

Media Release

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



Wednesday, 12 March 2025

EMPOWERING BUSINESSES IN NOWA NOWA TO TRANSFORM

The Allan Labor Government is backing businesses in Nowa Nowa and surrounds to reach their full potential, making sure they have the tools they need to generate new jobs and economic growth for the community.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence today announced \$320,000 of Forestry Transition Fund grants have been awarded to AvaGrow Farms, the Nowa Nowa General Store and Post Office and LCT Auto.

AvaGrow Farms in the Wairewa Valley is known for its high-quality vegetable production and will use a \$165,666 grant to build a high-care post-harvest facility, which will include a hydro vacuum cooler, a cool room, a water storage tank and a power upgrade.

When finished it is expected to create three new full-time jobs including a Post Harvest Coordinator, a Logistics Coordinator and a Quality Control Manager.

Adding more flair to the region's growing tourism market, the Nowa Nowa General Store and Post Office will use a \$150,000 grant to renovate its existing premises to include a customer service area, a visitor information section, and indoor and outdoor dining. The expansion is also expected to create one full-time and two part-time positions.

The projects align with the Nowa Nowa Futures Local Development Strategy to build the area's long-term economy.

A \$6,000 grant to LCT Auto has assisted owner and mechanic Lindsay Tuck to buy much needed tools and a trailer so he can service vehicles and trucks on-site.

Before establishing his business, Lindsay worked as a mechanic servicing vehicles in the native timber industry. This grant enables his business to go mobile so he and his family can still live and work in the area.

The Labor Government has invested over \$5.4 million in East Gippsland and the surrounding area through the Forestry Transition Program, which is supporting local businesses and the community to design and implement their Local Development Strategy.

This funding is in addition to providing businesses with compensation and supporting hundreds of workers through the Worker Support Program. A \$20,000 employment incentive payment is also available for businesses that hire ex-native timber workers.

Round Two of the Transition Fund is currently open for interested business and organisations looking to create new jobs in communities impacted by the end of native timber harvesting. For more information or to apply visit deeca.vic.gov.au/forestry or call 1800 318 182.

Quote attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"These are three great projects which will add to the future economic security of Nowa Nowa and district, while providing additional jobs."

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh

"East Gippsland has amazing businesses with huge capacity, and even bigger potential - especially in agriculture and tourism. With the right support businesses can continue to grow and thrive in this incredible region."

Quote attributable to Lindsay Tuck, LCT Auto

“The grant gave us a big kick start. Having the trailer has just made life so much easier because I used to have to get up early and load all of the tools, which would take an hour, and then at the end of the day have to unload everything again.”

Quote attributable to Matt Zagami, AvaGrow Farms

“We’re grateful for receiving the Transition Fund grant. It will not only help us to expand our business, but we can see it assisting the long-term economic growth of the area following the end of native timber harvesting.”