

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Agriculture

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change



Wednesday, 20 December, 2017

\$30 MILLION FOR FARMERS TO MANAGE ON FARM ENERGY

The Andrews Labor Government will invest \$30 million to help Victoria's farmers manage energy costs through improved efficiency and new technology.

Minister for Agriculture Jaala Pulford visited Boomaroo Nurseries in Lara today to launch the new Agriculture Energy Investment Plan.

The plan will help local farmers reduce energy costs, maintain competitiveness and create local jobs by providing on farm energy assessments, as well as grants to improve energy efficiency and install renewable energy systems.

The Victorian Renewable Energy Targets will ensure 25 per cent of the state's electricity generation comes from renewable sources by 2020, and increasing to 40 per cent by 2025.

These targets will cut the average cost of power for Victorians, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and importantly create new jobs.

The Agriculture Energy Investment Plan will start in 2018 and provides:

- \$5 million for energy efficiency assessments on farm
- \$20 million in grants to support farmers invest in energy efficiency and generation technology
- \$1.5 million to demonstrate energy efficiency and generation measures on farm
- \$2.5 million to link farmers and businesses to information, education resources and apps
- \$1 million in research to commercialise research for the farming sector.

In our initial consultation, the Victorian Farmers Federation informed us that cost, reliability and access were the key pain points for farmers. The On-Farm Energy Survey carried out by Agriculture Victoria provided the evidence to support an on-farm energy initiative.

The survey revealed that investment cost, the speed of technology change and uncertainty about implementation were preventing farmers from improving energy efficiency and pursuing alternative energy options.

The Plan is a partnership between primary producers, agricultural groups, Sustainability Victoria, educational groups and government, with an advisory group to be formed to advise on the investment plan's implementation.

The Agriculture Energy Investment Plan is funded by the Labor Government's \$200 million Agricultural Investment Jobs Fund, which supports projects that improve farm productivity, boost market access, grow exports and increase jobs.

To register your interest and learn more about the plan, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/agenergy

The Labor Government's Energy, Efficiency and Productivity Strategy establishes a tangible work program aimed at improving energy affordability, create jobs, encourage investment in new energy technologies and build a sustainable economy.

Victorian businesses are encouraged to take advantage of the full range of Government programs designed to help businesses manage their energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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Other programs to assist businesses reduce their energy costs and emissions include Boosting Business Productivity program and Better Commercial Buildings grants program.

To find out more about Victorian Energy Upgrades and other efficiency programs go to business.vic.gov.au

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaala Pulford

“Through input from the VFF, we’re working hard to better understand how to tackle on-farm energy consumption, cost structures and the barriers that prevent or discourage investment.”

“This plan will better prepare our agricultural sector for the future and reflects our determination to working with farmers to maintain a sustainable, adaptable and internationally competitive agriculture sector.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

“This plan will be delivered in partnership with Sustainability Victoria because renewable energy is key to Victoria’s future – to drive new investment, create jobs and cut electricity prices.”

“This is about working together to boost business productivity through energy efficiency upgrades and helping reduce energy costs on the farm.”