

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Training and Skills

Minister for Higher Education

Minister for Agriculture



Thursday, 29 September 2022

SOUTH-WEST TRAINING PROGRAM TO BOOST DAIRY INDUSTRY JOBS

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting 50 unemployed young people in Victoria's South-West to begin a fresh career in the local dairy industry, under a new entry-level training program.

Minister for Training and Skills and Higher Education Gayle Tierney today visited Rosemount Dairy in Southern Cross to announce a \$1 million *AgFutures Initiative* which will provide vital training pathways for young people, while supporting the employment needs of the region's dairy farmers.

It's not only important to give people access to local training, but to also support them into local employment, which is why The Labor Government is funding skills training and job placements for up to 50 unemployed young people over the next two years, within areas of the dairy industry where there is a skills shortage.

Barwon South-West is the state's largest producer of food and fibre, producing more than \$2.3 billion worth of products each year. It's good for local industry, it's good for the local community and it's good for local job seekers.

The program is being led by The Brotherhood of St. Laurence in partnership with South-West TAFE and other partners and will provide the foundation for young people to continue on to complete Certificate II and III qualifications in Agriculture, Horticulture, Conservation and Land Management.

The initiative is being supported by partners including Skills Impact, Dairy Australia, Food & Fibre Great South Coast and Brophy Family and Youth Services and local employers such as Apostle Whey and WestVic Dairy.

Only a Labor Government can be trusted to make training more accessible than ever for Victorians, because breaking down barriers to education and skills and training is good for everyone.

Since 2014, the Government has made a record \$3.5 billion investment to rebuild TAFE and support universities and higher education to ensure Victorians have access to high quality education and rewarding career pathways.

Quote attributable to Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney

"We are always looking at different ways to help young people start rewarding careers while supporting the skills needs of our vital local industries."

Quote attributable to Brotherhood of St. Laurence Executive Director Travers McLeod

"This initiative will improve training pathways for young people to start agricultural careers and is an example of how we can redesign our employment and training systems so they are fit for the future."

Quote attributable to South-West TAFE Director of Strategy and Research John Flett

"The AgFutures project is an exciting initiative that will give young people disengaged from work and learning a new opportunity to find work in the food and fibre sector with some of the region's most forward-thinking employers."