

The Hon Gayle Tierney MP  
Minister for Agriculture  
Minister for Higher Education  
Minister for Training and Skills



## AGRICULTURE PORTFOLIO

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee

6 June 2023



Energy,  
Environment  
and Climate Action

The past year saw Victoria's agriculture sector continue to lead the nation in food and fibre exports, and remain as the backbone of our regional communities.



**\$17.5 billion**

gross value of agriculture production in 2020-21



**150,100 jobs**

in agricultural production and food manufacturing



**21,600**

agricultural business



**11.4 M ha**

of productive land used



**26%**

of total national food and fibre exports in 2021-22

**Biosecurity:** Protected industry from serious biosecurity risks including Varroa mite, and invested \$33m to boost EAD response preparedness.

**Floods and storms:** Helped farming communities recover from natural disasters with grants and technical and decision-making support.

**Legislative reform:** Modernised agricultural regulatory frameworks, giving farmers new protective tools against trespass and biosecurity threats.

**Climate action:** Partnered with the sector to demonstrate its commitment to ambitious action on climate change.

**Exports:** Supported Victoria's record food and fibre export value of \$17.9b, a 29% increase, through in-market and domestic programs.





## ***Backing Victoria's world-class producers***

Supporting and growing Victoria's producers and helping to promote their world-class food and beverage products to more consumers, at home and overseas: \$31.2 million package.

- \$3m within this package to improve farm safety and farmer wellbeing and back the vital work of the National Centre for Farmer Health.



## ***Protecting Victoria from biosecurity threats***

Further investment in biosecurity to ensure the system continues to grow stronger so that Victoria can effectively respond to evolving and dynamic threats: \$17.5 million package.



## ***Implementing animal welfare commitments***

Continuing to invest in animal welfare through community grants and modernised regulations to enhance industry reputation and meet community and trade partner expectations: \$9.5 million package.

The Victorian Government is providing record investment to support the native forestry transition and promote the state's nation-leading plantation sector.



**24%**

Victoria's share of national log harvest volume in 2020-21 (21% plantation, 3% native)



**\$875m**

Government funding for forestry exceeds this figure since 2019.



**383,000 ha**

Size of Victoria's plantation sector, representing 22% of the national estate



**\$388m**

Transition support for timber workers, industry, communities in this Budget alone



**\$120m**

The single largest investment in plantation establishment in Victoria's history

## *Timber worker, industry and community support*

- **\$388 million** in this Budget for targeted transition support services includes:
  - Sawmill Voluntary Transition Package to ensure all impacted mills can access packages to switch sectors or source alternative supply.
  - Forest and land management works package to secure the critical skills of forest contractor crews (Environment portfolio).
  - Supply Chain Resilience Package for impacted supply chain businesses to make informed decisions about their future (Industry and Innovation portfolio).
  - Support payments to stabilise the industry and keep workers retained and paid following the Supreme Court's decision last November, including for Opal Maryvale Mill workers.
- Transition support programs already underway through broader investment of more than **\$875 million** are being fast-tracked, scaled up and enhanced including:
  - A boosted worker support package to provide impacted forestry workers including case management, support payments, and free training.
  - Long-term programs to support local economies to diversify into new and expanding industries.
  - Assistance for timber businesses to transition to plantation fibre.





## The Victorian Government is supporting the agriculture and forestry sector to:

- **Deliver a managed transition** for native timber workers, businesses and communities.
- **Recover** from natural disasters.
- **Protect** against rising biosecurity threats.
- **Modernise** to maintain the sector's competitive advantage.
- **Adapt** to new challenges and opportunities.
- **Grow** to achieve target of \$20 billion in exports by 2030.

