

Meeting a demand for fresh meat

Alexandra Economou

SOUTH Australian butcher Mike Rankin has high hopes for his new Queensland operation.

Mr Rankin owns wholesaler Holco Fine Meat Suppliers, which recently opened a processing and distribution plant in Brisbane.

Holco already processes and delivers about 300 tonnes of fresh beef, chicken, lamb and pork each week from its operations in Adelaide and Darwin.

The new Queensland site, initially employing 11 people, will increase this output by about 50 tonnes of meat products weekly.

Mr Rankin, Holco's founder and managing director, believes Queensland income will be about \$20 million within 18 months.

"We are very excited to have a new plant in Brisbane, providing our company with a springboard for growth in a number of areas," he says.

"Holco is already a major supplier of meat to the mining industry, either through direct

contracts or as a supplier to catering companies.

"With the rapid mining expansion in Queensland, we believe there is potential to significantly increase sales of meat.

"Having an operational base in Queensland will also open up new export opportunities for us."

The 30-year-old business racked up turnover of \$118 million in 2010-11, a 9 per cent increase on the previous year.

It is aiming for \$140 million within two years.

Holco employs 280 staff and currently delivers meat to more than 250 hotels in SA and the Northern Territory.

It also supplies several healthcare organisations, restaurants and supermarkets.

Last month, Sydney-based smallgoods manufacturer Primo announced it was also looking to tap into Queensland's growth with a new \$200 million factory in Brisbane employing 600 people.

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NEW PLANT: Mike Rankin is the managing director of Holco, SA's largest domestic fresh meat supplier. **Picture:** Brooke Whatnall