

Media Release



Victorian
Farmers
Federation

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AG VISA PROMISES TO SOLVE CRIPPLING FARM LABOUR HEADACHE

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) says today's announcement by the Federal Government to deliver a dedicated Agriculture specific Visa (Ag Visa) is the culmination of years of advocacy and has the potential to help solve Victoria's crippling workforce labour issues.

VFF President Emma Germano said the long called for and awaited Ag Visa will offer both short and longer term employment opportunities and a pathway to permanent residency.

"The design of the initiative will support increased seasonal workforce needs, such as those experienced in the grains and horticulture industry and support longer term opportunities and workforce needs in sectors like meat processing and our dairy and livestock industries."

"It's a critical step towards ensuring the tens of thousands of current and upcoming positions on Victorian farms are filled and our world-class produce isn't left rotting on the trees or unable to be harvested in the paddock."

"This outcome demonstrates how effective the collective voice of farmers can be on an issue that impacts every single industry of Victorian agriculture," Ms Germano said.

Ms Germano said the future of the scheme now hinges on employers maintaining high welfare standards and working with the state governments to streamline quarantine to make the Ag Visa a reality.

"The success of the agriculture visa relies on high standards to be met by sponsoring employers to ensure the welfare of visa holder."

"We look forward to working with all state governments to ensure adequate quarantine pathways and the Ag Visa works as it is intended."

"The immediate issue is clearly the movement of workers across state borders for the upcoming harvest season. We typically see the movement of workers from north to south over the coming months, especially in our horticulture industry. The current border restrictions is going to cause real issues," Ms Germano said.

The VFF would like thank Federal Minister for Agriculture Minister, David Littleproud for commitment to making the Ag Visa a reality and looks forwards to working together with all stakeholders to ensure it is in place as promised by 30 September 2021.

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