

Agricultural Centre of Excellence



A MAJORITY LIBERAL GOVERNMENT WILL:

- Establish an Agricultural Centre of Excellence in the North West, centred around Burnie's Freer Farm
- Invest \$5 million to build a contemporary learning facility for agriculture students
- Extend the Blundstone Scholarship for 4 years and increase opportunities for students wishing to study agribusiness



Supporting growth in agriculture

Agricultural Centre of Excellence

A re-elected Hodgman majority Liberal Government will invest \$5 million to establish an Agricultural Centre of Excellence in Tasmania's North West to provide the skills needed for Tasmania's booming agricultural sector.

Centred around Burnie's Freer Farm, the Centre of Excellence will include TasTAFE course delivery, plus extended delivery through partnerships with Agritas and the University of Tasmania.

Outreach training will also be a key component of delivery provided on farms throughout Tasmania.

The Centre of Excellence will deliver qualifications from specific industry led skills sets, through to Certificate and Diploma qualifications, and up to Associate Degree and Bachelor Degree qualifications in agriculture, natural resource management and agribusiness.

Tasmania is now an Australian leader in agricultural production and innovation. Our plan will leverage this agricultural growth and innovation to create a new, nation leading agricultural training facility.

Freer Farm

Freer Farm is a working farm, owned by the Government and operated by TasTAFE. Our commitment is to invest in Freer Farm, to update its ageing infrastructure and farming equipment, and to build a contemporary farm based learning space.

This stands in stark contrast to Labor, who tried to sell Freer Farm, in the face of strong community opposition.

Only a re-elected Hodgman majority Liberal Government will ensure access to working farms for training, like Freer Farm, continues and ensure opportunities for developing the next generation of Tasmanian farmers.

Our targets

#1: Reduce the unemployment rate to the best State in the country by 2022

#3: A 40% increase in apprentices and trainees in the private sector by 2025

#40: Over the next four years, increase the long-term average investment in public infrastructure by 20%

Continuing target: Grow the annual farm gate value of the agricultural sector to \$10 billion per year by 2050

Our record

Since coming to Government, we have strongly supported Tasmanian agriculture and have seen significant increases in farm productivity.

The figures speak for themselves – by August 2016 there were 4000 additional jobs in agriculture, forestry and fisheries since the 2011 census.



Supporting growth in agriculture

The importance of industry leadership

Industry will be a key driver of the new Centre of Excellence which will be guided by an industry based board. This will ensure the operations and course offerings of the Centre of Excellence align with the requirements of industry right around the state.

Extending opportunity through the Blundstone Scholarship

A re-elected Hodgman majority Liberal Government will commit to 4 years of support for the Blundstone Scholarship.

The Blundstone Scholarship assists students undertaking an Associate Degree in Agribusiness at UTAS. It supports those who would not otherwise access higher education, and gives public school system students an early boost in their agriculture careers.

Cost

A re-elected Hodgman majority Liberal Government will invest \$5 million in the new Agricultural Centre of Excellence.

The Labor Green alternative

Labor has a habit of selling out rural communities and cannot be trusted when it comes to agricultural skills. Labor tore TAFE Tasmania apart at the seams through their disastrous Tasmania Tomorrow reforms.

Labor and the Greens then ignored the advice of the consultant they hired to design TasTAFE, who recommended a Centre of Excellence model which they never implemented.

Labor also sold off Clark Farm in the North West and attempted to sell Freer Farm. Strong action by the local community helped saved Freer Farm – under a re-elected Hodgman majority Liberal Government Freer Farm will be safe.

Why Tasmania needs this

The growth of the agriculture sector continues to be one of the foundations of the improvements in the Tasmanian economy.

Tasmania is extremely well placed nationally and globally to leverage off competitive strengths in agriculture.

The Agricultural Centre of Excellence will ensure Tasmanian primary industries have access to the skills they need for their businesses to continue to grow.