



Media Release

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Horticulture growers to be surveyed on labour challenges

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) Horticulture Group will be visiting the Sunraysia irrigation district next week to survey growers on labour challenges in Australia's horticulture industry.

"Despite years of lobbying, there have been no meaningful improvements to the labour challenges that undermine the horticulture industry," said Ms Emma Germano, VFF Horticulture Group President.

"Both sides of government continue to claim there is insufficient evidence to support an agriculture visa or other effective solutions.

"We hope to use the first-hand accounts and data we gather from Sunraysia growers as a case-study to take to Government," said Ms Germano.

The VFF is seeking growers of all commodities and sizes from the Mildura, Robinvale, Red Cliff and Merbein irrigation districts to complete the survey. Growers do not need to be a member of the VFF to participate.

Ms Emma Germano, Ms Alana Pittard, VFF Horticulture Manager, and the VFF Industrial Relations team will be meeting growers on farm to complete the survey from Tuesday 5 February to Monday 11 February 2019.

"We have chosen the Sunraysia region for the survey because it is experiencing some of the greatest challenges in labour in Victoria. Once the survey is complete, we believe Sunraysia should be used as a pilot region for an agriculture visa.

"We know growers are frustrated by the lack of options to improve the horticulture labour force, so we hope growers in Sunraysia will come forward to participate in the survey and support our efforts to change the system," said Ms Germano.

Growers can arrange a time to complete the anonymous survey by contacting Ms Alana Pittard, VFF Horticulture Manager, on 0400 813 770 or apittard@vff.org.au.

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About the VFF

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is dedicated to representing the interests of farmers and making a positive difference to their businesses and communities. We strive to create an environment for our members, our farmers, that enables profitable, safe, sustainable production to ensure an enduring social licence in a community that respects and values the sector.