

Media Release

Ms Danielle Green MP

Parliamentary Secretary for Sport

Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Victoria



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WORLD-FIRST RESEARCH FACILITY LAUNCHES AT HORSHAM SMARTFARM

The Andrews Labor Government is investing in world-class innovation and technology at the Horsham SmartFarm, backing our grain growers to become more productive and adaptable to climate change.

Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Victoria Danielle Green today launched the world-first Free Air Temperature Extreme (FATE) facility, established by Agriculture Victoria to advance research into growing new grain crop varieties that are suited to Australia's increasingly extreme weather.

It is vital to support Victoria's grain growers to better manage the impacts of extreme weather on the quality of their crops as Australia becomes more prone to frequent heat waves and crops remain at ongoing risk of frost damage.

The FATE facility uses unique technology that simulates extreme weather events, including heat waves and frost, to measure how cereal, oil and pulse crops perform under these conditions in open-field environments.

Featuring open-air radiant heaters that are affixed to mobile trolleys, the FATE facility applies heat waves to crops at specific temperatures and times, to capture real-world data on how grain crops respond to extreme weather.

This data will support research into developing grain growing strategies that are effective under a changing climate and help farmers understand how environmental factors affect the response of new crop varieties, their resistance to pests and disease, and crop production techniques.

With access to real-world data, the FATE facility will also enable researchers to use computer simulation models to forecast grain growing strategies for regions that don't have access to this on-ground technology.

The FATE facility is backed by a \$700,000 investment by the Labor Government, including a contribution from the \$5 million *Smarter Safer Farms initiative*, which is building skills in science and digital agriculture.

The Horsham SmartFarm is delivering on the Victorian Government's 10-year Agriculture Strategy to modernise and protect the state's farming industries.

For more information on our SmartFarms visit agriculture.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Regional Victoria Danielle Green

"This is an example of innovative technology being used to modernise and protect our agricultural sector so that farmers can grow more resilient crops under a changing climate."

"By backing experimental research, we are building a knowledge bank that will help Victorian farmers to increase their productivity, profitability and sustainability in the face of extreme weather events."