

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Community Sport

Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Wednesday, 10 December 2025

VICTORIA GIVES VIRTUAL FENCING THE GREEN LIGHT

Victorian cattle producers can now harness cutting-edge technology to guide and contain livestock without physical fences, with the Allan Labor Government approving the safe use of virtual fencing.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence today announced the new regulations under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*, giving farmers access to virtual fencing and herding technology.

These new regulations come with safeguards and clear requirements, providing farmers with smarter tools to manage livestock with precision, boost productivity, and keep animal welfare a top priority.

Victorian manufacturers can now apply to Agriculture Victoria for their virtual fencing technology to be approved, with the first products expected to be approved in early February 2026. The approval conditions will include requirements for record keeping and reporting.

Farmers adopting this technology, which uses collars with GPS and wireless technology to control livestock without physical fences, will need to comply with certain requirements – using approved technologies, completing manufacturer training, maintaining a physical boundary fence or barrier and ensuring collars are checked regularly.

The new regulations were developed following engagement with industry, manufacturers, researchers and animal welfare groups on virtual fencing to better understand the impacts of this technology on animal welfare.

A demonstration of virtual fencing technology took place at Agriculture Victoria's Ellinbank SmartFarm in Gippsland between July 2024 and May 2025 – giving farmers a better understanding close to home.

Dairy cattle were fitted with solar-powered smart collars that use audio, vibration and electronic cues to contain animals within a virtual fence and guide them to areas of the farm via a mobile phone app. The system also allowed farm staff to monitor the cows' location, health and reproductive status.

The trial demonstrated how virtual fencing technology can enhance livestock management, enabling farmers to monitor animal health and location in real time. Cows adapted well to the system, with milk yields remaining consistent with expectations.

Electronic collars for livestock species other than cattle can only be used when a scientific licence has been granted under the POCTA Act, and the use is approved by an Animal Ethics Committees.

For more information visit, agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/animal-welfare-victoria/livestock-management-and-welfare/livestock-confinement

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"We're striking the right balance between farm productivity and animal welfare, and it's clear that this technology provides great on-farm benefits for farmers across the state."

"We've ensured we have appropriate safeguards in place to protect animal welfare, while enabling innovation. These new regulations and permit system provide the framework to achieve this."

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