

Media Release

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



Wednesday, 24 February 2021

TAPPING INTO BREW GROWTH FOR SMALL-SCALE PRODUCERS

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to support small-scale and craft producers across the state with the latest round of funding for the *Small-Scale and Craft Program* announced today.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas visited AC Hops in Dean to launch the latest grants from the \$10.2 million program, which has already injected nearly \$4.3 million into Victoria's small scale and craft producers.

Under the program, AC Hops received funding to expand its hop yard, increasing production and enabling the business to offer a wider product range, thanks to specialised equipment including a hot pelletiser and cool room.

Having farmed in the district of Dean for more than 150 years, AC Hops is passionate about supporting local craft brewers and educating the community about the hop-growing journey.

Eligible small-scale and craft agribusinesses can apply for grants of up to \$15,000 to modernise their equipment or adopt new technologies, diversify their product range, access new markets, or develop specialised skills.

Alongside AC Hops, several other small-scale and craft producers across Victoria have received grants through the Program – including cultured butter manufacturers, gourmet vegetable growers, gin distillers and smoked meat producers.

The Government is helping small businesses in agriculture grow as a key pillar in the Agriculture Strategy, boosting visitation to regional towns, creating jobs and encouraging more Victorians to buy local.

The *Small-Scale and Craft Program* is an example of how that is being delivered and supports the vision for a Victorian agriculture sector that is strong, innovative, and sustainable.

To find out more about the *Small-Scale and Craft Program* visit the agriculture.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"We're helping producers like AC Hops to grow their business to meet the interest from people who want to know more about where their produce comes from and want to support local makers."

"This new stream of funding will make sure even more Victorian producers can grow their business, welcome more visitors and boost local economies."

Quote attributable to AC Hops owner Alistair Tippett

"The funding has supported us in fast tracking our plans to give craft breweries access to local farmgate hops to 'add a little story to their brew' and greatly assisted us in purchasing the specialised equipment needed to produce the best quality hops."

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