

Media Release

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



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GETTING OUR FOOD TO MARKET – INVESTING IN AGRIBUSINESS

The Victorian Government is supporting agricultural producers across the state to get our food to market sooner by growing exports, building domestic market capability and managing supply chain risks.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas today announced \$8.4 million as part of the first tranche of the *Food to Market* program, with 13 key industry and regional peak bodies receiving grants to support projects that will add value to food grown and processed in Victoria.

Global Victoria has contributed an additional \$2.8 million to provide export recovery support to industries impacted by disruptions as a result of the pandemic.

The peak body for Victorian fresh vegetable exporters, AUSVEG, has received \$960,000 to commence a pilot in partnership with the Victorian Government to investigate and trial alternative packaging and transport options.

This will ensure viable export pathways remain open for broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus, celery and lettuce crop producers in Victoria.

Citrus Australia and the Australian Table Grape Association received \$1.4 million to lead two innovative traceability pilots for premium fruit – in order to grow, diversify and protect high-value exports.

The pilots include using leading technology, isotope testing, cool-chain tracking and orchard mapping to enhance traceability. This will aim to safeguard the industry from fraudulent products and ensure that the integrity of Victorian premium fruit brands and varieties is protected.

Cherry Growers Australia has received \$750,000 to support the development of a 'Chemical Use for Export Toolkit.' The toolkit will help industry provide evidence-based, practical advice to Victorian businesses planning to export their produce so they can meet the expectations of international markets.

The \$15 million *Food to Market* program is funded through the Government's *Agriculture Strategy* and will help to deliver on its vision for a Victorian agriculture sector that is strong, innovative and sustainable.

A key focus of the 10-year agriculture strategy is supporting industry to recover from the impacts of coronavirus and unlocking its capacity to adapt and grow.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"The Food to Market program is an excellent example of how we are providing timely support to agribusinesses impacted by the pandemic, while capitalising on opportunities to expand into new markets over the longer term."

Quote attributable to Minister for Trade Martin Pakula

"By supporting our agri-food sector to grow and expand into new markets, we are protecting Victoria's global reputation as exporters and suppliers of some of the world's best food and fibre products."

Quote attributable to AUSVEG Chief Executive Officer Michael Coote

"This funding will allow AUSVEG to explore new packaging and export pathways to ensure Victoria's high-quality vegetables can continue to make their way onto dinner tables around the world."

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