



# Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck

Liberal Senator for Tasmania

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### \*\*\*\* Future Jobs Boom in Agriculture \*\*\*\*

- Career prospects bright for ag professionals, with manager job openings estimated to be 10,100 a year by 2024
- Further investment in agricultural science expected as farm mechanisation increases
- Free Trade Agreements to create growth in demand for Australian produce

The agriculture sector is predicted to be a significant area of jobs growth over the next 6 years, with a report by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research predicting 80,900 job openings for farm managers in that time.

The report titled *Future job openings for new entrants by industry and occupation* and conducted by researchers at Victoria University found that “Employment in agriculture, forestry and fishing will benefit from the lower value of the Australian dollar relative to the currencies of Australia’s major trading partners and expanding export opportunities through free trade agreements (FTA) with countries in East Asia.”

Former Assistant Trade Minister Richard Colbeck noted the rapid rise of demand from the East Asian middle class was driving demand for Australian produce and was, in turn, growing prospects for jobseekers looking for a career in agriculture.

“Since signing the Free Trade Agreements with South Korea, Japan, China, and now the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Coalition Government has opened up major new markets for our farmers,” Senator Colbeck said.

“As mechanisation and greater use of technology becomes commonplace on farms we can expect to see growing demand for highly skilled professionals and managers in the agriculture industry.”

“As a Government we acknowledge the importance of continuing to grow our investment into research and development, as well as educating the future farmers of Australia.”

Minister for Agriculture David Littleproud welcomed the findings of the report by saying that it’s a great time to train for a career in agriculture.

“Farmers have always been natural innovators and advances in science, drones and smart devices are now playing key roles in making our farms more efficient and profitable,” Minister Littleproud said.

“The good news is innovation and technology look set to create more jobs on our farms, not less.”

Senator Colbeck also made mention of the myth of farming as “an old man’s game”.

“Particularly among our most productive farmers and farm managers, we see a much younger cohort than people expect,” Senator Colbeck said.

“While hobby farmers tend to be older and possibly retired, the willingness to innovate and adopt new technology of younger generations is seen as a major asset among leading agribusinesses”.

Government and industry currently invest over \$600 million annually in research and development and extension through our rural research and development corporations.

The Coalition Government’s \$180.5 million Rural R&D for Profit program is on top of this, aiming to improve farmgate productivity and profitability and deliver real outcomes for Australian farmers.

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