

# Joint Media Release



Australian Government

**Hon Julie Collins MP**  
Minister for Small Business  
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



**Hon Ros Spence MP**  
Minister for Agriculture  
Minister for Community Sport  
Minister for Carers and Volunteers

Wednesday, 9 October 2024

## GRANTS TO BOOST FRUIT GROWER RESILIENCE AND PROFITS

More premium Victorian grown fruit and vegetables will make it onto local supermarket shelves thanks to grants awarded to install new netting on Victorian farms – protecting crops and increasing productivity.

The expanded \$15.9 million Horticultural Netting Program - funded by the Albanese Labor Government and delivered by the Allan Labor Government - is now fully allocated with 190 grants delivered to 150 Victorian producers over 3 rounds.

The Program provided up to \$150,000 to producers of commercial horticulture crops, excluding wine grapes, for the purchase and installation of new netting over established production areas.

The Commonwealth established the Horticulture Netting Program to help Australian growers, and their communities, recover from drought and the pandemic.

Besides protecting produce from environmental damage such as hail and sunburn, horticultural netting helps to keep out some pest animals and can reduce orchard water use by up to 20 per cent.

An increase in fruit quality, coupled with reduced impacts from adverse weather and animal damage means more dollars in horticulture growers' pockets.

Among the grant recipients is Temhem Pty Ltd, a grower and packer of fresh fruit for the domestic and export markets based at Lemnos, near Shepparton. The grant supported the installation of netting over 4 hectares of Nashi Pears to limit hail damage and protect against birds and bats.

For more information on how Agriculture Victoria is supporting the horticulture industry visit the [agriculture.vic.gov.au/crops-and-horticulture](https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/crops-and-horticulture)

### Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

*"The Horticulture Netting Program aids the industry's recovery from floods, storms, and drought and will also help our growers protect their valuable produce from pests and adverse weather conditions."*

### Quotes attributable to Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Julie Collins

*"The Albanese Labor Government is committed to helping farmers and regional communities across Australia who are on the front line of climate change, natural disasters and extreme weather events. These can impact production and hurt farmers' and producers' bottom line."*

*"The Horticultural Netting Program has enabled Victorian producers to build more resilience into their businesses and continue to provide Australians with high quality produce for which we are renowned."*

### Quote Attributable to Temhem Pty Ltd Director Shannan Mehmet

*"These grants have enabled us to significantly expand our netted land area, leading to a substantial increase in the production of premium-quality fruit and boosting the profitability of these blocks."*

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