

The **united voice** of intensive
agriculture in Queensland



ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18



CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT.....	3
CEO'S REPORT	4
2017-18 SNAPSHOT OF ACHIEVEMENTS	6
ABOUT QFF	8
ADVOCACY	10
ENERGY	
WATER	
BIOSECURITY	
RISK MANAGEMENT	
RURAL PLANNING	
ENVIRONMENT & NRM	
MINING & RESOURCES	
WASTE MANAGEMENT & RECYCLING REFORM	
WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY	
FARM FINANCE & DEBT	
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY	
2017-18 SUBMISSIONS	21
MAJOR PROJECTS.....	24
ENERGY SAVERS	
REEF ALLIANCE: GROWING A GREAT BARRIER REEF	
RURAL JOBS & SKILLS ALLIANCE	
DROUGHT AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROGRAM	
INSURANCE DATA	
CYCLONE DEBBIE RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE	
NUWATER	

COPYRIGHT 2018 Queensland Farmers' Federation Ltd

This work is Copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may reproduced by any process without the written permission from Queensland Farmers' Federation Ltd. Requests and enquirers concerning reproduction and right should be addressed to

Queensland Farmers' Federation Ltd, PO Box 12009 BRISBANE QLD 4003 or qfarmers@qff.org.au

CITATION Queensland Farmers' Federation Ltd 2018. Annual Report 2017-18. QFF, Brisbane.

DISCLAIMER QFF advises that the publishers, editors, authors and contributors do not warrant that the information in this publication is free from errors or omissions. Nor do they accept any form of liability, be it contractual, tortious or otherwise, for the content of this report or for any consequences arising from its use or any reliance placed on it. The information, opinions and advice contained in this book may not relation to, or be relevant to, a reader's particular circumstances.



STUART ARMITAGE
PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The 2017-18 year has been another positive year of progress and achievement for the Queensland Farmers' Federation as the organisation continued to drive improvements in the operating environment for farmers.

In its 25th year, QFF addressed issues in state and national energy policy and the cost of electricity, advocated for affordable and accessible water and supporting infrastructure, worked towards improved biosecurity outcomes and broke new ground in the development of agricultural insurance products for farmers affected by natural disasters.

The majority of the credit must be given to CEO Travis Tobin for his leadership in progressing the organisation's agenda to continue bringing the state's agricultural representative groups closer together. The QFF team, led by Travis, has continued to deliver upon the organisation's reputation of producing a high standard of policy advocacy and project delivery on behalf of the intensive agricultural sector.

However, this year has not been without its challenges as more than half of Queensland struggled through drought and the

Queensland Government implemented vegetation management legislation without properly considering the effect it would have on farmers, regional communities or the environment.

QFF continues to rely on the contribution of our farming leaders serving on its committees, council and board in conjunction with the support of staff from their respective industry member organisations. QFF would not exist without the service, dedication and collective vision of individual farmers aspiring for a better deal for the agricultural sector.

In 2018-19, QFF will continue to strive for the right policy settings and effective collaboration between industry, government and the community to help overcome the challenges and realise the opportunities ahead. The organisation will continue to strive for a framework that encourages productivity and profitability while enabling us to deliver on our environmental and social obligations, while not forgetting that present and future generations must continue to be competitive with farmers around the world.



TRAVIS TOBIN
CEO

CEO'S REPORT



Much like the diversity of Queensland agriculture, the state's farmers will no doubt look back on 2017-18 with mixed emotions, but the resilience of the sector was again evident. Despite commodity price pressures experienced in some industries, particularly for cane, dairy and pork farmers, severe rainfall events on the central coast and the continued drought, the overall value of the sector remained strong at \$19.45 billion for farm gate GVP and first-stage processing.

Now into its sixth year in some parts of the state, the prolonged nature of this drought coupled with its reach into most of NSW, has highlighted how drought can impact intensive and semi-intensive animal industries and irrigated agriculture. These industries continue to be 'hidden casualties' of droughts. Future state and federal drought policy must better understand the different business models that operate within the sector and support arrangements acknowledge and respond to the way droughts impact different industries.

