



21 February 2020

Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

National agriculture focuses on Tasmania

Over the last two days, Launceston has played host to the Agricultural Minister's Forum (AGMIN), which brings together all of the State and Territory agricultural Ministers from around the country and New Zealand.

Held over 20 and 21 February, it has been a great honour to host this nationally significant meeting in Tasmania and recognise Launceston as a regional centre for agricultural excellence.

It has been many years since AGMIN have met in Tasmania, and this is the first time the Forum has been held in Launceston.

AGMIN is the peak forum to collaborate on priority issues of national significance affecting Australia's primary production sectors, focuses on developing a strong and profitable agriculture, fisheries and forestry sector for the future, and supports the industry's goal to reach \$100 billion by 2030 nationally.

The impact of drought, floods, bushfires and other challenges from climate change to future growth were acknowledged as very real, but so are the opportunities for growth, particularly from building infrastructure, adopting new innovations and expanding trade.

In addition to the presentations, delegates had the opportunity to visit farms and agricultural businesses, including visits to a local winery and grazing, cropping and dairy businesses.

AGMIN showcased Tasmania's nation leading irrigation infrastructure, which is providing farmers with reliable access to water and forms a key pillar in our AgriFood Plan to grow the farm gate value of our agricultural sector to \$10 billion per annum by 2050.

Delegates met with the Board of the Cressy/Longford Irrigation Scheme and the CEO of Tasmanian Irrigation to see firsthand how irrigation developments are transforming Tasmanian agriculture, creating jobs and expanding farm production to meet the growing demand for Tasmania's premium produce.

Tasmania's nation leading Pipeline to Prosperity is a \$496 million long-term program which, when fully implemented will deliver 10 irrigation schemes, providing an additional 78,000 megalitres of water, creating thousands of jobs and injecting an estimated \$114 million each year into our agriculture sector, and the Tasmanian economy more broadly.

It has been a pleasure to provide a small snapshot to my agricultural Ministerial colleagues of Tasmania's investment in irrigation and innovative developments in protected cropping.