



## Success stories

### The Wildflower Bunch - Sarsfield

From the ashes – blooming  
again



## Resilience

Kevin and Milusa Giles' wildflower farm stood little chance against the raging Black Summer fires. In one night, they lost their home, along with the plantation and successful business they had spent the last 15 years lovingly building. After dealing with the shock and aftermath, Kevin and Milusa are well on the way to rebuilding.

## Re-building

With less than 5% of the original 14,000 protea and wildflower plants having survived, the process and timeline for replanting appeared daunting - particularly considering short-term cashflow challenges associated with not having a productive plantation for at least 7 years.

Kevin and Milusa are however committed to re-building and, in line with their business Roadmap, replanting is well underway. It's a

slow but steady process – and one that also supports the healing journey. There have been many offers of support with replanting, but for Kevin it is a labour of love.

## Recognising core capabilities for new opportunities

Ensuring financial resilience has been a key priority. With support from Dr Nicola Watts, Entrepreneurs' Programme – Strengthening Business Service, Kevin and Milusa assessed a range of other shorter-term revenue generating opportunities for their small farm. "There were lots of possibilities, but in the end, we concluded that it's the flower industry that we know and love, so we've decided to explore and trial a range of fast-growing flower varieties", says Milusa. "This complements our longer-term strategy and also helps us maintain our industry connections."

Kevin and Milusa agreed that it was important for Kevin to keep working on the farm, so Milusa found part-

time employment to assist with short-term cashflow.

## The recovery journey

Recovery remains an ongoing journey. "There has been so much to consider and do," says Milusa.

"At first rebuilding our business seemed such an overwhelming challenge. Developing a Roadmap through support from the Entrepreneurs' Programme has however really helped us focus on moving forward," **Milusa Giles, The Wildflower Bunch**

"Our hearts were broken but it has taught us what is important, and we are emerging more resilient than we were before and are highly appreciative of all the support. We have greatly valued having a dedicated business advisor to help us build and monitor Roadmap and provide a strong sounding board."