

# 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



Tuesday, 15 December 2020

## RESILIENCE OF FOOD AND FIBRE SECTOR SEES RECORD EXPORTS

Victoria's food and fibre producers have beaten the odds to deliver a record \$14.5 billion in exports for 2019-20, despite the challenges thrown at them by drought, bushfires and the global pandemic.

Victoria is Australia's largest food and fibre exporter, accounting for 28 per cent of total national exports. Today's release of the 2019-20 Victorian Food and Fibre Export Performance Report shows that Victoria is still on-track to reach its target to grow food and fibre exports to \$20 billion by 2030.

While China continues to be Victoria's highest value market for commodities such as horticulture and dairy, South East Asia and North America are becoming increasingly important markets, with exports to South East Asia growing by 8 percent and North America by 7 per cent. Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines are major markets for Victorian dairy, grain and horticulture and will continue to present strong export opportunities.

Since 2015-16, Victoria's food and fibre sector - which includes dairy, meat, seafood, grain, as well as wool and wine - has increased its exports by a huge \$2.4 billion.

Through Global Victoria's network of 23 international specialised trade offices, the Andrews Labor Government is working hard to ensure more pathways are opened for Victorian producers to do business around the world.

The Government has developed funding packages and programs to support the sector through the challenges of the past year, including the \$15.7 million *Export Recovery Package* that will provide increased assistance for Victorian industry to address logistics, supply chain, and market access issues caused by the pandemic.

Other support for the sector includes a mentoring and business skills scholarship program for young farmers, the \$5 million *Wine to the World* initiative, and the \$8 million *Growing Food and Fibre Markets* program, which focuses on expanding international export opportunities by improving paddock-to-port capabilities.

The Victorian Food and Fibre Export Performance Report can be found online at [agriculture.vic.gov.au/exports](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/exports).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture and Acting Minister for Trade Jaclyn Symes

*"Our food and fibre producers and exporters have shown enormous strength in the face of adversity, delivering an incredible result that Victorians should be proud of."*

*"We know the past year has been tougher than any other in recent memory – that's why we're delivering unprecedented levels of support to help the sector so it can continue to grow and create local jobs."*