

# 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, 10 December 2020

## FEMALE FARMERS FEDERATION LEADERSHIP DUO WELCOMED

The Andrews Labor Government welcomes the appointment of the Victorian Farmers Federation's (VFF) first dual-female president and vice president in its history, Ms Emma Germano and Ms Danyel Cucinotta.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes today congratulated Ms Germano and Ms Cucinotta on their appointment and thanked outgoing president Mr David Jochinke for his four-year service advocating for Victorian farmers.

Under Mr Jochinke's leadership, the Government has worked closely with the VFF to deliver many programs to help Victorian farmers, especially in drought relief, bushfire recovery, farm safety and agricultural education.

Some of the most notable programs include the Government's \$81 million Drought Support Package which helped farmers buy new equipment and build business resilience, the emergency fodder program giving donated hay and feed pellets to hundreds of farmers in the North East and Gippsland, and the Quadbike Rebate Scheme helping farmers to make their bikes safer.

The Labor Government has also delivered on several of the VFF's priorities for farmers in the *Victorian Budget 2020/21*, including the \$65 million Agriculture Strategy which invests \$30 million to extend the popular Agriculture Energy Investment Plan and \$15 million to make AgTech accessible to more farmers, and a separate \$50 million for the Agricultural College Modernisation Program.

Having served as the VFF's vice president Ms Germano brings a wealth of experience to the role as the managing director of her family's mixed farming operation at Mirboo North, a Nuffield Scholar and a passionate advocate for Victoria's horticultural industry.

Ms Cucinotta will also bring valuable knowledge to her role as vice president as a third-generation egg farmer from Werribee and VFF Committee member.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

*"Ms Germano is an excellent advocate for Victorian agriculture – she brings lived experience and a forward-thinking attitude to this role. I can't wait to start work with her and Ms Cucinotta to tackle the challenges and opportunities facing our farmers."*

*"I thank Mr Jochinke for his leadership and hard work representing the needs of our farmers, especially over this challenging year. He has been a dedicated champion for our agriculture sector – I wish him well for what comes next."*