

Media Release



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Seasonal worker extension welcomed

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) welcomes the Victorian Government's extension of the Seasonal Worker Programme and Pacific Labour Scheme and says it's a small step towards filling the more than 24,000 workers needed for the upcoming peak season.

VFF President Emma Germano said the 1500 additional workers are sorely needed once again this year on Victorian farms.

"It's a small, positive step in the right direction towards filling our huge workforce labour holes."

"It's a drop in the ocean compared to what we need, but they will be very welcome for the growers who take them on."

"The fact that farmers are willing to pay \$2,000 each for their quarantine highlights how important these workers are," Ms Germano said.

Ms Germano said the focus must remain on governments delivering an urgently needed a quarantine plan for the immediate future.

"There's no hiding the fact that we still don't have the required quarantine facilities needed to host the numbers of worker our industry needs. We're more than 18 months into this pandemic and it's still no clearer if or when our governments will commit to providing a road map to COVID normal"

"We need a plan and we needed it yesterday. Our produce doesn't grow overnight, it takes months and months of forward planning and growers need to know well in advance if they'll have workers on hand to harvest produce," Ms Germano said.

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