

# 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

Thursday, 20 June 2019



**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

## UNITED NATIONS AWARD FOR VICTORIAN RABBIT PROGRAM

The Andrews Labor Government's Victorian Rabbit Action Network is set to be recognised with a prestigious United Nations Public Service award.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes today announced the program, delivered by Agriculture Victoria, will receive an award for 'delivering more inclusive and equitable services' on United Nations Public Service Day.

The program has taken a long-term, collaborative approach across generations, right across the state, to manage one of Victoria's most invasive species, the European rabbit.

Rabbit Action Network community members Gerald Leach and Dr. Kathryn Rodden, along with Agriculture Victoria program manager Michael Reid will travel to Baku, Azerbaijan, this week to accept the award at a ceremony on UN Public Service Day.

The award was contested by programs from Europe, the United States, United Kingdom, Canada and New Zealand, and Victoria's program was successful for bringing together a diverse range of perspectives from those affected by rabbits - including land managers, farmers, scientists, government officials and the wider community.

Since its establishment, the network has reached 6,000 people, covering more than 2.5 million hectares of public and private land. By the end of 2019, it is expected to have engaged 10,000 people.

The network's strength is providing a forum for individuals to highlight their key concerns, addressing the complex nature of the rabbit problem, and identifying location and community-specific solutions.

Agriculture Victoria is now looking at how this model of shared decision-making and responsibility can be applied to managing other invasive species and issues across the state.

For more information about the Victorian Rabbit Action Network, visit <https://rabbitaction.com>.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

*"Congratulations to Agriculture Victoria and the Victorian Rabbit Action Network on this prestigious award, showing that our agricultural sector is among the most innovative and successful in the world."*

*"It's inspiring to see a strong partnership between government and community tackling such a complex issue that affects both our agriculture sector and the broader environment."*

*"Rabbits don't follow fence lines and boundaries, and neither does the Victorian Rabbit Action Network – we're making sure community, industry and government work effectively together to develop long-term, sustainable approaches and solutions."*