

# Media Release

**Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Treasurer

Minister for Industrial Relations

Minister for Regional Development



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## ABATTOIR EXPANSION BOOSTS STAWELL JOBS AND INDUSTRY

The Allan Labor Government is backing Stawell's biggest employer to give even more locals access to jobs close to home, with the expansion of Thomas Foods International's abattoir now open for business.

Member for Western Victoria Jacinta Ermacora today represented Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes to officially open the facility, alongside staff and the company's leadership team.

The expansion, which was supported by a Victorian Government investment, is expected to almost double lamb production at the site to more than 2.3 million lambs per year.

In a big win for local workers, the expansion has created 100 new jobs, bringing the abattoir workforce to 600 and cementing Thomas Foods as a driving force in Victoria's lamb market.

Rated one of Australia's best lamb processing facilities, the Stawell abattoir is a key lamb supplier for Woolworths, Aldi and overseas markets, with staff currently processing around 1.5 million sheep per year.

Works to expand the abattoir include the delivery of a new chiller room with capacity for an additional 2,000 carcasses, a larger lamb boning room and new cold room storage and truck loading bays.

New innovative technology and equipment has been installed that connects all areas of the abattoir to the in-line traceability system. This system ensures that only top-quality lamb will be used in products and is expected to increase demand for Australian lamb and mutton.

The upgrades allow Thomas Foods to grow its lamb exports across global markets, while creating new jobs at the Stawell abattoir, from managers and labourers to new roles for forklift drivers, drovers and maintenance workers.

With bigger, better facilities and a strengthened local workforce, the expansion is set to take Victorian products to a wider international market while reinforcing Stawell and the Grampians region as a food processing powerhouse.

Investments like these are part of the Victorian Government's record \$45 billion support for rural and regional Victoria over the past decade. Our investments mean more locals have jobs close to home and regional economies are supported to thrive. For more information, visit [rdv.vic.gov.au](http://rdv.vic.gov.au).

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Victoria Jaclyn Symes**

*"This important expansion will nearly double Thomas Foods' production capacity and provide a range of employment opportunities for the people of Stawell and the broader Grampians community."*

### **Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jacinta Ermacora**

*"Thomas Foods' Stawell abattoir plays an important role in Victoria's vibrant food and fibre sector, and it's wonderful to see the completion of a project that means more local jobs and more access to the global food market."*

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**Quote attributable to Tom Davies, Chief Operating Officer of Thomas Foods International**

*“Thomas Foods welcomes the completion of this milestone project in what is a key region of our operations. We extend our gratitude to the Victorian Government for their funding support towards the development of cold storage facilities, which significantly enhances our capacity on site and the creation of local job opportunities.”*