

Media Release

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



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NEW FARM SAFETY REBATE KEEPING REGIONAL VICTORIANS SAFE

Victorian farms will be made safer for workers, families and visitors through a new scheme backed by the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas was at Avington Merino Farm today to launch the new \$3 million Farm Safety Rebate Scheme, which will provide a rebate of up to \$5000 per farm for infrastructure and equipment to address health and safety risks on farms.

The agriculture sector is overly represented in workplace fatality statistics, making up less than two per cent of Victoria's workforce, but accounting for 14 per cent of workplace deaths.

This scheme recognises that those at risk of injury or death on Victorian farms are not just farmers, but also families, employees, suppliers and contractors.

Some examples of equipment and infrastructure that are eligible for the rebate include child safety fencing, animal handling equipment, dedicated chemical storage sheds and wash stations, emergency shut off switches and reversing cameras for tractors and vehicles.

The Government is supporting farm businesses to take the lead in making practical changes to their workplaces and improving the sector's focus on safety. A safe and healthy sector means more resilient communities in rural and regional Victoria and an even better place to work.

The scheme is a key part of delivering *Smarter, Safer Farms*, the Labor Government's \$20 million commitment to improve safety and skills for Victorian farmers, and position agriculture as a career of choice.

The Farm Safety Rebate Scheme will close on 31 December 2021 or when all funds are allocated. For more information or to apply for a rebate, visit <http://ruralfinance.com.au/farm-safety-rebate-scheme> or call 1800 260 425.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"Farms are workplaces but they're also homes – we want to make sure that everyone that steps onto a farm gets to return home safely."

"Too many people are killed or injured on farms each year. This new program is an easy way to make simple adjustments to farms so they're safer, and workers can carry on with peace of mind."

Quote attributable to Minister for Workplace Safety Ingrid Stitt

"Lives are forever changed by workplace deaths and injury. That's why we're working to reach as many people as possible and change the attitudes around farm workplace safety."

Quote attributable to Rural Assistance Commissioner Peter Tuohey

"I encourage farmers to apply for the Farm Safety Rebate and take up this opportunity to purchase and install safety infrastructure and equipment to make their farms safer for their workers, families and themselves."

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