

Media Release

The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC

Deputy Leader of the Government in the
Legislative Council
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Resources



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Friday, 28 February 2019

TOMATOES RIPE FOR THE PICKING IN CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS

More tomatoes will be making their way to supermarket shelves and wholesalers across Victoria thanks to a \$7 million expansion of Mortlock Hydroponics' Carisbrook Glasshouse.

Minister for Agriculture and Regional Development Jaclyn Symes today visited Mortlock Hydroponics to announce a grant towards the expansion from the Andrews Labor Government's *Regional Jobs Fund*.

The project will see Mortlock Hydroponics increase its glasshouse from three hectares to six, doubling its annual cherry and truss tomato production from 1,350 tonnes to 2,700 tonnes per year.

Mortlock Hydroponics has been operating for 20 years and is a major employer in the Central Goldfields region with 55 full-time equivalent staff.

Once the expansion is complete, the company is expected to create an additional 40 full-time equivalent jobs in the areas of packing, pruning, pollinating, winding, picking and de-leafing.

The increased operations are also slated to have flow on benefits to the local supply chain through logistics and transport, packaging, seedlings and fertilisers.

The expansion, due for completion in early 2021, comes as demand for glasshouse-grown tomatoes from retailers increases because of longer shelf life, consistency of supply and innovation through new tomato varieties.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture and Regional Development Jaclyn Symes

"It is fantastic to see this family-owned business which has been operating and providing jobs in the central Goldfields region for 20 years, position themselves for major growth and go from strength to strength."

"The demand for glasshouse-grown tomatoes from retailers is booming – they last longer on the shelves and are more consistent in quality, and we're proud to be helping Mortlock Hydroponics double their production and create 40 new local jobs in the process."

Quote attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jaala Pulford

"This project is not only great news for tomato lovers but a big win for local jobs and everyone along the supply chain."

Quote attributable to Mortlock Hydroponics General Manager Shane Mortlock

"The backing from the Victorian Government has given us the confidence to expand our family business, ensuring we continue to maintain our competitiveness as a major tomato supplier across Victoria."