

Media Release

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



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INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF VICTORIA'S YOUNG FARMERS

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to support the future leaders of Victoria's agriculture sector, with the *2021 Upskill and Invest – Young Farmers Scholarship Program* launching today.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas recognised the 2020 scholarship recipients at a ceremony in Melbourne today, highlighting the important role young farmers play in Victoria's \$15.9 billion agriculture sector.

In its seventh year, the program has awarded 76 scholarships to eligible young farmers, supporting them with up to \$10,000 to boost their skills and careers.

Each year the Labor Government provides \$125,000 to the Program. Each scholarship recipient is eligible for up to \$5,000 to upskill through study and training, followed by up to \$5,000 to invest in putting new skills into practice with on-farm equipment and technology, business planning or professional development.

Among this year's recipients was Benalla sheep farmer Tamara Pabst, who plans to use her scholarship to undertake tertiary training in agribusiness. She then plans to invest in hi-tech animal scales for her farm that measure the performance of her flock and allow her to make more informed business decisions.

Giving young farmers access to advanced agriculture technology not only improves productivity and profitability of their businesses but also ensures Victoria stays at the forefront of modern farming on a global scale.

The Labor Government continues to support the next generation of farmers through a range of initiatives and provides opportunities for young people in agriculture to have a say, boost their skills and progress their careers.

The scholarship program builds on the Agriculture Strategy commitments to grow, modernise and promote the sector – helping to deliver the agriculture skills of the future and building on the Government's goal to grow Victoria's agriculture sector to \$20 billion by 2030.

For more information on 2021 Young Farmers Scholarships and to apply visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/youngfarmers. Applications close on Sunday 6 June.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"Young farmers are the future of Victoria's agriculture industry and we are continuing to support them to develop the world-leading skills this state has a global reputation for."

"In an industry that is undergoing constant evolution, fostering our young talent and giving them tools to thrive and succeed in a complex environment is vital."

"The calibre of 2020 Young Farmers Scholarship applicants was nothing short of exceptional and showcases the passion for the sector that exists within our young producers. There is no doubt that the future of Victoria's agriculture sector is in capable hands."

The following young farmers representing agricultural industries and regions across Victoria also received scholarships:

- Peter Carmichael, mixed livestock (beef and sheep), South Gippsland
- James Cox, livestock (sheep), Murrindindi
- Georgia Douglas, livestock (sheep), Northern Grampians
- William Fay, livestock (sheep) and cropping, Pyrenees
- Isis Jordan, dairy (goat), Mount Alexander
- Richard McKee, cropping, Mildura
- Michelle Muir, dairy, Corangamite
- Elizabeth Shotter, livestock (beef), Wellington
- Jen Smith, livestock (beef), East Gippsland
- Ty Stanton, livestock (beef) and cropping, Indigo
- Theresa Star, livestock (sheep), Towong
- Tyr-Ryan Sturgess-Myers, horticulture, Greater Shepparton