

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture
Acting Minister for Local Government
Acting Minister for Suburban Development



Tuesday, 21 September 2021

SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS TO SUCCEED

The Victorian Government is calling on young farmers to take their careers to the next level, with expressions of interest open for the 2022 *Young Farmer and New Entrant Mentoring Program*.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas announced today that eight positions are available in the 2022 program which pairs young farmers with experienced farmers in a mentorship, overseen by a skilled farm business consultant.

The Program is open to farmers aged 18 to 35 years to develop the skills they need to better manage their farm businesses, identify risks and develop strategies to build resilience and achieve their business goals.

During the 12-month program the mentor and mentee will meet regularly to assist the young farmer in building professional networks, utilising trusted sources of advice and information, and setting business goals.

Program participants are matched to ensure the mentor's experience aligns with the mentee's enterprise and personal development goals.

Samantha Mitchell, a mixed grain and sheep farmer from Watchupga in northern Victoria, took over the family business from her father this year. She is one of 12 mentees currently involved in the 2021 program.

Samantha applied to the mentoring program to support the transition of her family business, build relationships in the industry and gain a better understanding of business operations, such as employing and managing staff.

The Young Farmer and New Entrant Mentoring Program is funded by the Government's \$20 million *Smarter, Safer Farms* initiative, which includes targeted training support to build capability in financial literacy, risk management, farm planning and adaption to climate change.

Expressions of interest for mentees for the 2022 Young Farmer and New Entrant Mentoring Program are now open. For more information and to apply visit vic.gov.au/youngfarmers.

To hear more about Samantha's story in the latest podcast episode of 'AgVic Talk', go to agriculture.vic.gov.au/agvictalk.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"The Young Farmer and New Entrant Mentoring Program is a great way for young farmers to meet and learn from someone with a lifetime of experience and form valuable relationships in the industry."

"Our young farmers are the future of Victoria's agriculture industry – this program is a chance for experienced producers to share their knowledge with the next generation and support the sector to continue to thrive."

Quotes attributable to 2021 Young Farmer mentoring program mentee Samantha Mitchell

"My mentor was a fourth-generation mixed farmer and was able to give me so much knowledge about his personal experiences on farm."

"It was the best way to learn – from other people's experiences, their mistakes and their successes."

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