

Media Release



16 September 2020

Regional Victoria primed to lead economic revival

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) says regional Victoria is ideally positioned to help lead the state out of the current economic woes and is asking for both the State and Federal Governments to enable the thinking and policy needed to support growth.

VFF President David Jochinke said despite the challenges agriculture and the regions continue to face, regional Victoria has the opportunity to lead the state's economic recovery as COVID-19 restrictions ease.

"As farmers, we're still awaiting the Agriculture Workers' Code to be implemented and have very real concerns of the impact on our livestock industry in the midst of restrictions placed on our meat processing facilities."

"We do however have a once in a generation opportunity to revive regional Victoria and help lead the state from its economic woes."

"Of course our health must always remain our top priority and we need to ensure we continue practising COVID-safe measures, but we also need to look forward to the future," Mr Jochinke said.

The VFF is calling for a change in government thinking and policy to enable the regions to be a vehicle for economic growth and genuine investment in critical infrastructure.

"Regional Victoria is in a much more advanced stage of COVID recovery than Melbourne. Now is the opportunity for governments to invest in the regions to help power Victoria's economic recovery," Mr Jochinke said.

"There's an undeniable city and country divide in infrastructure and services such as roads, rail, telecommunications, health and education."

"If we can get commitment from government to deliver a standard for all Victorians, the liveability of the regions will attract community and economic growth."

"Our message to the Victorian and Federal governments is the regions can't wait for Melbourne to catch up. The time to entice growth in the regions and help us recover is now."

"COVID-19 has shown the resilience of regional Victoria. The upside of getting the regions up and running initially is enormous, not just for agriculture, but for Victoria as a whole."

"The longer we wait to do this, the longer the road we have to economic recovery."

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Media Contacts:

David Jochinke, VFF President, 0427 834 524

Ryan Moloney, VFF, 0400 874 589

Farrer House 24-28 Collins Street Melbourne 3000

Ph. 1300 882 833 | Fax. 03 9207 5500 | E-mail. vff@vff.org.au | www.vff.org.au