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THOUSANDS of jobs are tipped to be created in Victoria's farming sector after the signing of the multi-billion-dollar free trade agreement between Australia and China.

Beef and dairy farmers, woolgrowers, orchardists and winemakers are the big winners in the deal, which could triple the produce being exported to China each year.

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And Australian shoppers are likely to see discounts on Chinese-made clothing, shoes, carpets, cars, car parts and tinned fruit.

However, our tariffs are at a relatively modest 5 per cent, so it's unlikely major discounts will emerge.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Chinese President Xi Jinping signed the deal in Canberra yesterday.

It will drive at least \$18 billion in extra revenue into Australia's economy in the next decade and open a new era in economic co-operation.

White-collar businesses will also benefit: Australian tourism operators, hoteliers, aged care providers and lawyers will get more freedom to work and run businesses in China.

The FTA will remove taxes adding up to 40 per cent to the cost of Australian goods such as crayfish, table grapes, oranges, almonds and beef, sold into China.

The rush of orders should see increased production in Australia and the creation of thousands of jobs.

Tariffs on Australian mining exports will also be lifted.

Lisa Dwyer, who with husband Eddie runs 280 dairy cows near Macarthur, expects big growth in Victorian dairy exports to China.

"This ultimately means more money in dairy farmers' pockets," Ms Dwyer said. CONTINUED PAGE 4 FROM PAGE 1 In return, Australia is making it easier for the Chinese to invest here: Chinese private companies are able to invest in projects worth up to \$1 billion without triggering a review by the Foreign Investments Review Board.

They will be able to buy, with a review, agricultural land worth up to \$15 million, and agricultural businesses worth up to \$53 million.

Mr Abbott said the trade deal, which follows earlier deals signed with Japan and South Korea, meant Australia now had deals with our three largest export markets.

More than 85 per cent of exports to China would be tariff-free in a few years, and in about nine years 95 per cent of all exports would be tariff free.

"The has secured the best ever market access provided to a foreign country by **China** on services, with enormous scope to build on an export market already worth \$7 **billion**," Mr Abbott said.

"Australian households and businesses will also reap the benefits of cheaper goods and components from **China** such as vehicles, household goods, electronics and clothing." Referring to the long negotiations, Mr Xi said: "It takes 10 years to sharpen a sword. This will provide a bigger market, more favourable conditions and better institutional support for our co-operation." National Farmers Federation president Brent Finlay praised the deal, saying: "We could conceivably see a tripling in agricultural exports to **China** within the decade." Trade Minister Andrew Robb said **China** was already Victoria's largest export market, accounting for 19 per cent of exports, worth over \$4 **billion**, last year.

He said manufactured goods such as vitamins and medical equipment would also get a boost from the deal.

"Victoria is well positioned to meet the healthcare demands of **China**'s rapidly growing middle class," Mr Robb said.

The Australian National Retailers Association, which represents the largest retailers including the big supermarket and department store chains, declined to comment, saying that "the deal did not particularly impact on them." ellen.whinnett@news.com.au

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