

Media Release

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



Wednesday, 8 December 2021

CELEBRATING THE FUTURE OF VICTORIA'S YOUNG FARMERS

Victoria's brightest and best young farmers have been celebrated at the 2021 Upskill and Invest Young Farmers Scholarship Awards.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas presented 13 farmers with scholarships at a ceremony in Melbourne last night, highlighting the important role young farmers play in Victoria's \$17.8 billion agriculture industry.

The program, which has awarded 89 scholarships since 2015, supports young farmers with up to \$10,000 to boost their skills and careers.

Each recipient is eligible for up to \$5,000 to upskill through study and training, followed by \$5,000 to invest in putting new skills into practice with on-farm equipment and technology or further professional development.

Greater Bendigo farmer Madeleine Marson was one of this year's recipients and plans to use her scholarship to undertake further training in viticulture. She will also invest in new equipment for her family vineyard to support herbicide-free weed management under the vines.

Rupanyup cropping and sheep farmer Dougal McAllister will complete training in business management, leadership and decision making to improve profitability on his family farm.

Giving young farmers access to higher educational opportunities improves productivity and profitability of their businesses and ensures Victoria stays at the forefront of global modern farming.

The *Upskill and Invest Young Farmers Scholarship Program* is part of the Victorian Government's commitment to continue growing our strong, innovative and sustainable agriculture sector.

The 2022 Young Farmers Scholarship program will open mid next year. For more information on the program and the next round of scholarships visit: <https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/celebrating-future-victorias-young-farmers>

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"Young farmers are the future of Victoria's agriculture industry, and we are excited to invest in their skills to support a strong, innovative and sustainable sector."

"The calibre of the 2021 applicants was excellent and showcases the passion of our young producers to excel in this industry. There's no doubt that the future of our agriculture sector is in the best hands."

The following young farmers representing agricultural industries and regions across Victoria also received scholarships:

- Thomas Amery, cropping and livestock, Benalla
- Andrew Lay, livestock (beef), Baw Baw
- Lianli Lin, aquaculture, Wyndham
- Timothy McCann, dairy, Wellington
- Jackie McGrath, livestock (beef), Benalla
- Jasmine McJames-Court, mixed livestock (dairy and beef), South Gippsland
- Tanya McKenzie, livestock (sheep), Ararat
- Grace Morrison, cropping and livestock (sheep), Corangamite
- Brooke Peel, mixed livestock, Moyne
- Lauren Schmidt, cropping and livestock, Wellington
- Daniel Toohey, mixed livestock, Moorabool.