

NEWS

Local Life

IN BRIEF

Leadership program

SOUTHERN Downs Regional Council invites present and emerging leaders from the community to the Southern Downs Leadership Forum. The forum, held this morning at the Civic Centre supper room from 7-8.30am will focus on sharing experiences and management practices.

Open garden

AFTER her book's huge success in Stantorpe, Liz Chappell will open the historic garden at Devon House Dundee to the public on November 14 and 15, for the official launch of her book, Celebrate the Seasons: Garden memoirs from New England which features gardens on the Granite Belt.

The garden will be open from 10 am to 4pm, entry is \$8 per person, children under 18 are free. Proceeds will benefit the Australian Garden History Society's Heritage Rose Garden at Saunarez Homestead.

Morning and afternoon tea and lunch will be available, provided by the Deepwater Branch of Australian Red Cross.

# Twisted sustainability

## Eco-friendly approach wins award

TWISTED Gum Wines near Ballandean has won the small business prize at the 2015 Premier's Sustainability Awards for its eco-friendly approach to vineyard management.

Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk said the award recognised Twisted Gum Wines' commitment to sustainable practices in almost every aspect of their business, from the vineyard to the bottle shop.

Environment Minister Dr Steven Miles said the Granite Belt vineyard was leading the way in adopting practices that reduced its environmental impact while strengthening its commercial position.

"Thanks to some innovative thinking, Twisted Gum Wines has done away with insecticides and drastically reduced its use of chemical fertilisers, fungicides and herbicides," Dr Miles said. "In addition, energy requirements have been



**GREEN THUMB:** Twisted Gum's Michelle Coelli in among the vines of their Ballandean winery.

PHOTO: FILE

reduced, greenhouse gas emissions have been cut, there are better water flows in the river system, and there's been a marked improvement in biodiversity.

"All these benefits have been achieved through relatively simple but smart

measures making Twisted Gum Wines an inspirational example for similar enterprises."

The vines are grown in small blocks surrounded by native forest, there is a permanent grass sward between rows and the farmers spread large

amounts of mulch under vines.

The award was presented at a gala evening at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre on Thursday.

"These awards are a chance to showcase some of the leaders in sustainability,

innovation, practice and promotion," Ms Palaszczuk said. "My government is committed to helping Queenslanders develop technologies that reduce environmental impact, foster new businesses and jobs, and bring economic benefit to the community."