

Strategic Plan 2021-26



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Foreword

Evolving and modernising the VFF

June 2020 was a moment for significant reflection for the VFF.

Our members told us a few fundamental facts:

- Our primary purpose is to advocate for farmers and to lobby government on behalf of farmers
- Most of the challenges our members face on farm are common across most types of agriculture, regardless of farm size, regardless of region
- That it was time to reflect on the organisation and plot a better way forward.

At the heart of the feedback was the need for the VFF to be the uniting voice for Victorian farmers – to represent and support our members.

We must improve our services to members, through more effective, targeted and relevant communication and by making our achievements clearer.

Better representation involves gathering the diversity of thoughts and opinions of our members and our community and working towards common ground whenever we can.

Better representation also means encouraging all farmers to be members and to actively participate in the VFF – regardless of what you farm, your age, gender or philosophy.

We have a proud and strong heritage that dates back to 1879. Today's Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) was formed in 1979 and is the voice of Victorian farmers and rural communities helping to create a sustainable and socially responsible agricultural industry connecting with all Victorians.

Our mission will always be to represent, protect and progress Victorian farmers' interests. To do this to the best of our ability, our focus for the next few years will be to

- **Foster a connected and engaged farming community** - the voice of solidarity of the Victorian Ag industry, a community where we find connection and support
- **Use our resources responsibly** - getting the best return on our human capital and financial resources

- **Proactively advocate for Victorian farmers** – connecting with all current and potential stakeholders for solid outcomes for farmers and the supply chain
- **Evolve and modernise the organisation** - in culture, governance and advocacy

A clear, dynamic plan underpinned by accountability to our members and to each other is essential. This 2021-2026 Strategic Plan defines our way forward.

The team we put in place will deliver our plan. The organisational structure has been re-designed to reflect the four key areas identified to deliver on what you have told us.

You said that advocating for farmers was at the heart of our purpose. The new structure delivers on this feedback with a unified farmer engagement team, a strengthened policy team alongside a dedicated promotions and communications team with governance support to ensure we are not just talking about change but effecting it.



Emma Germano
President



Vision

A secure farming future –
for Victoria and for generations
to come.



Mission

We are the voice of Victorian agriculture: we protect and progress farmers' interests.



Who are we and what do we do for Victoria?



13.1
billion
contribution to
Victoria's economy

23%
of Australia's total
gross value of
agriculture



43%
of Australia's sheep
and lamb meat



62%
of Australia's
milk



18%
of Australia's
winter grain
production



32%
of Australia's
horticultural products



23%
of Australia's chicken
meat production



24%
of Australia's
egg production



60%
of Australia's
flower production



29%
of Australia's
wool
production

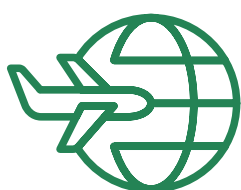


21%
of Australia's pig
meat production



92,000
jobs in agriculture

EXPORTS



\$11.4 billion

in food exports with main markets being
China, USA, Japan, New Zealand and
Indonesia



PILLAR 1

Engagement and culture *(engaged, diverse people and culture)*

- A stronger more engaged farmer community
- Attract and retain young diverse farmers
- Provide support and representation for farmers in need
- Connect with the non-farming community
- Attract, develop and retain passionate and effective staff



PILLAR 2

Financial sustainability *(effective use of financial resources)*

- Establish corporate industry partnerships delivering member benefits
- Consolidate service offering for our members
- Maximise investment portfolio
- Deliver valuable and impactful projects that add value to farmers



PILLAR 3

Advocacy *(one advocacy voice for all Victorian farmers)*

- Ensure resourcing reflects our strategic objectives
- Streamline and digitise policy and advocacy
- Initiate core campaigns
- Stronger industry stakeholder relationships become modern and progressive in our advocacy strategies



PILLAR 4

Governance *(modern and agile corporate governance)*

- Increasing transparency and accountability
- Establish and communicate core values and ethics
- Diverse and professional Board, Committees and Councils
- Deliver outstanding customer service
- Establish best practice risk and governance culture and behaviours

What does success look like?

At the highest level, we will know we are delivering on our Mission if:

- We are financially supported by least 5000 Victorian farmers by 2026
- Our operating budget is in surplus by 2024
- We achieve at least 50% of Policy Council's key objectives each and every year
- Victorian farmers describe us as accountable, transparent, inclusive and effective.