For the Queensland Farmers' Federation, it was a constructive year of achievement and organisational consolidation with an eye to the future. QFF continued to develop and prosecute solutions-focused policy across more than a dozen areas including: energy, water, biosecurity, risk management, planning, environment and natural resource management, Reef, education and training, rural adjustment, mining and land access, waste, and workplace health and safety. The intensity of effort continues to ebb and flow across the different areas, with energy and water remaining the two most time consuming and critical to ensure competitive, profitable farm businesses. Summaries across all the policy areas follow in this report.

Representation of the membership and the sector more broadly at countless government and industry stakeholder advisory/consultancy committees and functions was again an important



role for QFF. It is a huge time commitment, but the collaboration across the membership continues to ensure intensive, semi intensive and irrigated agriculture is effectively represented in these key influencing forums.

Project work continued to be a core part of the business, with QFF leading government funded projects on energy, Reef, education and training, water, resilience and agricultural insurance to the benefit of the whole sector. Key to the success of these projects is QFF's ability to deliver solutions in complexity and inspire and unite diverse groups of people. After a lot of work, the innovative insurance projects are starting to deliver tangible results. We continue to urge the government to make the modest investment and abolish stamp duty on crop insurance to complement this work and help progress a nascent agricultural insurance market in Queensland. Summaries of all the major projects follow in this report.

Positive outcomes at the organisational level continued to be realised throughout the year. The transparent, contemporary membership model is paying dividends and we welcomed the Australian Cane Farmers Association into the QFF family. The 'finance hub' consolidated its work, and successful co-location arrangements remained in place. The organisation celebrated 25 years in its current form, with Ministers and senior staff joining QFF members to acknowledge the milestone and reflect on a proud history, long list of achievements and the future. The strategic corporate partnership investigations also moved to the next stage and arrangements with Telstra, Jacobs Australia and Holding Redlich were put in place. We continue to look for other leading organisations from relevant sectors to add to this coalition of highly respected brands.

The State Election was held on 25 November 2017, with the Palaszczuk Labor Government returned and Queensland now

joining the other states in recognising fixed term parliaments. QFF ran a positive campaign and provided real, actionable solutions for government across core areas of our advocacy and encouragingly, several positions were adopted by all parties. The 2018-19 Budget was handed down in June 2018, and while it delivered on the government's election commitments, it was a missed opportunity to address some critical competitiveness and productivity issues for agriculture. QFF is keen to see more strategic intent for agriculture in the government's most significant annual document and long-term funding committed to address the bigger picture issues facing the sector.

The three pillars that underpin QFF's achievements, standing and integrity remain key to the organisation's success. Members continue to provide financial support, expertise and a commitment to a unity of purpose. Leading farmers from many industries continue to give their time to serve on QFF's board and council and provide strong and relevant leadership; and the small, committed QFF team continues to deliver competent, professional outcomes and punch well above its weight. I thank them all for their contribution, particularly President Stuart Armitage for his enthusiastic and selfless leadership throughout the year.

In 2018-19, QFF will be looking to progress the current challenges and capitalise on the opportunities ahead for the sector. We continue to point out that this requires deliberate and strategic action from government. With the first meeting of the newly established Agricultural Ministerial Advisory Council (AgMAC) due next month there is an opportunity to make some inroads and better deal with the fragmentation of our issues across government.

2017 - 18 SNAPSHOT OF ACHIEVEMENTS



Successfully lobbied the Queensland and Australian governments to support an industry-led proposal to better manage groundwater recovery in the Upper Condamine Alluvium under the Murray Darling Basin Plan



Successfully worked with the Queensland Government to develop and deliver the first Queensland Climate Adaptation Strategy: 'Agricultural Sector Adaptation Plan'



Successfully lobbied the Queensland Government to remove the 'non-reversion' policy allowing regional electricity customers to return to Ergon and secure more affordable energy



Successfully lobbied the Queensland Government to develop a Solar Planning Guideline for large-scale solar projects to provide greater consistency in development approvals and protections for prime agricultural land



Partner in successfully lobbying governments for \$411 million to fund 10-year National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program to find, contain and destroy fire ants in South East Queensland



Successfully lobbied the Queensland Government to conduct an independent review into rural water metering



Successfully lobbied the Queensland Government for \$10 million to extend the Energy Savers program to include an additional 200 energy audits and offer a 50% co-contribution (capped at \$20,000) towards the cost of implementing recommendations



Partner in successfully lobbying major banks to allow farmers to offset money held in Farm Management Deposits against their agricultural lending.



