

# Jaclyn Symes MP

**Minister for Agriculture**

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee Hearing  
*2019-20 Victorian Budget*

12 June 2019

# Agriculture is the backbone of our rural and regional communities



**90,000**

Victorians employed  
in agriculture



**40+**

Agriculture Victoria  
locations



**\$14.1b**

Value of Victoria's  
food and fibre  
exports in 2017-18



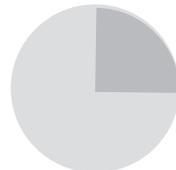
**40%**

Increase in Victoria's  
food and fibre exports  
since 2011-12



**5.9%**

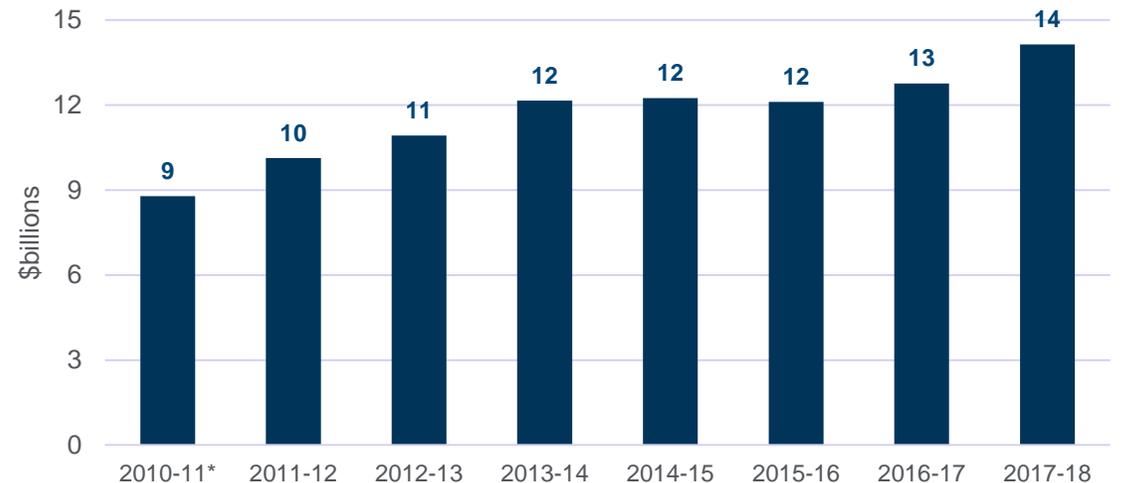
Contribution of food  
and fibre products to  
Gross State Product



**27%**

Australian food and  
fibre exports are  
from Victoria

Value of Victorian food and fibre exports (\$b)



# ACHIEVEMENTS – SOME RECENT HIGHLIGHTS



## WE HAVE DELIVERED FIRST-RATE **BIOSECURITY** AND **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

- Agriculture Victoria has provided immediate and effective responses to several **biosecurity threats**. This has included:
  - The detection of a hive of **bees with Varroa mite** found in a crate of industrial equipment unloaded at the Port of Melbourne;
  - The detection and management of **Salmonella Enteritidis** in Victorian poultry; and
  - The management of an **anthrax outbreak** in Northern Victoria.
- Agriculture Victoria has helped communities prevent, prepare, respond and recover from **emergencies**. This has included:
  - Responding to the **Wangaratta flood event** on 12-13 December 2018 through support to farm businesses; and
  - Responding to the **Gippsland fires** in March 2019 by undertaking animal welfare and agricultural loss and damage assessment on 288 agriculture and lifestyle properties.



## WE ARE LEADING THE WAY ON **ELECTRONIC IDENTIFICATION** AND **DIGITAL AGRICULTURE**

- **Electronic Identification** (EID) of sheep and goats supports market access and allows livestock to be traced in the event of an animal disease emergency.
- The uptake has been very strong:
  - Sheep processors have scanned and uploaded information on over **5.3 million sheep** to the NLIS database since 31 December 2017.
  - Saleyards have uploaded information on over **2.7 million** sheep to the database.
  - Producers have purchased more than **21.4 million** electronic ear tags.
- The Government is also implementing its **Digital Agriculture Strategy**, including:
  - On-farm **Internet of Things** trials;
  - The **Demonstration of Agricultural Technology Applications Farm project**, which showcases digital technology in the grains sector; and
  - Five **SmartFarms** that apply advanced agriculture technologies across Victoria.



