

Media Release

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



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NEW GLASSHOUSE HELPING TO SAFEGUARD FUTURE CROPS

The Andrews Labor Government is backing a new state-of-the-art plant quarantine facility to accelerate the delivery of new and improved crop varieties to Australian farmers.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas was in Horsham today to officially open the new \$4 million Post-Entry Quarantine (PEQ) facility which is part of the Australian Grains Genebank – the national centre for preserving grain crop genetic resources in Australia.

The Australian Grains Genebank is a partnership between the Labor Government and the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC), which each invested \$2 million towards the PEQ facility.

The impressive 400-square-metre PEQ glasshouse is fitted with LED lighting and a wi-fi enabled irrigation system, allowing researchers to grow and evaluate more seeds faster, while adhering to Australia's stringent biosecurity and emerging international quarantine requirements.

Seeds must pass through quarantine processes before being distributed to plant breeders and researchers. The process at this facility will involve growing out the seed and carrying out a range of tests to ensure it is free from exotic pests and diseases.

The fully automated glasshouse can accommodate 3900 pots and two-and-a-half growth cycles per year, expediting the quarantine process and helping to ensure improved crop varieties get to farmers faster.

This Victorian facility will be the premier grain quarantine facility nationally – supporting the Australian Grains Genebank to continue its vital role for food security and the future success of grain production.

The Australian Grains Genebank PEQ facility is part of the Government's new Agriculture Strategy which is working towards enhancing the commercialisation of research and ensuring our agriculture sector is well placed to be stronger, more innovative and sustainable.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"The Australian Grains Genebank (AGG) supports the development of new, more productive grain crop varieties for Australia. This new state-of-the-art infrastructure will enable world-class research, encouraging more scientists to the region and upholding our national and international biosecurity and quarantine requirements."

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jaala Pulford

"This new post-entry quarantine facility not only benefits Victorian farmers, but also makes an important contribution to local businesses and the people who depend on them."

Quote attributable to Grains Research and Development Corporation Managing Director Anthony Williams

"This facility will let us accelerate the development of the Australian pulse industry by reducing the quarantine wait time from two years to six months which will enable the delivery of better varieties faster to growers and consumers."

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