



Monash students make real difference in industry

An Australian first, the Monash Industry Team Initiative (MITI) program is a cross-disciplinary collaboration where Monash students engage with industry to solve real world problems and provide solutions.

"Established multi-discipline teams of students work together on a well-defined industry problem over the summer break," said Director External Engagement Madeleine McManus.

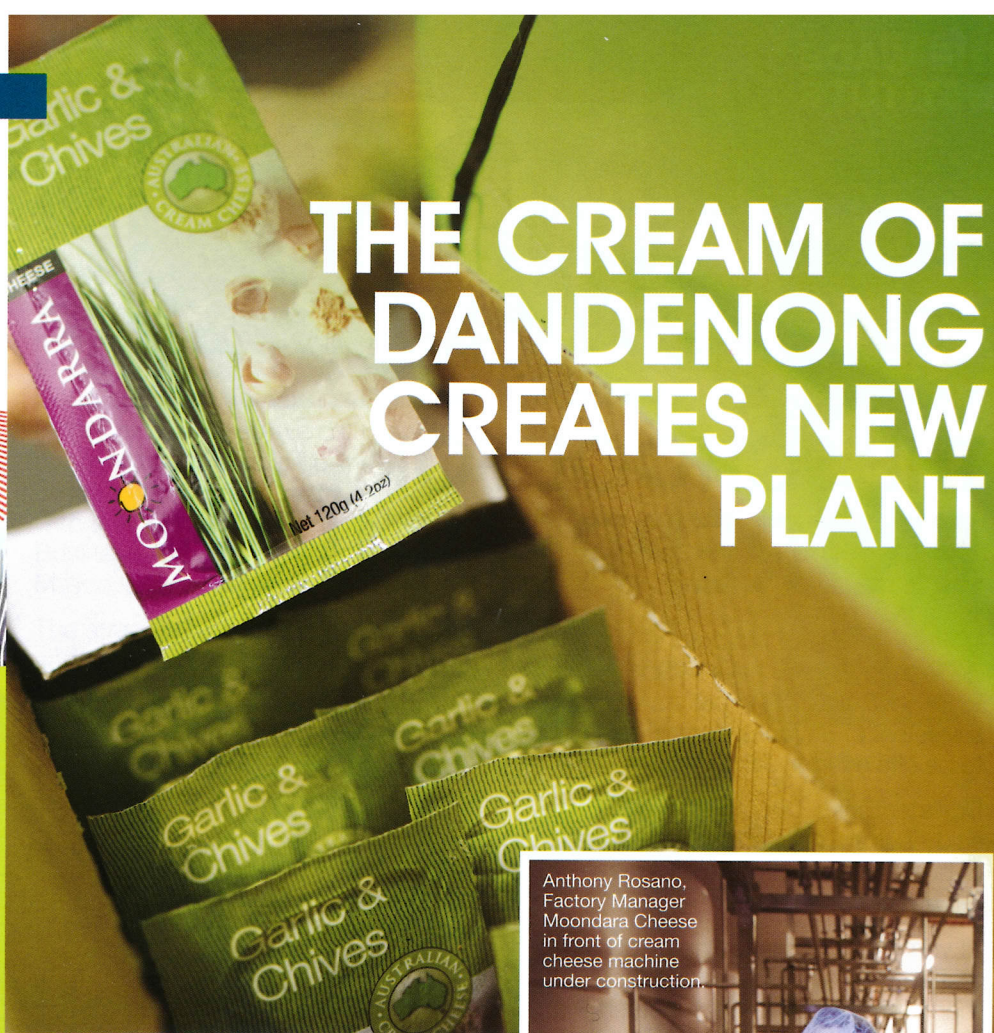
"The partners for this year included recognised leaders in industry, engaging 18 teams across Victoria. All student teams delivered above expectations, resulting in commercial innovation and financial benefits."

As a testament to MITI, all of the industry partners involved indicated they intend to participate again, including Hilton Manufacturing – the first to be involved in the Greater Dandenong region – which asked students to design and build an innovative new product.

"Partnering with universities like Monash is vital in helping develop the next generation of engineers; the industry experience they gain helps them develop skills and experiences that cannot be learnt in the classroom. We look forward to being involved in future programs," said Darren Williams, Product Launch Engineering Manager for Hilton.

Businesses interested in participating in the MITI can contact Madeleine McManus on 03 9905 6870.

www.miti.monash.edu



Manufacturer Moondarra Cheese has completed a \$5 million cream cheese plant to service both local and overseas markets.

"Currently we make flavoured cream cheese under the Moondarra brand but we also do a lot of contract manufacturing for leading brands," said Managing Director Matt Freeman.

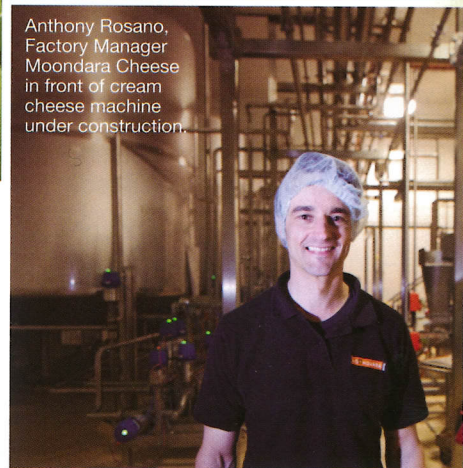
"Building this plant means we'll supply our own needs, using local milk rather than bringing it in from outside and interstate."

Moondarra Cheese is widely acclaimed for its quality and innovation with a unique range of flavours exported to many countries.

The company's best seller is its apricot and almond cream cheese but tastes vary across different countries. "Our bruschetta flavour is a big seller in Russia, the chocolate hazelnut flavour is popular there and also in the USA, and the melon and mango is the favourite in Korea."

"The export side has been developed over the 11 plus years of doing business. It's about developing good relationships with distributors in the local market and supporting them too, however there are risks beyond our control."

Anthony Rosano, Factory Manager Moondarra Cheese in front of cream cheese machine under construction.



Russia is Moondarra Cheese's biggest export market but the company ran into problems last August when various sanctions were placed on agricultural products into that market. "We lost 15 per cent of sales overnight through geopolitics," Mr Freeman said.

The company moved to the LOGIS estate in Dandenong South three years ago to expand. "We saw an opportunity to develop a greenfield site for our specific needs and the infrastructure here was conducive to business. We appreciate the support and interest Council gives with business seminars and their focus on manufacturing," Mr Freeman said.

The company employs around 40 staff full-time with an additional 40 casual staff in the 'entertaining' season – the lead up to Christmas through to January. The new cream cheese plant will create up to five additional jobs.

www.moondarracheese.com.au