

Regional champion no accident

KRIS LLOYD AM



BLESSED: Kris Lloyd received an AM in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her work in cheesemaking (inset), education and tourism.

Picture: DEAN MARTIN

WOODSIDE Cheese Wrights owner Kris Lloyd refers to herself as an “accidental” cheesemaker but her career, and support of the state’s food industry, has seen her take out a major honour in the Queen’s Birthday awards.

Ms Lloyd was appointed a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia for significant service to the artisan cheesemaking industry, to education and to tourism.

“It was a huge surprise – I’m really honoured to receive such ... recognition,” she said.

Ms Lloyd has owned Woodside Cheese Wrights since the late 1990s, but she only ever saw herself in a managing role.

“I was working in my family’s winery (Coriole). We were talking one day and I said ‘Wouldn’t it be amazing to make cheese’,” she said.

She said when the Woodside business came up for sale, they took the plunge.

“I was only ever going to be the manager. With corporate and marketing skills, it was never my intention to be a cheesemaker,” Ms Lloyd said.

But during a week of staff absences, she had no choice but to make the cheese herself.

She fell in love with the process of cheesemaking and never looked back.

Ms Lloyd says one message she would like to get across through her award is the incredible opportunities available in the state’s food sector.

“It’s been such an incredibly exciting career. I feel lucky to be in such a vibrant industry,” she said. - **PAULA THOMPSON**