Other key indicators of success



PILLAR 1

Engagement and culture

(engaged, diverse people and culture)

- More farmers actively support the VFF
- More farmers under 40 support the VFF
- Farmers enjoy participating in VFF activities and interact more with the VFF
- Members get great customer service from VFF
- People love working at VFF
- The community values Victorian farmers and farming businesses.
- Farmers are good employers
- Young people seek to work in Victorian farming businesses

How will we do this?

- Ensure value of VFF membership is clear and understood
- Improve relevance and appeal of VFF to younger farmers
- Increase farmer involvement in policy development and submissions
- Develop the next generation of agricultural leaders and succession plan for our Boards, Councils and Committees
- Focus on effective, appropriate and tailored communication with Victorian farmers
- Reinvigorate events, branches and gatherings
- Deliver timely and meaningful services and projects
- Initiate membership marketing campaigns
- Develop the VFF team through effective training and enhancing capacity
- Continue building understanding of farming with primary and secondary school students, consumers and metropolitan communities
- Positive promotion of agriculture and agricultural opportunities
- Seek regular feedback - from Victorian farmers, our members, staff and the community – and respond



PILLAR 2

Financial sustainability

(responsible use of financial resources)

- Protect and enhance our strong equity base.
- Increase commercial partnership base
- Improve operational efficiency
- Provide a strong value proposition to attract members
- Ensure best practice financial governance

How will we do this?

- Continue to develop commercial partnership offerings to benefit members
- Provide an attractive offering to attract more commercial partners
- Increase membership base to underpin the financial operating position
- Maximise investment returns
- Ensure assets are maintained to maximise returns
- Maintain stringent controls and process on expenditure
- Ensure efficient deployment of resources





PILLAR 3

Advocacy

(one voice for all Victorian farmers)

- Grass roots membership needs and concerns shape VFF policy and advocacy
- More Victorian farmers and members help develop policy.
- All levels of government seek input from VFF on policy issues.
- VFF policies are adopted by all levels of government.
- Victorian farmers supported in times of need
- Victorian farming businesses have the resources they need to operate successfully and safely year after year.

How will we do this?

- Continue to build and strengthen relationships across government and with like-minded organisations
- Develop more ways for members to be involved in policy development, including a member register of interests
- Develop advocacy capacity across the organisation and of our members
- Develop an accessible, responsive policy and submission process
- Improve accessibility of our policy submissions and positions
- Improve communication of advocacy activities and wins to members
- Make sure we are there when we are needed
- Refine emergency preparedness plans to enable rapid and effective response and coordination
- Ensure farmer friendly mental health services are available





PILLAR 4

Governance

(modern and agile corporate governance)

- VFF is an effective, contemporary farmer representative organisation
- The organisation's reputation and resources are protected
- Board, Councils and Committees include a variety of perspectives, backgrounds and experience.
- Board, Councils and Committees are effective
- Staff, Board and elected representatives have a strong reputation for ethical behaviour and demonstrate agreed values and behaviours

How will we do this?

- Values and behaviours embedded across the VFF
- Implement selection processes for elected officials that ensure required skills and experience
- Develop the next generation of agricultural leaders and succession plan for our Boards, Councils and Committees
- Implement best practice risk and governance framework
- Regularly review Board performance and procedures
- Improve transparency and accountability across the VFF
- Develop the VFF team through effective training and enhancing capacity
- Seek regular feedback - from members, staff and the community - and respond



It starts now

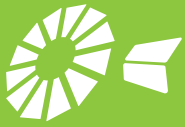
A clear and sharp focus is needed to ensure traction and progress towards our strategic objectives.

With this in mind, the VFF Board identified four key priorities for the first year of the Strategic Plan:

- Farming communities are stronger. Farmers participate in VFF activities.
- We use new advocacy strategies. We have strong stakeholder relationships.
- There are more interactions with the non-farming community.
- Resources support strategic objectives.

The VFF team have created detailed operating plans for the first year, a discipline that will be repeated every year. Our annual operating plans will be refined to reflect progress made and to ensure the VFF is dynamic and responsive to the current situation and our vision and mission.





Victorian
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