

Media Release

The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC

Deputy Leader of the Government in the
Legislative Council
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Resources



**DELIVERING
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Thursday, 29 August 2019

VICTORIAN HEMP INDUSTRY SET TO GROW

The Andrews Labor Government has convened a cross-party taskforce to investigate the industrial use of hemp and identify opportunities to grow the industry and create jobs for regional Victorians.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes today announced the new taskforce alongside Member for Northern Metropolitan Region Fiona Patten and Member for Mildura Ali Cupper, with support from Agriculture Victoria.

The Industrial Hemp Taskforce will engage with industry stakeholders, participants and research organisations to understand where the industry has potential, and whether regulations need to be amended to support growth.

The Victorian industry currently focuses on hemp seeds used for food, but the opportunities for hemp, which is more environmentally friendly and sustainable than many fibres, are endless.

The fibre has a variety of potential applications across a diverse range of products including textiles, bio-composite plastics, paper, automotive, construction, bio-fuel, oil and cosmetics – all of which will be examined by the taskforce.

The taskforce will focus strictly on the industrial use of hemp, rather than the therapeutic uses.

Demand for hemp as a food product has grown rapidly in Australia since it was included under the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code in 2017.

The taskforce will also look at the hemp industries in other jurisdictions for ideas and lessons that can be learned to help the Victorian industry grow – and will discuss their findings with their parliamentary colleagues and the industry before setting guidelines on how to grow the industry.

Those involved in the hemp industry can have their say at <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/grains-and-other-crops/cannabis-in-victoria/industrial-hemp/taskforce>.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

“Hemp has huge potential in so many applications – and we’re keen to find out how Government can support the industry to grow, creating jobs for regional Victorians.”

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Metropolitan Region Fiona Patten

“This will be a great opportunity for us to better understand the industry and the regulations surrounding industrial hemp, and then consider if changes are needed to grow the sector.”

Quote attributable to Member for Mildura Ali Cupper

“Industrial hemp is an emerging industry, and we’re excited to work out the best way to harness that potential and turn it into economic benefit for Victoria – particularly regional Victoria.”

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