

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

Monday, 24 June 2019



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

REGIONAL WOMEN LEADING THE WAY

The Andrews Labor Government is encouraging women making a difference in regional Victoria to apply for a place on the Victorian Rural Women's Network to develop their leadership skills and advocate for country communities.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes today launched the 2020 intake of the Victorian Rural Women's Network Leadership and Mentoring Program, with Member for Macedon Mary-Anne Thomas, at a cattle farm in Fern Hill, the home of 2019 participant Caroline Thomson.

The \$500,000 program provides funded places on a range of leadership programs targeted to rural Victorian women connected to agriculture. The programs offer opportunities for training along the many stages of the leadership journey.

The Victorian Rural Women's Network is partnering with four established leadership training providers to deliver these prestigious programs, which have already supported thirteen outstanding Victorian women since the program launched in August 2018.

Caroline Thomson is a Senior Agribusiness and Food Manager at ANZ, and as part of this year's Leadership and Mentoring Program received a funded place on The Observership Program, for emerging leaders to position to become future board directors.

The Leadership and Mentoring program, alongside other initiatives including the AgriFutures™ Rural Women's Award and the Invisible Farmer Project, is part of the Labor Government's ongoing support for rural and regional women.

For more information and to apply for a place, see the Victorian Rural Women's Network website at extensionaus.com.au/VRWNetwork/home.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

"Initiatives like the Leadership and Mentoring program are making sure women continue to play a vital role in driving the success Victoria's \$14.1 billion agriculture sector."

"One of the best parts of my job is meeting the many active and engaged woman doing exciting things in agriculture, I'd love for them to take the opportunity to be part of the program, build leadership skills and meet other brilliant regional women."

"When you connect ag-women from around the state – amazing things happen."

Quote attributable to Member for Macedon Mary-Anne Thomas

"We're really proud of the work our government is doing to make sure rural and regional women are empowered to step up and lead their businesses, communities and Victorian agriculture on the world stage."