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TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT MEDIA RELEASE

Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water  
26 November 2020

## Boosting Tasmania's agricultural farm research for the next decade

The Tasmanian Government is investing nearly \$6 million to transform research farms in the State's north to deliver better outcomes for Tasmanian agriculture and ensure the industry can grow into the future.

In partnership with UTAS, the Government will provide \$5 million in funding towards a \$7.4 million suite of upgrades for the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) farms at Elliott and Forthside.

It's the first steps in the Plan for Tasmania's Research Farm Capacity: supporting agricultural research, development, and extension (RD&E) for 2050 that will boost delivery of RD&E for Tasmanian farmers and agribusiness while investing in research farm assets, infrastructure, facilities, and equipment upgrades.

The joint investment will upgrade these centres of excellence and ensure they can provide dairy and vegetable RD&E and education for the next decade, and forms part of the UTAS vision to develop an integrated "future farming hub" for agriculture in the State's north.

It's another key marker in our goal to grow the value of Tasmania's agriculture sector to \$10 billion a year by 2050, driving investment and creating local jobs, many in regional areas.

The Elliott Dairy Research Facility will be converted to a Sustainable, Manageable, Accessible Rural Technologies (SMART) farm to provide real time data for informed decision-making, along with modernising and relocating the dairy and upgrading buildings, laneways, and renovating pasture.

The Forthside Vegetable Research Facility will also be converted to a SMART farm, along with upgrading irrigation and farming equipment to support precision agriculture and safety, and installing a solar array for on-farm energy generation.

Funding of \$750,000 will also be invested at Cressy Research and Development Station to upgrade core infrastructure such as electricity and pipelines for irrigation, drainage works and training facilities.

This investment aims to ensure co-investment from agribusiness and support ongoing industry-led RD&E at the site into the future.

Investing in the State's public-owned research farms is one part of the Government's White Paper for Growing Tasmanian Agriculture: RD&E for 2050.

We are also working with fruit growers to determine the feasibility of whether the Grove Farm in the Huon Valley could support an industry-led horticultural centre for RD&E and demonstrations.

And to further protect and promote our pome fruit genetic heritage, we will also examine the feasibility of establishing an additional insurance population from the apple and pear heritage orchard currently at the Grove site.

The Government is also delivering \$28 million over five years to TIA, including the \$3 million Agricultural Innovation Fund to seek innovations, new technologies and assist with productivity improvements adopted in Tasmanian farms.

For more information about the Plan, visit the DPIPWE website at <http://dpiipwe.tas.gov.au/RFC>