

Media Release



16 June 2021

VFF WELCOMES AG VISA BREAKTHROUGH

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) has today welcomed reports the Federal Government will introduce an agriculture specific visa.

The visa will provide Australian farms access to workers from the UK in addition to the ten ASEAN nations. VFF President Emma Germano said farmers had called for and been promised such a visa for too long.

“This has been a long time coming and is a huge breakthrough for industry. The labour shortages we have faced in the past 18 months are well known but broader issues with labour supply and quality have been ongoing without a solution for years.”

Details on how the visa will work are yet to be released but the VFF says that industry must be consulted to ensure it is fit-for-purpose.

“In addition to its original intent the visa will also now need to replace the more than 10,000 UK backpackers that will no longer be required to complete 88 days of farm work under the deal struck in the Aus-UK FTA,” Ms Germano said.

The visa will not only need to address labour shortages in the horticulture industry but also skilled and unskilled shortages across the agricultural industries.

“Labour shortages are being experienced across every agriculture industry sector. From milkers, livestock farm hands, pickers, packers, machinery drivers; everyone is having trouble finding labour,” Ms Germano said.

“Right now we need smart policy solutions for a wicked human capital problem and I hope this decision opens the door to a resolution.”

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