

Media Release

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



Wednesday, 1 June 2022

HUNDREDS OF JOBS TO SUPERCHARGE STAWELL

The Andrews Labor Government is creating 250 jobs while unlocking new export opportunities with a major abattoir upgrade in Stawell.

Minister for Regional Development and Agriculture Mary-Anne Thomas today visited Frew Foods International in Stawell to announce funding through the Labor Government's *Regional Jobs Fund* to assist the company in delivering a multi-million-dollar abattoir expansion project.

Frew Foods International is Stawell's largest employer with its almost 500 staff, processing up to 900,000 sheep each year for local and overseas markets, including the United States and Canada. The abattoir is rated as one of Australia's highest quality lamb processing facilities and is a key lamb supplier for Woolworths and Aldi.

The project will almost double Frew Foods' current lamb production, with works already underway to upgrade equipment to process more sheep at a lower cost. This will help the company grow its lamb exports across Europe and North America.

The company is also set to install a cold storage room at the site to drive down storage costs and a traceability system to track livestock during any potential disease outbreaks.

The upgrade is enabling Frew Foods to create a wide range of new roles at the abattoir including managers, labourers, forklift drivers, drovers and maintenance workers.

Established in 1984, Frew Foods International is an Australian family business that merged with local company, Thomas Foods International, in 2020.

The *Regional Jobs Fund* is part of the Government's flagship *Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund* which helps businesses create jobs in regional Victoria, supports community projects and backs councils to build the infrastructure that locals and visitors need.

The Labor Government has invested more than \$700 million in its Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund since 2015 – supporting around 13,000 jobs and delivering 1,000 projects.

The *Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund* is part of the Government's more than \$36 billion investment in rural and regional Victoria since 2015. For more information go to rdv.vic.gov.au/rjif

Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas

"We are proud to back Frew Foods International here in Stawell to deliver hundreds of new jobs, helping to strengthen our region with more employment opportunities."

"This project will go a long way in supporting the region, creating new jobs and boosting the local economy."

Quotes attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jaala Pulford

"By supporting Stawell's biggest employer, we are opening the door for more people to get jobs in regional Victoria."

"This project will continue to put Northern Grampians on the map for its high-quality meat processing industry."

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