

# Joint Media Release



**The Hon Gayle Tierney MP**  
Minister for Training and Skills  
Minister for Higher Education  
Minister for Agriculture



**Australian Government**

**Senator the Hon Murray Watt MP**  
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
Minister for Emergency Management

Tuesday, 16 May 2023

## **PRIMARY PRODUCER LOANS AND MORE DISASTER RECOVERY ASSISTANCE FOR HAIL-IMPACTED VICTORIANS**

Victorian primary producers in the City of Greater Shepparton and the Yarra Ranges Local Government Areas can now apply for concessional loans of up to \$250,000 following a hailstorm event on 23 March this year.

The loans are part of a range of assistance jointly funded by the Albanese and Andrews Governments through the Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

The concessional loans will support eligible primary producers to re-establish operations, restore and/or replace damaged assets and pay for working capital expenses that cannot be met due to a loss of income.

Federal Minister for Emergency Management, Murray Watt said the hailstorm was the third significant storm to have impacted the City of Greater Shepparton Local Government Area during the current horticultural season.

“Significant infrastructure damage was sustained, including orchard netting and poles. Unfortunately for this event, hail netting offered limited protection given the size of the hail and the direction of the storm,” Minister Watt said.

“As well as help for farmers, there are also other forms of disaster assistance available for this event, including debris-removal help for residents, and assistance for local councils to fix up roads and public assets.”

Victorian Minister for Agriculture, the Hon Gayle Tierney MP, said she was pleased to announce this financial support for hard-hit horticultural growers who have felt the full impact of storms since November.

“The March storm hit growers in the Goulburn Valley on the eve of harvest and caused significant damage to the apple harvest (and compounded the impacts of previous flood and storm events),” Minister Tierney said.

“This financial support recognises the significant impact that the recent storms and floods have had on many in the horticultural sector.

“This additional provision of a concessional loan of up to \$250,000 to eligible growers recognises the impacts sustained by many in this sector in the past six months and acknowledges the need to support our fruit and vegetable growers.”

For more information on the new concessional loans and the range of financial support measures available for the October 2022 to 13 January 2023 floods and storms visit Rural Finance at [www.ruralfinance.com.au](http://www.ruralfinance.com.au) or call 1800 260 425.