

Media Release

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



Wednesday, 2 March 2022

GROWING OPPORTUNITIES IN GIPPSLAND

The Andrews Labor Government is backing a Gippsland nursery to produce more seedlings, as Victoria transitions away from native timber and moves towards reliable plantation-based supply.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas today visited Hancock Victorian Plantations (HVP) at Gelliondale, to see the completed nursery expansion made possible by a \$875,000 investment from the Victorian Forestry Plan.

The funding has allowed HVP to expand the nursery, which will enable them to produce up to 14 million seedlings a year, an increase of more than 25 per cent on its previous capacity.

The Gelliondale nursery includes seed orchards, glasshouse infrastructure, growing and despatch areas. The construction of an additional purpose-built seedling growing bay and installation of new state-of-the-art equipment now means more than 50,000 seedlings can be sorted each day.

The expansion at Gelliondale has created an additional five jobs. During the peak growing season from April to September over 80 people will be working at the site at any time with recruitment currently underway for casual positions.

Seedlings from Gelliondale have been planted by VicForests at a new pine plantation site in Stradbroke in Gippsland as part of continuing efforts to establish new plantations. Production of seedlings at the nursery will support the creation of more plantations across Gippsland in the coming year.

Under the Victorian Forestry Plan commercial native timber harvesting in all Victorian state forests will be phased out by 2030. Five out of six trees currently harvested in Victoria are taken from plantations.

The Labor Government is investing more than \$200 million for affected businesses, workers and their local communities to transition away from native timber harvesting, while providing an additional \$110 million for new plantations that will support a sustainable future for our timber industry.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

“We know that our timber industry is changing – it’s great to see this Gippsland business boosting its seedling supply, which will create a stronger and more secure footing for industry now and into the future.”

“To ensure the best transition to a plantation-based supply, we are investing in businesses that are innovative and looking at new ways to create jobs and economic opportunities for regional communities.”

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Jane Garrett

“We’re helping to grow more trees and jobs for Gippsland, whether it’s at nurseries, plantations or manufacturing timber products.”

Quote attributable to Hancock Victorian Plantations Chief Executive Officer, Stephen Ryan

“The increase in nursery capacity will help us keep up with demand now and in years to come as the plantation estate grows across Gippsland and the rest of Victoria.”

Media contact: Nadia Dimattina 0438 701 306 | nadia.dimattina@minstaff.vic.gov.au