



The Place To Be

# Media release

From the Minister for Regional and Rural Development

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**DRAFT: TBC**

## **NEQTAR EXPANSION TO DELIVER 25 NEW JOBS IN MILDURA**

Neqtar Australia will invest \$6.7 million expanding its food and wine processing operations, creating 25 new jobs in Mildura with the help of a \$50,000 Victorian Government grant, the Minister for Regional and Rural Development, John Brumby, said today.

Mr Brumby said the grant was being provided under the Government's *Community Regional Industry Skills Program (CRISP)* initiative through Regional Development Victoria.

"Neqtar Australia is the lead company of two major food and beverage companies in the Mildura region – Neqtar Wines (previously Roberts Estate and Salisbury Estate Wines) and vegetable concentrate company SDS Beverages," Mr Brumby said.

"As part of a major organisational restructure, Neqtar Australia will invest \$6.7 million integrating, upgrading and expanding its operations at two sites in the Mildura region.

"This includes relocating Roberts Estate Wines assets and winemaking employees at Merbein to Neqtar Wines at Irymple South, increasing the combined wine production from 40,000 to 75,000 tonnes over the next five years.

"To achieve this, the company will recruit and train an extra 25 staff over the next three years in winemaking, cellar operations, management and administration.

"The other aspect of the restructure involves SDS Beverages increasing this year's raw carrot crush by 53 per cent to 43,000 tonnes at its plant in Merbein.

Mr Brumby said Neqtar Australia's \$6.7 million investment and recruiting and training staff would increase competitiveness and viability allowing it to remain a major employer and contributor to Mildura's economy in the years ahead.

"Neqtar Australia's increased wine and carrot juice production will generate additional export sales of approximately \$40 million over the next three years," Mr Brumby said.

"The increase in the carrot crush and introduction of new technology will diversify the business and strengthen the company's position as Australia's No.1 exporter of carrot juice to Japan."

Mr Brumby said finding the appropriately trained people to work in country Victoria can sometimes be difficult.

"To address this, we established the *CRISP* initiative, bringing together employers, labour market providers and education providers to address local skills shortages," Mr Brumby said.

"The Victorian Government is committed to helping companies such as Neqtar Australia expand while stimulating growth and prosperity right across rural and regional Victoria."

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