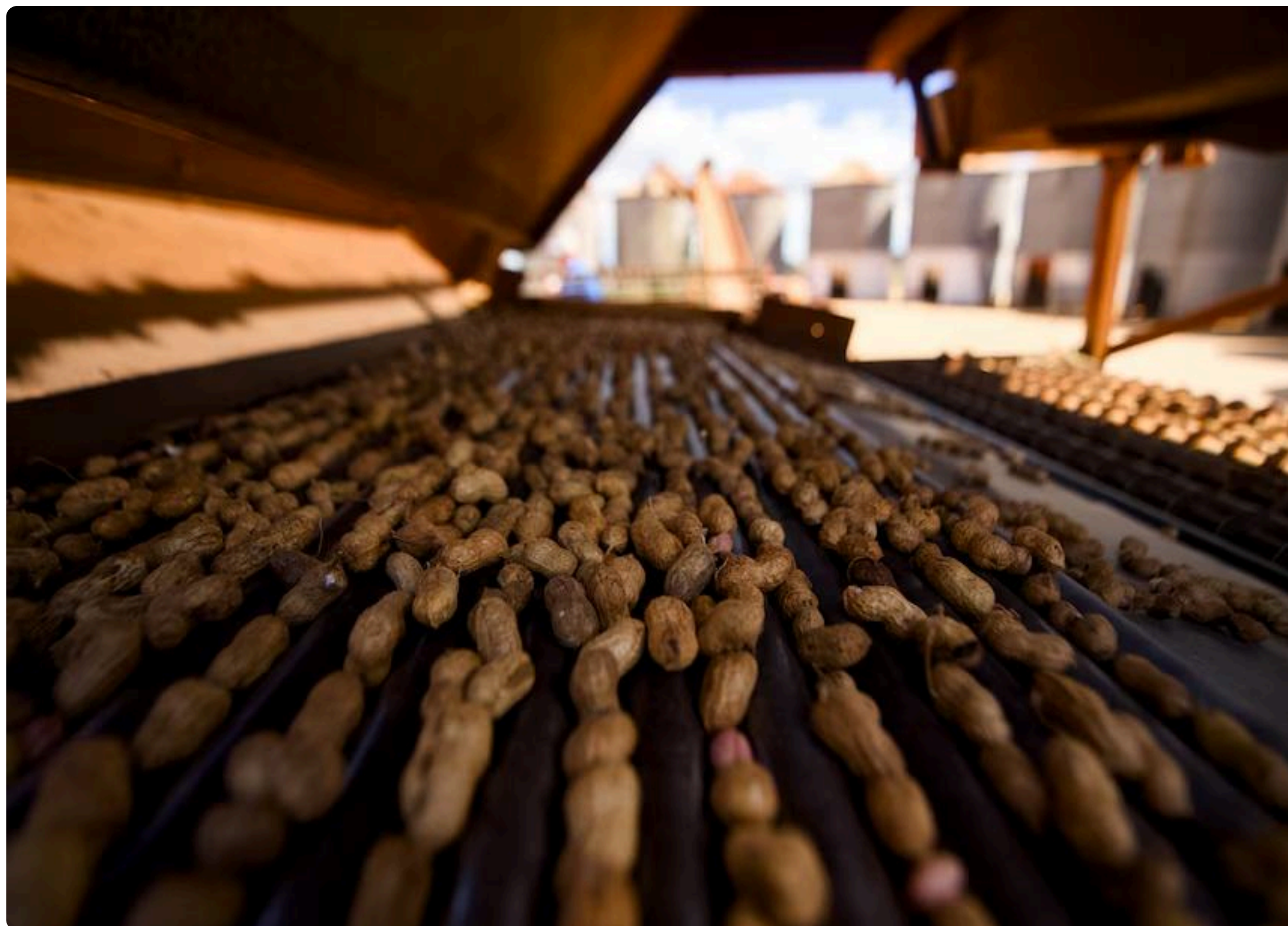


Peanut Blog

An ounce of information



Protein powder moves beyond shakes and gym junkies to create new opportunities for food manufacturers

The protein craze sweeping the world is transforming Australia's food industry, unlocking lucrative new opportunities for local food manufacturers.

How protein became big business :

- Driving the trend are social media influencers and food marketers espousing the wellness and longevity benefits of protein.
- Their targets are fitness fans, the diet-conscious, menopausal women, and the over-60s trying to maintain muscle mass.
- In Kingaroy, three hours north-west of Brisbane, local cold-pressed nut oil processor Josh Gadischke has timed his entry into the market perfectly.
- The managing director of Plenty Foods opened a new \$22 million high-protein peanut powder factory in February and is already capitalising on the booming market with sales here and overseas.
- He buys locally grown peanuts, classed as second grade due to blemishes and splits, and turns them into a low-fat, high-protein powder.
- "We've seen a number of cycles through our time in manufacturing, and certainly protein is the one that's here and now.
- "Every food manufacturer is trying to boost protein content in their products, and I don't think that trend is going to go away anytime soon."

Turning peanuts into powder :

- The defatting and powdering process is done by an expensive imported press, the only one in Australia.
- "We've seen other manufacturers try to produce a powder, but it's very difficult to get a fine texture like this and the high protein amount," Mr Gadischke said.
- "So yes, the press is our secret recipe to producing a superfine nut powder."
- He believes his talc-like powder, which boasts a 55 per cent protein content, will compete strongly against traditional whey, soy and pea proteins, because it's dairy and gluten free and has a pleasant taste.
- "Some of those other traditional proteins can leave a lingering bad taste in the back of your throat that's difficult for food manufacturers to overcome or try to mask," Mr Gadischke said.
- The factory has been built with ten years of growth and a more than doubling of staff from 40 to 100 in mind.
- Local member and Queensland Attorney-General Deb Frecklington said the new factory had buoyed locals saddened by the decline of the local peanut industry.
- Kingaroy was once known as the peanut capital of Australia, but fierce competition from cheap imports and changing rainfall patterns saw growers exit the industry.
- "To have a value-adding manufacturing factory right here gives confidence back to those growers that there is an end use for their product," Ms Frecklington said.

New demand for an old crop :

- Local peanut grower Trevor Campbell was excited that there was a new buyer for the hard-to-sell second-grade nuts.
- "It should push the price up somewhat, so for each and every farmer I think it can only be good because our peanut prices may increase," Mr Campbell said.
- As well as offering Australian food manufacturers a locally grown import replacement option, Mr Gadischke was targeting exports, especially to India.
- "There's a high vegetarian population, and they're quite protein-deficient, so a plant-based protein is ideal," he said.
- "You've got one and a half billion people in India and a large young population coming through. With exposure to things like social media and those trends, they're quite quickly picking up on it."
- Local peanut farmers, roasters and shellers, the Crumpton family, sells peanuts to Plenty Foods and was confident it could increase supply if powder production increased.
- "We've got expansion plans, we've got extra capacity, and we've done a lot of improvements over the last couple of years to get more production done, so we can grow with Josh," said Crumptions' general manager Daniel Cook.
- "I think he's very brave. When we look at the general trends in the industry, I think it's a call that he'll look back on in 10 years time and be glad he did it."

Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2026-06-13/protein-powder-moves-beyond-shakes-and-gym-junkies/106781284>