## WE ARE TAKING ACTION ON **CLIMATE CHANGE**

- Victoria is leading a **coordinated national approach to climate change** for the agriculture sector and is a **world leader in reducing emissions from livestock** through research and innovation.
- The Government's support for the sector to adapt to climate change includes:
  - The \$30 million **Agriculture Energy Investment Plan** to support farming businesses to reduce their energy costs and emissions;
  - Dairy projects to **improve the drought tolerance** of pastures;
  - **Breeding research** for higher heat tolerance in animals; and
  - **Innovations to help grain farmers** adapt to a changing climate.

# 2018-19 Budget initiatives

## Strengthening Victoria's biosecurity system

\$142.5m over four years,  
\$30.2m ongoing



## Taking our local produce to the world

\$10.2m over four years



## Rehoming pets and supporting low-cost veterinary clinics

\$3.3m over four years



## Supporting recreational hunters & sporting shooters

\$6.0m over four years



\* Agriculture output component

## Rural Finance Counselling Services

\$1.7m over one year



## Master planning for the Royal Melbourne Showground

\$1.5m over one year



## Delivering for Regional and Rural Victoria Program

Making our farms safer: \$3.0m over four years

Reducing regulatory burden on our dairy industry: \$0.5m over two years

Young Farmer Scholarships: \$0.5m over four years



# \$470.9 million

Total expenditure in the Agriculture portfolio in 2019/20

# BIOSECURITY

The 2019/20  
Budget is  
strengthening  
Victoria's  
biosecurity system



**There are increasing  
biosecurity risks and  
demand for services**

- Biosecurity is fundamental to Victoria's economy, environment and community

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- Increased trade and market access requirements are increasing demand for biosecurity services

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- Growing investigations and detections of pests and disease – an outbreak could cost the economy tens of billions of dollars



**\$142.5 million over four years  
(\$30.2 million ongoing) for  
increased biosecurity capabilities**

- 150 specialist biosecurity staff in regional and outer metropolitan areas

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- Support trade and market access by helping to meet demand from export markets for quality assurance

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- Increased engagement with industry and community to strengthen Victoria's biosecurity system

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- Ensure Victoria is better prepared to manage biosecurity risks, minimising impacts on the agricultural sector and the community

## AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS

The 2019/20 Budget is supporting growth in agricultural exports



**\$10.2 million will support grants for small-scale producers**

- The Victorian Government has set a target to grow food and fibre exports to \$20 billion per annum by 2030

- To help us achieve this target, the 2019-20 Budget has committed \$10 million over four years for grants of up to \$200,000

- This will help small-scale and craft food and beverage producers to promote and grow their businesses, creating jobs and increasing agricultural exports



**This is in addition to \$5.2 million to boost wine exports**

- In addition, \$5 million has been committed over four years to boost Victorian wine exports

- This funding will support annual wine symposiums, a wine showcase, trade missions to key export markets, international marketing campaigns and export training for winemakers

## CLIMATE CHANGE

We will continue to support the agriculture sector to adapt to climate change



### Agriculture Victoria is supporting farmers to manage emissions

- Agriculture Victoria works with industry to improve livestock and crop management decisions

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- This includes projects and research to identify practices that reduce methane emissions and improve the drought tolerance of crops and pastures

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- Our \$30 million Agriculture Energy Investment Plan also supports Victorian farmers to improve energy efficiency and support energy generation capacity



### We will uphold our reputation as a leader in reducing emissions

- Agriculture Victoria is researching the genomics of pastures and methane-producing livestock, low methane feed supplements and improved farm management

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- We are leading a project for the Agricultural Ministers' Forum to develop a national approach to help the sector adapt to climate change and manage emissions

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- We will streamline dairy applications for our Agriculture Energy Investment Plan, and expect an increase in applications through the second half of 2019

## ANIMAL WELFARE

The 2019/20 Budget is supporting our commitment to animal welfare



The 2019/20 Budget provides \$3.3 million for shelters and vet clinics

- \$1 million will be available through the Animal Welfare Grants program to support animal shelters and registered foster carers to purchase equipment or upgrade or expand their services
- \$2 million in grants will also be available for not-for-profit and community vet clinics for equipment, upgrades and expansions, and to support the establishment of new low-cost or not-for-profit clinics in areas of need



This will complement our ongoing work to break the puppy farms business model

- From 1 July, the Pet Exchange Register (PER) will enable greater traceability of all advertised dogs and cats
- On 10 April 2018 we introduced new schemes for dog breeder approvals, voluntary registration for foster carers and introduced an animal sale permit system.
- We are also educating people on living safely with pets through our Responsible Pet Ownership Program, which has reached 86,764 children; and information for new parents.