

Media Release



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Victoria's spring lamb processing reaches critical junction

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) Livestock Group is warning Victoria's spring lamb processing is at a critical crossroad and is calling for the Victorian Government to ease processor workforce restrictions as part of this Sunday's COVID-19 recovery roadmap.

VFF Livestock Group President Leonard Vallance said Victoria produces almost half of Australia's sheep and lamb meat and there are currently concerns about the viability of both processors and producers.

"Farmers have battled bushfire, drought and now COVID-19."

"Many producers were looking forward to one of the best seasons in years, but now face an uncertain immediate future as the spring peak approaches."

"There is an urgent need for a sensible, risk-based approach to evaluating processing facilities."

"Some processing facilities already have the infrastructure and the internal procedure capabilities to implement COVID safe practises. We're calling for these facilities to operate at least at 80 per cent capacity to manage the influx of spring lambs," Mr Vallance said.

The proposed switch from a blanket approach to a risk-based strategy based on individual processing facilities would help provide producers with a level of certainty during the peak season.

"We have producers who receive their yearly pay check from large consignments of lamb in the spring time who are anxiously waiting to see a commitment to work with industry."

"Farmers just want to continue farming at the end of the day and are confident they can do so in a COVID safe way," Mr Vallance said.

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