

Media Release

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Minister for Regional Development
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VICTORIA'S PREMIUM LAMB PRODUCERS GO GLOBAL

The Andrews Labor Government is backing the state's lamb producers to strengthen international exports to new and established markets while supporting jobs.

Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas attended a cooking masterclass as part of the 2022 'Lambassador' program and met with 30 international chefs who are in Melbourne to undertake a 'paddock to plate' workshop as part of the initiative.

The leading chefs will spend the week learning about Victorian lamb and the state's producers, inspiring them to create their own signature dishes and promote Victorian lamb when they return home.

The Lambassador program is delivered by Meat and Livestock Australia with support from a \$2.5 million grant from the Labor Government's Global Victoria's Export Recovery Fund and Agriculture Victoria's Food to Market program. The program has been running since 2015 with delegates travelling to Victoria from around the world.

Having operated virtually during the pandemic, the return of the in-person program will see the group travel to regional Victoria to see where Victorian lamb is farmed, learn more about how it is produced, discover new cooking techniques and experience some of the state's best food and wine.

The 'Lambassador' program began in Japan and will now be expanded to new regions including South East Asia, the Middle East and North America over the next two years.

Victoria is the largest sheep meat exporter in Australia with exports valued at \$1.4 billion. The program will help to grow global exports by boosting the profile and understanding of lamb in important overseas markets such as Japan, Vietnam, and South Korea.

The Government is supporting agricultural food producers to diversify their international export markets through its international network of trade and investment offices, the largest network of any Australian state.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas

"We're excited to partner with Meat and Livestock Australia to expand the successful Lambassador program into global markets which has a proud history of supporting Victoria's lamb producers by promoting their high-quality, grass-fed lamb internationally – which in turn supports jobs."

Quote attributable to Minister for Trade Martin Pakula

"Victoria is the largest exporter of lamb in the country and we're backing farmers and the industry to recover and continue to create new jobs for Victorians."

Quote attributable to Meat and Livestock Australia General Manager International Markets Andrew Cox

"Teaching world-class international chefs more about Victoria's high quality, premium lamb and the exciting range of culinary possibilities it presents through the Lambassador program is an innovative way to promote and boost the industry's global export potential."