

Rail on agenda

FARMERS FEDERATION PUSHES FOR CRUCIAL UPGRADES

A \$250 million upgrade and standardisation of Victoria's regional rail freight network is at the top of the Victorian Farmers Federation's 2014 election wish list.

VFF president Peter Tuohey said regional Victorians needed crucial transport upgrades to improve efficiency of the rail network.

"We want to see the Coalition commit its next \$500 million of its Regional Growth Fund

to infrastructure that helps create jobs in agriculture," Mr Tuohey said.

"And Labor needs to make similar commitments.

"We need plans from both sides of politics, which deliver rock-solid funding for regional infrastructure, which is crucial to guaranteeing farmers' capacity to grow the state's economy and regional jobs."

Mr Tuohey said

while other industries were in decline, demand for food and fibre exports was expected to drive continued growth in agriculture and agribusiness.

"We're one of the few sectors that has the potential to keep on growing," he said.

"The major political parties in Victoria have acknowledged the importance of increasing food and fibre production — with the

Coalition aiming to double food and fibre production by 2030.

"Labor has also told the VFF it is committed to this target."

The VFF also wants increased funding for frontline DEPI agricultural services, changes to municipal rates for farm properties, funding for a National Centre for Farmer Health and government support for Goulburn Valley fruit growers and SPC Ardmuna.



Visit: Cr Fern Summer, Mayor Jenny Houlihan and Greater Shepparton City Council chief executive Gavin Cator with members of the Lijiang delegation.

Delegation takes in sights

A government delegation from Lijiang, China visited Shepparton on Friday.

Greater Shepparton City Council hosted the delegation as part of its sister city relationship with Lijiang City.

The delegation took part in a smoking ceremony and welcome to country at Victoria Park Lake, where a eucalyptus tree was planted.

They also visited Tatura's Unilever plant.



Concentrating: Clark Morgan ran a successful workshop.



Something for everyone: Gigarre's Carol Ohlin and Loraine Warde at the community car plant stall.



Crowd pleaser: Vanessa Craven accompanied by Andrew Barcham.

Event proves moosic to muster-goers' ears