

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP
Minister for Skills and TAFE
Minister for Regional Development



Thursday, 26 October 2023

CUTTING EDGE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH FACILITIES OPENED IN BUNDOORA

Victorian agriculture researchers now have greater capacity to explore medicinal innovations and improved food production thanks to the opening of new facilities at Agribio research centre at La Trobe University.

Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney today opened new research glasshouses at La Trobe University's Bundoora campus following a \$10 million Allan Labor Government investment to expand resources for Victorian agriculture and food research.

La Trobe invested \$3.5 million of the funding to the glasshouses through the Agriculture Production Platform project. The facility now includes controlled environment pods to create new and improved plant varieties.

The facility supports scientists to develop medicinal agriculture innovations, drought resistant plants, crops that need less pesticides and use high-tech visual apparatus to detect and link plants' physical characteristics with genes. The technology enables plant breeders to quickly determine the genetic material to take forward and breed.

The remaining \$6.5 million will fund the Applied Industry Agriculture Platforms project to develop dedicated plant phenomics growth chambers with remote digital access for regional industry, researchers and students.

Delivered through the Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund, the project supports 120 jobs related to new and expanded research, industry infrastructure and partnerships.

The \$350 million Victorian Higher Education State Investment Fund supports universities with financial assistance for capital works, applied research and research infrastructure to create more jobs and grow Victoria's economy.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney

"By supporting Victoria's universities, we can tap into the incredible knowledge and skills of our researchers to build a more innovative and responsive agriculture industry that meets the needs of the next generation of Victorians."

"We look forward to the new discoveries that La Trobe University's agriculture researchers will uncover."

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"We're continuing to invest in world-class research facilities, benefiting our agriculture industry both now and into the future."

"Research and innovation play a key role in ensuring Victoria's agriculture industry remains productive, resilient and equipped with the best technology to solve real-world problems."

Quotes attributable to Member for Bundoora Colin Brooks

"To see new world class facilities opening at La Trobe University is great not only for the students, but for industry and the local community as well."

Quote attributable to La Trobe University Vice-Chancellor Professor John Dewar AO

“This investment by the Victorian Government will help support La Trobe’s world-class researchers to improve food security, agricultural productivity and sustainability, not just in Victoria but globally.”