

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



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MILDURA STORAGE FACILITIES BOOSTS FRUIT EXPORTS AND JOBS

A new fruit warehouse and cold storage facility at Mildura will boost horticulture exports and has created 35 local jobs, thanks to support from the Victorian Government.

Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes was today joined by VCT Refrigerated Transport business representatives and workers to officially open the \$1.75 million facilities at the company's Irymple depot.

The new facilities include a warehouse, loading bays, an office, cool rooms, a cold treatment space and refrigeration, which will enable the business to meet supplier demand for fruit from across the Mildura region.

VCT has experienced an increase in freight demand and in customers as a result of the improved facilities, enabling the addition of 20 full time equivalent and 15 part time and casual jobs for warehousing and transport industry workers.

The new positions include administration staff, service technicians, general yard staff and truck drivers, with three heavy stream mechanic apprentices also among the roles.

The new facilities will also boost horticulture exports by an estimated \$20 million a year and further benefit up to 100 local fruit-growers across the region by allowing them to use the facilities to treat fresh produce before they export it.

The warehouse and cold store facilities have been made possible through the Victorian Government's *Regional Jobs Fund* and provide storage for some of the region's most important exports. The *Regional Jobs Fund* is part of the *Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund*, a key part of the Government's record \$2.6 billion Delivering for Regional and Rural Victoria Program.

Another project helping to boost exports in the region is the Citrus Traceability Pilot. A partnership between Agriculture Victoria and Citrus Australia, the pilot is using technology to help reduce instances of food fraud and support improved market access for Victorian exporters.

The pilot, which has traced over 400,000kg of premium fruit from Mildura to international markets since the start of the trial, uses "digital fingerprint" labelling by Laava and blockchain technology provided by Trust Provenance.

The premium varieties of oranges that were part of the trial were scanned at over 50 retail and wholesale locations by overseas consumers, allowing them to verify that the fruit is a genuine Victorian product and to view the journey from tree to table.

To watch a video with further details of the pilot and for more information, visit the [Agriculture Victoria website](#).

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes

"This investment is great news for workers in the Mildura region involved in exporting fresh produce, as well as Australians who will be able to enjoy more fresh produce from regional Victoria."

"The build of a new warehouse and cold storage facilities is another example of how our Regional Jobs Fund is creating local jobs and supporting industries across regional Victoria."

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