

# Murrayland fields tap into sanitiser demand

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**BLOOMING LOVELY:** Brayfield Park Lavender's Rhona Parker-Benton has responded to the demand for hand sanitiser. Picture: TOM HUNTLEY

WITH hand sanitiser almost as hard to find on supermarket shelves as toilet paper, a Murraylands business has quickly pivoted to try to fill some of the demand.

Brayfield Park Lavender is a family-owned company that produces lavender products from a farm at Murray Bridge.

Owner Rhona Parker-Benton said the move to hand sanitiser production was a response to customer demand.

"I'm only doing it on a small scale at the moment," she said.

"Somebody just asked if I could create a sanitiser spray, because they knew that I'm a qualified cosmetic chemist."

Ms Parker-Benton said she was lucky enough to secure a supply of ethanol – one of the ingredients in hand sanitiser that had been hard to come by.

But she was not able to secure the polymer needed to make a sanitiser gel, so the product at this stage was only available in the spray form.

"I've been getting good feedback on the spray," she said.

"People have been saying if they're going into the supermarket or touching a door handle, even in the car, it's easier to use the spray.

"There's no difference in the effectiveness of the spray or gel. Both are made with more than 70 per cent ethanol."

At the moment, the sanitiser spray is available through Terry White Chemist in Rundle Mall and through Brayfield Park's online shop.

Brayfield Park products are usually available through the company's store in the main street of Hahndorf but on March 23, Ms Parker-Benton decided to suspend sales through the outlet.

"We'll definitely reopen but with Hahndorf being such a tourist town, it made sense to close down for the moment," she said.

"But if people wanted any of the products and didn't want to go online, we can open by appointment."

Ms Parker-Benton said luckily online sales had risen since the store was closed.

"We're doing more online sales, not so much overseas, but South Australian and Australian sales have picked up," she said.

Ms Parker-Benton announced plans last year to expand the business in the Murray Bridge area, with a larger farm, a processing plant and eco-tourism facility.

"The expansion is still on the cards and that's one benefit of the downtime at the moment – there's time to not only work on new products but also to work on the expansion," she said.

"Coronavirus has been bad for the economy and for businesses but it's also given a strategic breather and time to concentrate on some forward thinking