




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 24 February 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Regional Queensland, Job Creation

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (9.41 am): The Palaszczuk government is backing jobs in our regions and our regional economies. Through our \$175 million Jobs and Regional Growth Fund, we are supporting projects that are creating jobs in regional Queensland.

With assistance from the fund, Marciano Table Grapes will cultivate at least 80 hectares of grapes along the Flinders River at Hughenden, creating 35 new full-time jobs by 2025. There has already been strong interest from Coles, Aldi and local markets to buy locally grown, early season grapes instead of importing them from California. This means a longer shelf life and lower quarantine risk. This \$10 million project is a huge vote of confidence in the Flinders region and a massive boost to the local economy.

In Clermont we have honoured our \$1 million commitment to revitalise the showground and saleyards as part of the Year of Outback Tourism celebrations. The upgrades are complete and include electrical, water and IT upgrades, a full site master plan, construction of 60 individual horse stables, six sets of spelling yards and a designated livestock crossing. All up, this important local piece of infrastructure created 21 jobs during construction. These upgrades are part of a 20-year master plan for the saleyards which is designed to keep this facility at the forefront of the industry.

Soon Longreach will be able to process and sell more premium branded beef out of an expanded and modernised Western Queensland Livestock Exchange. AAM Investment Group is undertaking a four-stage redevelopment of the facilities under a 30-year lease from Longreach Regional Council. The fund is supporting the \$3.2 million second stage that will include new cattle weighing infrastructure and drafting facilities, creating seven construction jobs. The redevelopment will enable the throughput of 100,000 head of cattle per year by 2026 and offer best practice facilities and services that will become a significant economic driver throughout the Longreach region.

The fund will assist Western Meat Exporters to expand its Charleville facility which will create 60 new jobs and will see its production grow exponentially. Western Meat Exporters is already Queensland's largest commercial-scale sheep and goat abattoir and Charleville's biggest private employer. This \$8.2 million expansion will increase the number of sheep being processed from 100,000 a year up to 460,000 a year. The abattoir is developing a partnership with Charleville State High School to increase direct engagement with high school students through a formal work experience and traineeship program.

This is all part of our plan to create jobs in our regions. I look forward to updating the House on further outcomes from the Jobs and Regional Growth Fund.