



Media Release

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## SproutX launches first regional agtech hub in Mildura

SproutX, Australia's national agtech innovation hub, has launched its first regional agtech centre in Mildura to ignite entrepreneurship across the Mallee region.

In partnership with Mildura Regional Development (MRD), SproutX will open a co-working space at The Mill, Mildura's newly established innovation space, and will mobilise a community to support start-ups in the agricultural space in the region.

The SproutX Mildura Hub will officially be opened by The Honourable Minister for Agriculture, Jaala Pulford MLC, at 10.30am on Wednesday 28 February at SuniTAFE. The hub will offer free space for eligible start-ups to work from and will give them access to the national SproutX network, including a number of community initiatives it runs across the Asia Pacific region.

"We have supported SproutX since day one and are thrilled to see the team expand their footprint into regional Victoria. Mildura is a rich agricultural area and farmers here will increasingly rely on technology to manage their businesses sustainably into the future." The Minister said.

SproutX is striving to create a regional centre of agtech excellence in Australia, with Mildura now on the front line.

General Manager of SproutX, Sam Trethewey said, "The Mallee region was born through resourceful and innovative farmers. Mildura itself was mostly founded by two entrepreneurial Canadian brothers who bought out irrigation systems from the US back in the late 1800's. So, with such a strong local agricultural economy, it makes a lot of sense for SproutX and MRD to partner to jumpstart the start-up ecosystem and carry on the innovative traditions through technology."

"This hub is a great space in town that provides a home for entrepreneurs wanting to solve agricultural problems through technology. They can also use the space to tap into the SproutX network where they can find co-founders and other talent," Sam said.

After launching the first agtech focused accelerator program in the Asia Pacific, and with a \$10 million Venture Capital fund to fuel the start-ups in its programs, SproutX has been a leading force in the creation of agtech in Australia's \$60 billion agricultural industry. SproutX has built a national community of investors, entrepreneurs, corporates, government, and of course farmers, to give start-ups every chance to create world class scalable companies.

"To say we were excited by SproutX's offer to partner with Mildura Regional Development and open their first regional office here in Mildura would be a total understatement!" said Mildura Regional Development CEO, Daryl Buckingham.



“This is significant for our region. We are the biggest primary producer of so much of Australia’s food and beverages for both the domestic and export market, so we need to lead the way in innovation and technology,” he concluded.

The SproutX Mildura Hub is located at The Mill 129 Langtree Avenue, Mildura. Those interested are very welcome to visit the space to learn more.

## **About SproutX**

SproutX is a joint venture between Findex and the National Farmers’ Federation and has worked with more than 200 agtech start-ups in the past two years. The 2017 SproutX Accelerator cohort consisted of 11 start-ups who finished the six-month intensive program. A number of those businesses now have revenue, and some have raised follow-on funding.

SproutX is also closely affiliated with Crowe Horwath (part of Findex) and Ruralco, which both have a significant presence in the Mildura region.