



5 February 2015

## **HARVEST UNDERWAY FOR VICTORIA'S FIRST COMMERCIAL POPPY CROP**

**Statement by TPI Enterprises Managing Director, Jarrod Ritchie**

Harvesting is underway for Victoria's first commercial alkaloid poppy crop.

Up to 200 hectares is being harvested this season, the first time that a commercial poppy crop has been grown in Victoria. This follows trial crops in the 2013/14 season, and the passage of legislation to enable the cultivation and processing of poppies in Victoria.

Crops have been harvested in different locations across Victoria, ranging from Gippsland through to Central and Northern Victoria and the Western District regions.

The poppy straw harvested in Victoria will be processed at TPI's new manufacturing facility in Melbourne which is planned to be fully operational by April 2015. TPI produces narcotic raw material which is used by international manufacturers of therapeutic pain relief products.

This season's crop has been primarily influenced by the later than usual planting due to finalisation of regulatory requirements during 2014.

The harvest quantity is in line with expectations for the first season, and we are looking forward to growing the size of Victoria's poppy crop in future seasons.

Already, there are firm commitments from Victorian farmers to grow around 3,000 hectares of poppies in the 2015 season and we expect this figure to increase to between 4,000-4,500 before planting starts in April. This will deliver an estimated \$12-15 million to growers at the farm gate.

TPI has been providing advice and assistance to our growers throughout the season, and the company will expand its field services team to support the increased number of poppy growers this season.

TPI is also harvesting its Tasmanian poppy crop. Tasmanian poppy straw will be collected at TPI's facility in Cressy before being shipped to Victoria for processing.

TPI has valued the ongoing support of the Victorian Government in the establishment of the alkaloid poppy industry in the state, in particular the continuing guidance and assistance being provided through the Victorian Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.

### Background information

TPI is an Australian-owned company that produces narcotic raw material (NRM) from alkaloid poppies that are grown in Victoria, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and Portugal. It supplies NRM to international manufacturers of therapeutic pain relief products. It is one of nine companies globally involved in NRM production, and one of three Australian processors. TPI was founded in 2004, and has a presence in Victoria, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and Portugal.

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