

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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SETTING VICTORIAN AGRICULTURE UP FOR GROWTH AND CHANGE

The Andrews Labor Government is backing a bold new strategy for Victorian agriculture – helping the industry to grow in the face of constant change so it remains a cornerstone of the state’s economy and delivers better returns for farmers.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes unveiled the transformational strategy today, highlighting the Waverly Pastoral Company in Maffra, which has received an *Agricultural Energy Investment Plan* grant to install solar technology that will reduce energy and water usage at their dairy farm.

Building on initiatives such as this – which put money back into farmers’ pockets and help tackle climate change – the strategy sets out the Labor Government’s vision and commitments to drive a strong, innovative and sustainable sector over the next 10 years.

The strategy outlines fourteen commitments under five key themes of Recover, Grow, Modernise, Protect and Promote. These include commitments to strengthen local supply chains and manufacturing jobs, export our world class products to more markets more often, increase access to AgTech and research, position Victoria as a leader in low-emissions agriculture, and make agriculture a career path for more Victorians.

The strategy will support Victorian farmers and producers to gain a competitive edge as the sector evolves over the next decade and beyond. It will also provide certainty and leadership to seize opportunities and take on challenges armed with as much knowledge and experience as possible.

The Labor Government has invested \$115 million in the *Victorian Budget 2020/21* to develop and deliver the strategy. This includes \$30 million to extend the popular *Agricultural Energy Investment Plan* that supports government partnerships with industry to build a more resilient, energy efficient and internationally competitive agriculture sector, and \$50 million to upskill the next generation of farmers.

The strategy’s funding also includes \$15 million to access leading AgTech, innovative farming methods and new skills, and \$20 million for the *Food to Market* and *Pathways to Export* programs, supporting infrastructure and business development projects and dedicated agriculture export resources.

Working hand-in-hand with industry partners and the community will be critical to the successful implementation of this strategy. To read the strategy and have your say, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/strategy.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

“Many farmers and growers are showing that it is vital to the future of agriculture to adopt new ways of doing things to gain a competitive advantage and set themselves up for the future.”

“We need to ensure the whole industry can take advantage of new approaches that not only protect our industry and our state’s enviable position as a leader in ag, but also help it grow to its full potential.”

“This strategy provides certainty and leadership for Victorian agriculture. It’s an exciting chance to set our sector up for a strong future – I look forward to working with industry and communities to deliver this important work.”

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