

Media Release

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



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ADDING VALUE TO VICTORIAN FOOD AND FIBRE

The Andrews Labor Government is working to bolster the state's agri-food supply chains to create new job opportunities in food manufacturing, grow exports and build the resilience of the sector.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas opened the \$15 million *Food to Market* program in Mildura today.

The program will support industry to invest in Victoria's agri-food supply chain, providing funding of up to \$1 million for eligible projects that deliver jobs, improve productivity and capitalise on new value-added opportunities.

The grants will be used by agri-food businesses to invest in equipment that diversifies their product line and adds value to locally-grown produce and markets.

A range of project costs are eligible for funding including research and development for pilot projects, feasibility studies as well as investment in manufacturing plant and equipment.

The program is funded through the Labor Government's \$115 million *Agriculture Strategy*, and will help to deliver on the vision for a strong, innovative and sustainable sector.

A key focus of the 10-year agriculture strategy is recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and unlocking capacity that the industry has to rebound, recover and grow.

This program will strengthen local supply chains and support opportunities for local manufacturing, working hand in hand with local producers. Applications are open to businesses as well as groups such as industry associations and marketing co-operatives.

To be eligible, applicants must demonstrate their connection to the Victorian agri-food supply chain and directly employ staff. For more information, including the application guidelines, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"This \$15 million investment will add value to fresh produce grown in Victoria, delivering tangible benefits for producers, processors and consumers."

"This is about maximising our natural advantages, looking for better ways of doing things and not accepting the status quo. It means creating value and jobs right across supply chains, and right across the state."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Mark Gepp

"I'm excited to see how the community will take up this opportunity so the entire journey from paddock to plate, glass or retail outlet can happen right here in Victoria."