

Media Release

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



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BACKING OUR FAMOUS AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL SHOWS

The Victorian Government is continuing to invest in Agricultural and Pastoral societies across the state, with \$300,000 to support their recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas officially opened the *Agricultural and Pastoral Society Grants Program* for this year, with grants of up to \$10,000 available to successful applicants.

Agricultural shows play a significant role in regional Victoria's vibrant calendar of events, promoting the agriculture industry and showcasing the best of the state's livestock, local art, craft and artisanal produce. Drawing volunteers to their committees from across the community, they are also important social institutions.

Grants can be used for a range of purposes, including to implement COVID-safe measures and support the use of technology to encourage remote participation in show activities.

It will also allow Agricultural and Pastoral Societies to develop infrastructure, increase community involvement and improve show planning activities.

The annual grants program continues to support up to 90 per cent of the total cost of projects. Earlier this year, the Government announced 46 recipients from the 2020 program, which shared in almost \$300,000.

Recipients used the grants for a range of initiatives, including purchasing a grandstand, extending a shearing pavilion, providing sanitiser stations, the installation of solar panels, and the purchase of portable animal yards.

Over the past year, agricultural shows and field days across Victoria have been cancelled due to uncertainty associated with the coronavirus pandemic. In response to the restrictions, some societies pivoted online and created virtual events that stimulated community involvement.

The Government will continue to support Agricultural and Pastoral societies, backing local communities and economies and supporting regional jobs as the state unites to combat the pandemic.

Applications for the *Agricultural and Pastoral Society Grants Program* are open until Sunday, 3 October 2021. For more information visit agriculture.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"From the very young to the very old, Victorians love their local show and the pandemic has again played havoc with these local institutions – that's why we're providing this vital support."

"Agricultural shows are a significant part of not only regional Victoria but the entire state, providing opportunities for up to 50,000 volunteers and attracting around two million patrons annually."

"We are supporting our Agricultural and Pastoral societies with more funding and look forward to them welcoming visitors through the gates again when it's safe to do so."