

# 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



Monday, 20 July 2020

## FOCUS ON EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO HELP MAKE FARMS SAFER

Two new educational programs supported by the Victorian Government will be rolled out for rural and regional school students to start changing attitudes towards safety on farms from an early age.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes today announced the programs at the beginning of National Farm Safety Week to reinforce the Government's commitment towards reducing deaths and injuries on farms.

Kidsafe Victoria will receive a \$97,000 grant to support their work preventing unintentional death and injury of children by delivering a farm safety campaign and creative competition in primary schools over three years.

The National Centre for Farmer Health will receive a \$108,500 grant to deliver twenty 'Gear up for Agriculture Health and Safety' workshops to Victorian secondary school students who have an interest in agriculture.

Monash University Accident Research Centre (MUARC) found that children aged younger than 15 in Victoria's outer regional areas are four times more likely to die due to injury than children in our major cities.

MUARC recommended addressing this problem through increased education and awareness of known injury hazards such as dams, farm equipment and off-road motorbike use.

Drowning is the leading cause of death of children on farms – providing a fenced play area away from water hazards such as dams is one example recommendation of what can be done to help make farms safer for children.

Teaching children about farms as workplaces as well as homes is a vital part of changing attitudes, with information showing children influence the decisions their parents make, in turn improving farm safety for the whole family.

These grants are part of the Victorian Government's \$20 million *Victoria's Smarter, Safer Farms* program which is addressing skills and safety issues in the agriculture sector.

To find out more about the educational programs visit the Agriculture Victoria website.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

*"Increasing education and awareness is crucial in order to change the culture of safety on farms – by partnering with Kidsafe Victoria and the National Centre for Farmer Health, we can do this from an early age."*

*"This Farm Safety Week is a good reminder that we all have a role to play in understanding that farms are workplaces as well as homes, and how we behave on them can have significant consequences for every person who works, lives or visits one."*

### Quote attributable to Minister for Workplace Safety Jill Hennessy

*"The agricultural sector is overly represented in fatality statistics and helping Victorian students understand the role they play in making farms safer will make a difference now and for every person who participates in the agriculture sector over the years to come."*