia, good old-fashioned service and wholesome produce, Aussie Farmers Direct has been able to grow rapidly since its launch five years ago.

It also has struck a chord because the business is fully Australian owned and operated.

Aussie Farmers Direct chief executive Braeden Lord said the convenience of home delivery of fresh, quality products had been embraced.

"It's proving a winning formula for

us for three main reasons. Our customers love us for our freshness and quality, the convenience of online ordering and the ease of having everything delivered direct to your door," Mr Lord said.

Connecting rural communities to Australian households also has appealed to customers.

Mr Lord, who had a successful career with Bakers Delight, said the company started with one truck and three men who wanted to "bring back the milkman" and the associated values of trust, convenience and freshness.

It now has 169 franchises and employs almost 200 permanent staff.

Mr Lord said the concept had been acknowledged by various awards.

The milk deliveries are done overnight and placed in cooler bags on doorsteps before 7am.

Fruit and vegetables, complete with an accompanying recipe, are delivered in the afternoon.

"It's a great service for busy mums, as it means no more traffic jams or supermarket aisles to fight with and no temptation to buy products not on the shopping list," Mr Lord said, adding that the Aussie Direct prices were competitive.

"For families we are unbelievably convenient," he said.

"We also have a lot of elderly customers, who love the fact they have a friendly milkman who they know and trust, delivering direct to their door, as many can't get out to the shops."

## Milking it

AN Aussie Farmers Direct franchise is around \$125,000. This hands the franchisee an exclusive territory of between 8000 to 10,000 households, customers to start them off for the first four months and office back-up.

The cost of a van, depending on what they choose, can be anything from \$25,000 to \$50,000.



**Back to the future:** Braeden Lord of Aussie Farmers Direct delivers fresh milk. Picture: JON HARGEST