

Media Release

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



Friday, 28 March 2025

VICTORIAN TECH START-UPS TAKE ON CIRCULAR AGRICULTURE

The Allan Labor Government is working with the state's brightest technology start-ups to develop innovative new solutions to challenges facing the agriculture sector.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence today announced the new CivVic Labs challenge theme would be circular agriculture – with a focus on how technology can be used to maximise efficiency, minimise waste, and unlock new revenue streams.

Delivered by LaunchVic, Victoria's startup agency and funded by Agriculture Victoria, the CivVic Labs challenge brings together 10 start-ups for an intensive six-week bootcamp, where they receive \$15,000 in equity-free funding and specialist advice and support to refine their ideas.

The challenge culminates in a showcase event, where participating start-ups deliver a short pitch of their solutions, and two standout teams are awarded an additional \$35,000 to bring their prototypes to life.

The announcement of the new theme follows the previous challenge which invited Victorian AgTech startups to come up with farm safety solutions in response to agriculture's disproportionate share of workplace fatalities.

Among the farm safety challenge participants is Sam Pritchard, Co-Founder of People in Paddocks, whose AgTech offers a real-time workforce management tool aimed at making farms safer and more productive.

Another innovator who took part in the safety challenge is Laurence Khoo, Founder of AgriAssure, a platform which empowers agribusinesses to identify risks and reduce potential insurance costs.

Agribusiness is a key priority in the Labor Government's Economic Growth Statement, with continued emphasis on AgTech capability a crucial piece in delivering on Victoria's export target of \$20 billion by 2030.

For more on how to take part in the CivVic Labs Circular Agriculture Challenge, visit launchvic.org/programs/civvic-labs.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"We are proud to support innovation in the agriculture sector, which brings together creative start-ups to develop practical, technology-driven solutions to address some of the critical issues facing our farmers."

"Embracing fresh perspectives and technological solutions is key to overcoming the complex issues facing our agriculture sector while improving productivity."

Quote attributable to Launch Vic CEO Dr Kate Cornick

"LaunchVic's CivVic Labs program is the perfect sandbox for aspiring or early-stage founders to build and test new ideas - since its inception in 2017, alumni have collectively secured over \$20 million in investment capital."

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