

Media Release



Victorian
Farmers
Federation

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VFF CALLS FOR FOOD REP ON PANDEMIC COMMITTEE

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) has called on the Victorian Government to ensure there is a representative of the food production supply chain on the Independent Pandemic Management Advisory Committee.

VFF President Emma Germano said that the COVID-19 pandemic displayed the vulnerability of the food production supply chain to health orders and pandemic-induced market failure.

“We saw the hysteria that was created when people wrongly thought toilet paper was going to run out, imagine if fresh fruit and vegetables disappeared off shelves,” Ms Germano said.

Ms Germano said that we experienced restrictions to meat processing facilities and severe shortages of inputs and supplies such as labour, pallets and machinery parts.

“We escaped without significant food shortages this time round but our vulnerabilities were exposed.”

“The food production supply chain needs a seat at the table, recognising that without food, the health, wellbeing and security of Victorians is put at risk.”

“What we are saying may seem unlikely, but we are talking about legislation designed for operation in the most unlikely of circumstances,” Ms Germano said.

Ms Germano said that if food production was left out of the conversation, the consequences could be disastrous.

“We are talking crops not being planted or harvested, abattoirs and distribution centres shutting down and fresh food disappearing from supermarket shelves.”

“For the past two years food production has not been taken seriously by the Health Department and the highest levels of government. We need that to change.”

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