

# 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



Thursday, 15 October 2020

## SUPPORTING MORE RURAL WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

The Victorian Government is helping more rural women to reach their leadership aspirations with more funded places being made available through the Victorian Rural Women's Network Leadership and Mentoring program.

To mark International Day of Rural Women, Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes encouraged Victorian rural women in agriculture to apply for the program.

Applications to take part in Leadership Victoria's new 'Women Leading Now' program are now open, with four funded places on offer. This new two-day leadership is being delivered online in November.

While a third of Victorian farmers are women and many more work on-farm as a secondary occupation, Victorian women remain underrepresented in leadership and decision-making roles.

The \$500,000 Victorian Rural Women's Leadership and Mentoring program was launched in 2018 to upskill more than 40 women over three years. The initiative offers access to programs covering board skills, governance, financial and business management, team-building, community collaboration and networking.

Central Victorian farmer Carly Noble is one of 24 Victorian women who have so far used the Leadership and Mentoring Program as an opportunity to turn ideas into tangible outcomes for their communities.

This year Carly was one of three rural women to accept a funded place on a Regional Leadership program through the Victorian Rural Women's Network. During the program, Carly developed ideas to connect and advise small farm businesses and has also launched a gift hamper initiative supporting people doing it tough in rural communities.

Applications are now open for the Women Leading Now program, with funded places for Regional Leadership's three community-based programs based in Ballarat and the Western, Goulburn Murray and Wimmera regions set to open soon.

For more information and to apply, visit the Victorian Rural Women's Network website at [extensionaus.com.au/VRWNetwork/leadership-and-mentoring-program](https://extensionaus.com.au/VRWNetwork/leadership-and-mentoring-program).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

*"As we start to move to economic recovery, it's vital that rural women's voices inform decision-making at all levels so they can thrive and can contribute equitably to the recovery of rural and regional businesses and communities."*

*"This International Day of Rural Women, I encourage Victorian rural women to take the time to reflect on what's important to them and consider how they can contribute their many skills and talents to drive their communities forward."*