

Candidate Name:

Party:

Electorate:

1. What local infrastructure priorities will you support to help benefit farming business/communities in the electorate you are running for?

RESPONSE:

2. How will you (or your party) address the agriculture labour crisis and support farmers in getting the workers they need on-farm?

Background: *Australia's agricultural industry is experiencing widespread labour challenges which threaten the viability of many farming businesses. These challenges have been compounded by COVID-19, and border restrictions which have severed access to overseas workers. Labour shortages result in produce going uncultivated and unpicked; productivity being choked; and the viability of farm businesses being challenged. The next Australian Government must act urgently to attract domestic and overseas workers to end this crisis.*

RESPONSE:

3. How will you (or your party) work to safeguard Australia’s farm sector from future supply chain disruptions?

Background: *Agricultural supply chains stretch deep into global markets, enabling Australian farmers to sell their produce across the world. Recent turbulence in the global economy has disrupted many of these supply chains. Export and critical input supply chains, such as fuel, fuel additives, agricultural chemicals and fertilisers, almost came to a grinding halt in 2021. These near misses threatened to have a profound impact on Australia’s economy and society. Action is needed as Australia transitions to a ‘new normal’ for international trade and supply chains. Australia needs a collective government-industry civil society approach to establishing robust contingencies for the next inevitable supply chain disruption, and a strategy for domestic manufacturing strategy for highly-vulnerable critical inputs.*

RESPONSE:

4. How will you (or your party) support farmers to access the telecommunications services needed to grow their businesses?

Background: *Australia’s farm sector has a vision to be Australia’s next \$100 billion dollar industry by 2030. Achieving this vision requires significant innovation – including in how we connect regional Australians to critical telecommunications services. Economic modelling has found that adoption of digital agriculture can add an estimated \$20.3 billion to farm output, and lift the Australian economy by an estimated 1.5% (\$24.6 billion) by 2030. Of course, realising this potential requires adequate connectivity for farms – regardless of how remote they are.*

RESPONSE:

5. How will you (or your party) arm farmers with the information and tools needed to respond to a changing climate and to participate in carbon markets?

Background: *Climate change will play a major role in Australian agriculture's next decade, exacerbating climate risk while creating diverse new income opportunities. The VFF supports an economy-wide aspiration of net zero emissions by 2050 provided:*

- *there are identifiable and economically viable pathways to net neutrality, including impacts from inputs such as energy; and*
- *Commonwealth and State legislation is effective, equitable and helps deliver on-ground programs that benefit agricultural interests and do not create unnecessary regulatory impediments.*

RESPONSE:

How will you (or your party) respond to the needs of farming communities in dealing with the Murray-Darling Basin Plan?

Background: *The Murray-Darling Basin Plan continues to challenge the farm sector. After a decade of implementation, farmers are fatigued, Basin communities are weary, many struggle to keep up as implementation remains vexed and there does not appear to be any end in sight. Governments must all work together to provide farmers with certainty and confidence, adapt the plan and develop alternative solutions. Basin communities must not be faced with the prospect of more water buybacks. A pathway beyond 2024 must be articulated, utilising the pathways identified in the Productivity Commission report. Appropriate and balanced engagement with affected communities, respecting farmers' rights, and developing collaborative and supported outcomes remain key tasks for the process - especially in the context of constraints and Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanisms (SDLAM).*

RESPONSE: