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The Committee Manager
Standing Committee on Environment and Planning
Parliament House, Spring Street
East Melbourne
Victoria 3002

Via email: ecosystems@parliament.vic.gov.au

Food Frontier welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission regarding the inquiry into ecosystem decline in Victoria.

2 Food Frontier is the independent think tank and expert advisor on alternative proteins in Australia and New Zealand. Food Frontier provides data and insights on alternative proteins and their economic, environmental and public health benefits. We advise and connect businesses, innovators and policymakers – from start-ups to grocery giants, farming bodies to regulators – helping leaders navigate and pursue opportunities in the plant-based meat and emerging cellular agriculture sectors.

Comment

3 Food Frontier wishes to highlight to the Committee the contribution that alternative proteins can offer when considering policy, program and funding solutions to address sustainable development, whilst simultaneously increasing and diversifying economic and employment opportunities in Victoria.

4 In conjunction with some of the nations' leading agricultural representative bodies, Food Frontier recently co-launched the *Future of Protein Forum*,¹ a collaborative initiative aimed at developing research and development priorities, focused on alternative proteins.

5 Alternative proteins, such as plant-based and cellular agriculture products will be complementary to Victoria's agricultural industries, and present a lucrative opportunity for farmers to supply a new high-value market, both domestically and internationally, as demand for Australian grown plant-protein increases.

6 Plant-based products also offer environmental benefits. A peer-reviewed life-cycle analysis by the University of Michigan found that a popular plant-based meat product, the Beyond Burger, utilised 99 percent less water, 93 percent less land and 46 percent less energy, while contributing 90 percent fewer greenhouse gas emissions.^{2,3} Further research is necessary to determine the equivalent percentages based on Australian-grown inputs for plant-based and cellular agriculture, research which Victoria would be in a strong position to undertake.

7 Alternative proteins also offer a range of economic opportunities, opening up new supply chains, and benefiting farmers through to manufacturers and consumers.

¹ Food Frontier, National Farmers' Federation, NSW Farmers. Farming and food industry bodies unite to focus on the future of protein [Internet]. Melbourne, Food Frontier; 2020 Aug 19 [cited 2020 Aug 31]. Available from: <https://www.foodfrontier.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Future-of-Protein-Forum-Media-Release-August-2020.pdf>

² A burger with benefits [Internet]. California: Beyond Meat; 2018 Sep 25 [cited 2020 Aug 31]. Available from: <https://www.beyondmeat.com/whats-new/aburger-with-benefits/>

³ Heller MC, Keoleian GA. Beyond Meat's Beyond Burger life cycle assessment: A detailed comparison between a plant-based and an animal-based protein source [Internet]. Michigan: Centre for Sustainable Systems, University of Michigan; 2018 Sep 14 [cited 2020 Aug 31]. Available from: <http://css.umich.edu/publication/beyond-meats-beyond-burger-life-cycle-assessment-detailed-comparison-between-plant-based>

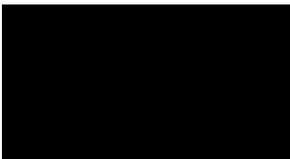
8 The plant-based meat sector in Australia is growing rapidly. Deloitte Access Economics has projected that the sector will be worth A\$3 billion in domestic sales by 2030 and employ 6,000 equivalent full-time employees. The sector is forecast to produce 169,000 tonnes of product annually, a volume sufficient to meet 70 percent of domestic demand, with the balance met by imports of 54,200 tonnes. Exports are anticipated to account for 25 percent of manufacturers' total sales, and constitute a valuable new export category equivalent to 42,200 tonnes valued at A\$337.5 million per year.⁴

9 Victoria stands to benefit more than any other jurisdiction in Australia, securing 31 percent of direct value-add (manufacturing) and direct employment, valued at A\$164 million by 2030 on a median modelling scenario.⁵ This outcome does not reflect additional incentives Victoria could introduce in coming years to attract and retain the new industry, which may further increase the sectoral benefit.

10 Plant-based meat alternatives and cellular agriculture combine food innovation and advanced manufacturing. States that actively grow these sectors can ultimately deliver both jobs and growth in regional areas, and generate new export opportunities, whilst simultaneously helping to address negative environmental externalities.

11 Food Frontier would be pleased to provide further commentary to the Committee as a witness at the inquiry hearings.

Yours faithfully



Sam Lawrence
Director of Policy and Government Relations



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⁴ Lawrence S, King T. Meat the Alternative: Australia's \$3 Billion Dollar Opportunity. Melbourne: Food Frontier; 2019.

⁵ Lawrence S, King T. Meat the Alternative: Australia's \$3 Billion Dollar Opportunity. Melbourne: Food Frontier; 2019.