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Tasmanian Government **Media Release**

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Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Record-breaking agriculture sector exceeds \$2 billion for the first time

The gross farm gate value of agricultural production in Tasmania has exceeded \$2 billion for the first time.

Tasmania's 2019-2020 *Agri-Food Scorecard* notes seasonal conditions, access to irrigation and export growth as key drivers of the continuing expansion of the agricultural industry which has grown by 13 per cent to \$2.15 billion.

The State's overall agri-food value grew to \$3.22 billion, and the value of food produced after packing and processing grew to \$5.27 billion.

The sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries sector is Tasmania's second-largest sector, employing around 14,500 people, nearly three quarters of them full-time, and accounting for 9.1 per cent of Gross State Product in 2019-20.

The strong agricultural performance recorded in the *Agri-Growth Scorecard* demonstrates why Tasmanian agriculture continues to lead the nation, and we remain securely on track to achieve our target to sustainably grow the value of Tasmania's agricultural production to \$10 billion by 2050.

Some of the strongest performing sectors included:

- Fruit increased by 22.1 per cent.
- Meat increased by 20.4 per cent.
- Vegetables increased 13 per cent.
- Dairy increased by 10.6 per cent, with record production volumes.

Tasmanian farmers produce over five times more food than is consumed in Tasmania, with the surplus sold interstate and overseas. In 2019-20, the value of Tasmania's international food exports reached a record \$954 million and the value of total agri-food exports increased by 23 per cent to \$1.08 billion, accounting for around 29 per cent of Tasmania's total merchandise exports.

Rabobank's latest quarterly Rural Confidence Survey shows that Tasmanian farmers remain among the most confident and optimistic in the country. For the second consecutive quarter, 100 per cent of Tasmanian farmers surveyed expected current business conditions to continue or improve further over the next 12 months.

The Tasmanian Government is investing \$153 million in over 70 initiatives to sustainably grow the agri-food sector as part of Tasmania's *Sustainable Agri-Food Plan 2019-23* in partnership with industry and other important stakeholders.

We are backing in our farmers, and almost \$50 million in additional funding is being invested as part of the *Accelerating Agriculture* policy to accelerate progress towards the long-term goal for the sector.

This is in addition to the Government's commitment of \$15 million to develop a nation-leading Tasmanian agricultural precinct in Launceston, \$7 million to upgrade Tasmania's dairy and cropping research farms, and \$2 million to expand the Strategic Industry Partnership Program to support key agricultural sectors.

The Tasmania Liberal Government thanks all Tasmanian farmers, producers, businesses and organisations who have helped us grow the sector and deliver these outstanding agricultural achievements.

The 2019-2020 *Agri-Food Scorecard* can be viewed online at: www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/scorecards