

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Resources



Wednesday, 15 July 2020

## NEW ONLINE TRAINING FOR HORTICULTURE WORKERS

New workers starting at Victorian horticulture businesses will be quickly brought up to speed to get to work quicker thanks to an online training package supported by the Victorian Government.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes today announced \$70,000 for SuniTAFE to develop the Horticulture Farm Worker Induction Program, as part of the \$50 million Agriculture Workforce Plan.

The program will help upskill new workers and allow them to quickly gain an understanding of the horticulture industry. It will also help ensure that a reliable harvesting workforce is trained and ready for the 2020 season and beyond.

The program will be rolled out over the next eight months and includes development of 12 interactive units covering topics such as industry awareness, safety, machinery use and harvesting skills.

Sections of other TAFE-accredited courses will be included to make the transition to certificate and diploma qualifications easier for workers wanting to further upskill in the future.

The training will be free for the industry and jobseekers, including those registered with Working for Victoria.

The Induction Program is part of the Government's broader \$50 million Agriculture Workforce Plan, supporting regional businesses across Victoria during the coronavirus pandemic.

Other measures in the Plan include Business Adaptation Grants to help workplaces meet health and physical distancing requirements, the creation of more than 80 agricultural jobs through Catchment Management Authorities, and funding for worker relocation, transport and training.

For more details or to register interest as a jobseeker or business, visit [agriculture.vic.gov.au/agworkforceplan](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agworkforceplan).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

*"This induction program will allow workers to quickly gain the knowledge they need when they join the horticulture workforce, including those transitioning from other industries."*

*"The program will help this key export industry that is a big employer in regional Victoria and a vital part of the state's food security."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Skills and Training Gayle Tierney

*"This funding support is another way we're supporting Victorians to get the skills they need to help industry moving and local economies rebuild from the pandemic."*

### Quote attributable to Chief Executive Officer SuniTAFE Geoff Dea

*"This induction program will provide employment opportunities for local people and help address labour shortages that directly impact our region's ability to get valuable crops to local and international markets."*

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