

# Media Release



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## BUDGET BOOSTS AGRICULTURE TO LEAD ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) welcomes the focus on agriculture in this year's Federal Budget and says the budget measures will better equip agriculture to help lead Australia's economic recovery.

VFF President David Jochinke said farmers were generally satisfied with key spending commitments to help enable young Australians to work in agriculture and important water infrastructure spend, but is disappointed the Murray Basin Rail Project has been neglected.

"At a time of great uncertainty and instability across Australia, agriculture continues to be an industry for growth as demonstrated by this commitment in the Budget."

"We applaud the \$17.4 million invested to provide \$6k grants to help enable workers to immediately relocate to regional areas to fill the estimated 26 thousand vacant jobs."

"It's good news for farmers and the industry with the investment for Australians to pursue careers in agriculture and the wage subsidy for employers to help employ young unemployed workers on farms."

"Farmers will no doubt welcome the \$50 million in funding for the popular Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme, but for farmers to benefit the Victorian Government must match the federal funding."

"The single most important asset to farmers is water and we're pleased to see the \$2 billion commitment in grants to build new pipelines, weirs and dams."

The VFF says while funding to boost regional telecommunications is welcome, this needs to be the start of further substantial funding for the regions.

"Regional communications and connectivity is an essential service and an enormous issue in the country."

"Issues such as lack of phone coverage and internet availability is a big barrier facing modern agriculture that the government must fix."

The VFF also is disappointed at the persistent disregard for the Murray Basin Rail Project and continues to call for the eagerly awaited business case to be released.

"For the Murray Basin Rail Project to miss out on funding is incredibly disappointing."

"The onus is now on the Victorian Government to show leadership and commit to funding the project as promised as we enter its sixth year of construction."

“The Victorian Government has found billions of dollars to fund cost overruns for metro projects, so we are disappointed that they did not put a proposal to the Federal Government meeting the normal 80/20 infrastructure funding split,” Mr Jochinke said.

**Other key budget announcements:**

- \$328 million congestion busting package for agricultural exporters;
- \$1.5 billion Modern Manufacturing Package, including a focus of food and beverage and tackling supply chain vulnerabilities;
- \$36.6 million to continue the statutory review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act;
- Confirmation of \$250.7 million for fuel security aimed at increasing onshore diesel storage by 40%
- \$269.6 million for the Murray Darling Communities investment package;
- \$95.4 million for further soil carbon research and methodology;
- \$31.5 million to improve ag vet chem access and approvals;
- Expanded instant asset write-off scheme.

**ENDS**

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