

# Media Release

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



Thursday, 26 August 2021

## 2022 RURAL WOMEN'S AWARD NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

The Victorian Government is calling on female leaders who are passionate about making a difference in rural and regional Victoria to apply for the 2022 AgriFutures Rural Women's Award.

The AgriFutures Rural Women's Award acknowledges and celebrates the essential role women play in rural and regional businesses, industries and communities.

The Victorian winner will receive a \$15,000 bursary to bring to life a project that benefits rural industries, businesses or communities, as well as an opportunity to take out the national award and a further \$20,000 in project funding.

The bursary can be used for activities such as formal education and training courses, establishing business plans or pilot programs, developing or testing new business concepts and publishing books.

Re-established by the Andrews Labor Government in 2017, the Victorian Rural Women's Network brings together women to connect, share skills and ideas and empower each other to step up, lead and succeed.

Since 2018, the Victorian Rural Women's Network Scholarship Program has supported 44 women from across the state to access leadership development training.

Kelly Barnes, from Dunkeld, was announced as the 2020 Victorian Rural Women's Awards winner in recognition of her work in establishing a Working Dog Training School.

The training program comprises small group sessions over a 12-month period to provide practical skills in dog handling while breaking down social isolation and building resilience in her community.

Ms Barnes is in the running to win the 2020 National AgriFutures Rural Women's Award on 20 October, which was postponed last year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Applications for the 2022 AgriFutures Rural Women's Award close on Friday, 8 October.

For more information and eligibility criteria visit [agriculture.vic.gov.au/support-and-resources](https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/support-and-resources).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

*"This is a wonderful opportunity to empower and celebrate Victorian rural women that are making a difference in our communities."*

*"I continue to be inspired by Victorian rural women like Kelly Barnes, who are using and developing their skills to benefit regional businesses and industries."*

### Quotes attributable to 2020 Victorian Rural Women's Award winner Kelly Barnes

*"The Rural Women's Award is an amazing opportunity and I would encourage women to apply. It's time to step up and out of your comfort zones and see what amazing things you can achieve."*

*"When I received the Victorian award last year, it was a life changing experience and I am proud to represent Victoria at the national awards."*

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