

Media Release

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Minister for Regional Development
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TOUGHEST ON-THE-SPOT FINES TO PROTECT OUR FARMERS

The Andrews Labor Government is ensuring our farmers and their businesses are protected, with new legislation passed in Parliament to deter trespassing on farms.

The *Livestock Management Amendment (Animal Activism) Act 2021* recognises the significant biosecurity risks that breaches from animal activists can pose and will deter behaviour that puts the hard work of our farmers and agricultural businesses at risk.

Those who fail to comply will face on-the-spot fines of \$1,272 for an individual and \$8,178 for an organisation, the toughest fines in Australia.

Further penalties of up to \$10,904 for an individual and up to \$54,522 for an organisation could apply for more serious offending.

Farmers seeking to better protect their animals can implement a biosecurity management plan (BMP) which can include measures such as requiring consent before anyone can access their property. Biosecurity breaches by trespassers can put human and animal health at risk.

These new measures are part of the Labor Government's response to the *Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture*. The Government supported 13 of the report's 15 recommendations in full including the creation of BMPs and subsequent penalties for those who fail to comply.

Peak industry bodies which represent farmers and agribusinesses, as well as animal welfare organisations were consulted during the development of this legislative framework and will be further engaged as the regulations are finalised.

The new arrangements will come into effect later this year.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"Victoria's on-the-spot fines for animal activists who trespass on farms will be the toughest in the nation."

"Farmers and workers in the agricultural industry should be able to do their work without fear of being targeted by animal activists. This sort of activity is highly distressing for farming families and puts the biosecurity and safety of animals at risk."

"We are backing our hard-working farmers because they are critical to keeping food on our tables and supporting local jobs in regional and rural communities across Victoria."