

# Media Release

**Ms Mary-Anne Thomas MP**  
Minister for Regional Development  
Minister for Agriculture



Monday, 4 January 2021

## KEEPING OUR AGRICULTURE WORKERS MOVING

With the border between Victoria and New South Wales now closed to keep our state safe from ongoing coronavirus transmission, the Victorian Government is ensuring primary producers and agriculture workers can travel between states to undertake their important work.

Effective immediately, all agriculture workers who live and work between New South Wales and Victoria – other than those already covered under the existing border bubble arrangements – can apply for a permit to enter Victoria to keep the state’s vital food and fibre supply chain moving.

These arrangements will apply to agriculture workers with the same safeguards as workers in the freight and essential services industries – they must only remain in Victoria for the period necessary and minimise contact with other people in Victoria.

Permitted agriculture workers entering Victoria must wear a face mask in all public places, get regularly tested for coronavirus, self-quarantine when not working and only leave their accommodation for takeaway food or drink, bathroom stops, medical care, to obtain a coronavirus test or in an emergency.

Victorian farmers and agriculture workers living outside the border bubble and re-entering Victoria after conducting work in NSW will be required to self-isolate for 14 days upon their return and get tested for coronavirus twice.

This permit system is consistent with the National Agriculture Workers’ Code endorsed by National Cabinet in September, recognising that many agriculture workers regularly cross state borders – and will provide Victorian contact tracers with vital contact information if there is a positive case where these workers have been.

The only other categories of authorised entry to Victoria from NSW – apart from existing border bubble arrangements – are individuals holding an exemption from the Department of Health and Human Services, those with a transit permit from another jurisdiction, Victorians who have completed 14 days’ mandatory quarantine in NSW, and people in set categories like emergency services workers.

Anyone seeking to enter Victoria from NSW, outside of these approved categories, will now be turned back.

Agriculture workers who need to cross the border will be able to apply for a permit at [service.vic.gov.au](https://service.vic.gov.au) from today, or contact Agriculture Victoria on 136 186 for further information.

The Victorian Government is backing regional businesses and workers with initiatives including the \$17 million Seasonal Workforce Support Package to address workforce shortages caused to the pandemic. The package is part of the \$57 million Agriculture Workforce Plan supporting worker relocation, induction and business adaption.

For more information on the border closure, current coronavirus exposure venues or to find a testing site, visit [coronavirus.vic.gov.au](https://coronavirus.vic.gov.au).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

*“Many of our agriculture workers need to cross the border to perform their vital work – these permits will allow that to happen while keeping our state safe.”*

*“We’re backing the food and fibre industry in these challenging times – I urge anyone needing support to get in touch with Agriculture Victoria as a first port of call.”*

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