



VFF WINS 2020-21

What have we done for you lately?

Over \$20m benefit to Victorian farmers this year alone!



February

Protecting Melbourne's Green Wedges & Ag Land submission

- Protecting the rights of peri-urban farmers

March

2021-22 Victorian State Budget submission;

- \$40 million to tackle pest plants and animals
- Ongoing funding to increase heavy vehicle access

Commonwealth commits to stop on-farm water recovery

- Following direct advocacy by the VFF, Federal Water Minister announced the closure of the Water Efficiency Program.
- The change will keep water in the consumptive pool and provide farmers with the certainty they need to plan for the future

April

Standing up for Northern Victorian farming communities

- VFF presented to the Senate Committee on the Murray Darling Basin Plan in Shepparton calling for removal for the 450GL, no water buybacks

May

Government confirms no current appetite to increase registration for older heavy vehicles;

- Potential \$20,000 registration price hike avoided

'Making our Farms Safer' team partners with St John Ambulance;

- Farmers can buy first aid kits at wholesale prices (up to 45% off discount)
- Saving of \$18 per kit

Murray Darling Basin legislative reform introduced in Parliament

- The National Party introduced legislation to scrap the 450GL and to stop buybacks following VFF advocacy.
- Whilst the legislation was ultimately defeated, this has put pressure on the Commonwealth Government to reform the Basin Plan.

June

EPA adjusts the livestock manure determination;

- No additional work or paperwork required
- \$1000 time-saving per farmer

Fended off Glenelg Shire rate hike

- Stopped Glenelg Shire's proposed removal of primary producer rate rebate.
- This would have seen the average farm rate bill increase by \$10,000.

Farm rates below the cap in 19 shires

- Average farm rates in 19 rural shires will remain below the rate cap of 1.5% for 2021-22 following VFF's advocacy - saving farmers over \$17 million collectively.
- Collaborating with councils to implement fair rate policies following success in Mansfield and Ararat.

Wage sheets sent to all VFF handbook subscribers;

- Tailored information reflecting current member subscriptions to various Modern Awards.

'Open Gate Conversations' initiative launched;

- Project aimed at providing transparency on how Victoria's food and fibre is produced;
- Goal is to address lack of community understanding about Victorian farming practices;

Making our Farms Safer team safety resources;

- Free one on one farm safety visits usually worth hundreds of dollars per visit; Value of \$300 per farmer
- Access to OHS manuals/ forms valued in the thousands of dollars;
- Invaluable, tailored farm safety advice to protect your family, workers and yourself;

August

Wimmera Road Train Extension

- VFF wins the establishment of a permitted road train network on key arterial roads throughout the Wimmera;



February

VFF helps overturn Bendigo's Pig Service Centre potential closure

- Centre now employing more staff than ever
- Working group formed with Ag Vic to ensure future operations

March

Agriculture deemed essential service amidst COVID restrictions

- Guidance for industry to ensure health directions compliance (especially for abattoirs)

June

Increased ag machinery and heavy vehicle access across South West Vic;

- On road machinery size increased from 3.7 metres up to 6.5 metres wide
- Access to 30 extra roads in Golden Plains Shire

On the spot fines recommendation for animal activist farm invasions accepted by Victorian Government (not yet implemented)

- Major roads incorporated in the network include the Calder Highway, Henty Highway, Western Highway and Borung Highway.

Defibrillators delivered to seven Victorian towns

- In conjunction with St John Ambulance, the VFF's 'Making our Farms Safer' team helped deliver 7 lifesaving defibrillators to remote/ at risk Victorian towns.
- Total value saved over \$17,500 or \$2,500 per recipient

Ag Visa to be delivered

- Federal Government promises to deliver long awaited Ag Visa after years of advocacy;
- Has the potential to help fix or solve our crippling farm labour shortage

August

A-double road train access extended on local roads in the Mildura Regional City Council;

- Increased freight haulage efficiency
- Lower transport costs from paddock to port

September

National Agriculture Worker Code adopted by National Cabinet;

- Farm workers exempt from State border closures
- Free movement of domestic workers during busy harvest period

Commonwealth Government commits to no further water buybacks in Murray Darling Basin

- Commitment came as a direct consequence of VFF's staunch opposition to water buybacks and our advocacy work.

December

Exemption approved for agricultural machinery to not require over-dimensional load permits when crossing railway lines

Saving of \$23.70 per permit per crossing

Hindmarsh & Loddon Shires amend local road access to grain receivable sites

- Increased access to key grain receivable facilities

Victorian Government commits to valuation averaging for local government rates

- Commitment to implement a valuation averaging mechanism for local government rates by 2022 as recommended by the VFF.

VFF Launches 'Kids to Ag' grant initiative

- More than 2,500 attended or approved to go on excursions
- 30+ farms and primary production sites involved

WHAT WE'RE CURRENTLY ADVOCATING ON

Nillumbik Shire Council's proposed glyphosate and barbed wire ban;

- VFF calling for Nillumbik Shire to reject these proposals;
- Highlighting barbed wire is used for safety purposes to ensure livestock stays off roads and glyphosate is approved by the APVMA (Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority);

Fair river camping rules;

- 12 month pilot at limited locations
- Protecting privacy (successfully decreased 28 day stay limit to 14 days, increased the 100m setback from dwellings to 200m & we're asking for access along closed or unused roads that transverse private property);
- Protecting the environment & biosecurity (No dogs or other pets, No vehicles, including motorbikes, allowing landholders to erect signs regarding private / public boundaries and biosecurity protocols);
- Protecting landholder safety (no guns, COVID Safe style registration of campers via the VFA app);
- Fair regulations (12 month review of regulations the opportunity for community consultation);

- Emergency access (camping should only be allowed where there is CFA access);
- Comprehensive Riverside camping fact sheet has been developed for members

Western Victoria Transmission Network Project;

- The VFF's preferred option is for the project to follow existing infrastructure corridors and public land to the greatest extent possible;
- Where private land must be crossed, then undergrounding should be the preferred transmission method and the route should limit its impact on farming systems to the greatest extent possible;

Local Government Rates

- Working with local and state government to reform the system so the rate cap is applied to farms.
- Advocating for an end to minimum Commonwealth grants for wealthy metropolitan councils, so extra funding is available to rural shires.

Murray Darling Basin Plan

- Calling on the Commonwealth Government to legislate its commitment to stop buybacks.
- Calling for the scrapping of the 450GL up water target.