

# Boom in area food industry

IF it's work you're looking for, Whittlesea is a boom area, according to new studies by an RMIT researcher.

PhD student Anthony Kent has found jobs in the food-processing industry doubled in Whittlesea between 1991 and 2001.

"It's certainly higher than in other outer-suburban areas," Mr Kent said.

"But the Whittlesea area is one of, if not the fastest-growing, municipality in Melbourne."

Mr Kent also said the availability of child care and affordable housing in the area made it an attractive area to work.

"The services are also there for people whose first language is not English," Mr

Kent said. The number of new businesses starting in the area also increased.

Many of the jobs fell in the labour and other low-skilled work categories.

"What we're talking about is work in abattoirs, poultry, packaging pasta and muesli and there are a lot of soft drinks produced in Whittlesea too," Mr Kent said.

"With Whittlesea's burgeoning population, there's plenty of people labour available for those positions too."

Mr Kent also said the Plenty Food group, which incorporates 100 food manufacturers in the northern suburbs and is supported by Hume and Whittlesea councils, could take some credit for the current job situation.



**Anthony Kent, who has completed a study on food production.**