

Media Release



19 July 2018

2018 election campaign launch puts candidates on notice

EMBARGOED TO 11AM THURSDAY 19 JULY

THE VICTORIAN FARMERS FEDERATION today launched its 2018 election campaign at its annual conference in Ballarat.

“The State election is 18 weeks away and we are kicking off a strong campaign, challenging all candidates on their ability to deliver for agriculture,” said Mr David Jochinke, President, Victorian Farmers Federation.

“We at VFF are serious about getting a good outcome this year for our farmers and their rural communities.

“We are calling on all candidates to commit to making the necessary investment in our neglected roads, and to ensure our rural and regional communities have reliable phone and internet access, and critical health care services; very basic needs.

“Roads are a vital part of our rural communities for interconnectivity and their improvement is beneficial to all residents who live in or visit regional Victoria, and for our emergency service workers.

“We want to see a State with a long term energy plan,” he said. “The reliability, availability and cost of energy have a huge impact on farm businesses.

“We are looking for science-based and practical regulation, particularly in the area of animal welfare,” he said. “Farmers care for their animals and are themselves strong practitioners of good animal health and welfare, but we must recognise that farm production animals are not the same as zoo, companion or wildlife animals and need to be addressed appropriately.

“Rates are another priority area for our members,” he said. “Across Victoria, farmers have experienced astronomical increases in their rates and while they are happy to contribute to the running of their communities, they cannot be rated out of existence,” he said.

“Over the next four months, VFF members will be engaging with all candidates to discuss our election platforms and the range of initiatives which we believe will help to build a better State and deliver for agriculture,” said Mr Jochinke.

A copy of the VFF election campaign brochure can be downloaded from www.vff.org.au. The VFF election campaign theme “Delivering for agriculture – growing communities” aims to deliver much needed support for farmers and their communities, recognising the contribution they make to the State’s economy and wellbeing.

ENDS

Media Contacts:

David Jochinke, Victorian Farmers Federation President, 0427 834 524

Heather Smillie, Stakeholder Policy & Advocacy Officer, 0400 874 589

Paula Fitzgerald, Campaign Coordinator, 0418 160 943

Farrer House 24-28 Collins Street Melbourne 3000

Ph. 1300 882 833 | Fax. 03 9207 5500 | E-mail. vff@vff.org.au | www.vff.org.au

About the VFF

The Victorian Farmers Federation is an active, powerful lobby group dedicated to the interests of farmers and making a difference to communities. With a strong record of successful political and industry advocacy and leadership, the VFF has generated substantial benefits for the agriculture sector since its formation in 1979. Our vision is to create an environment for farmers that enables profitable, safe and sustainable production, within a community that values and respects the farm sector.

The VFF consists of eight commodity groups; dairy (United Dairyfarmers of Victoria), livestock, grains, horticulture, chicken meat, eggs, pigs and Flowers Victoria – and expert committees representing; water, land management, agricultural and veterinarian chemicals, farm business and rural development and workplace relations.