Partner in successfully lobbying the Australian Government to deliver the Northern Basin Review and the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism as part of the Murray Darling Basin Plan



Successfully lobbied the Queensland Government to change the eligibility criteria for farm employees wanting to upskill through the Farm Business Management course



Successfully lobbied the Queensland Government to establish Agricultural Ministerial Advisory Council (AgMAC) to better address fragmented issues across government



Successfully lobbied the Queensland Government to review its drought programs to better respond to the impacts of drought on all agricultural industries



Successfully completed the 'Producing Enhanced Agricultural Crop Insurance Systems Project' to develop, model and price cyclone insurance products



Successfully completed the 'NuWater Project' to review potential options to pump recycled water from South East Queensland, improve Moreton Bay water quality, and increase agricultural production across the Lockyer Valley and Darling Downs

ABOUT QFF

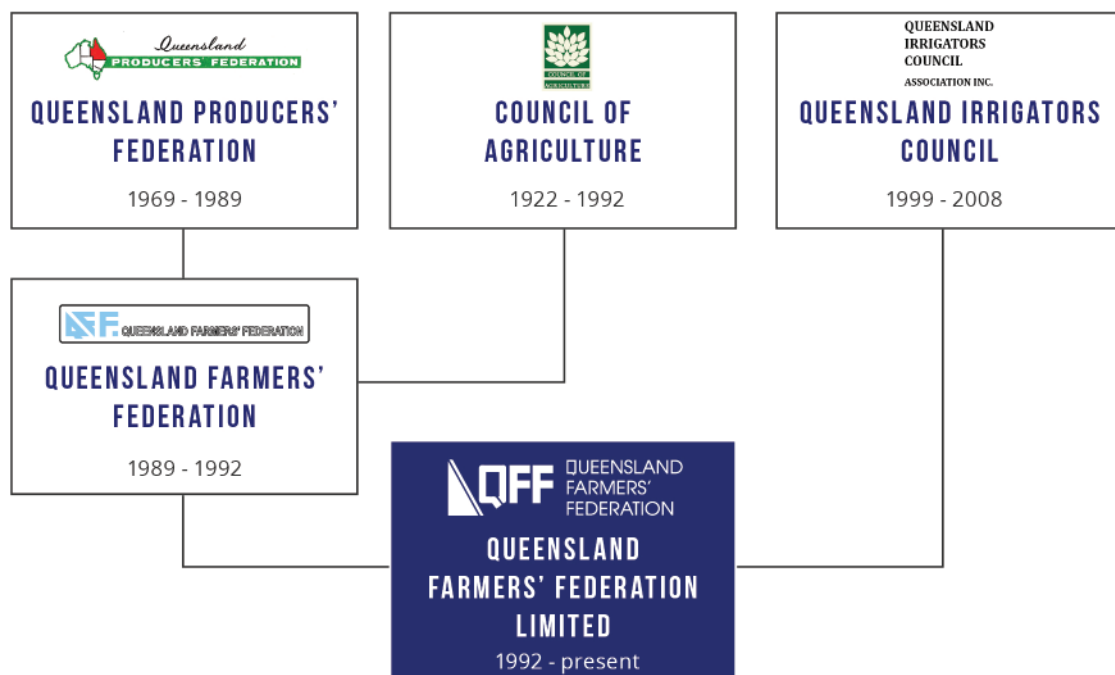
The Queensland Farmers' Federation is the united voice of intensive, semi-intensive and irrigated agriculture in Queensland. It is a federation that represents the interests of peak state and national agriculture industry organisations, who collectively represent the majority of farmers in the state.

QFF engages in a broad range of economic, social, environmental and regional issues of strategic importance to the productivity, sustainability and growth of the agricultural sector. QFF's mission is to secure a strong and sustainable future for Queensland farmers by representing the common interests of our member organisations.

For more than 25 years, QFF has earned a formidable reputation as a leader in sectoral policy development and driving change to improve the operating environment for Queensland's farmers. Recognised as a non-partisan organisation that works effectively with all levels and sides of government, QFF is widely acknowledged as one of the most influential and respected advocacy groups in Queensland.

QUEENSLAND AGRICULTURE REPRESENTATION HISTORY

This diagram shows the history of Queensland's peak agricultural advocacy groups and the progression that led to the formation of the Queensland Farmers' Federation Ltd.





25-YEARS OF QFF ACKNOWLEDGED

In February 2018, QFF and members hosted a ministerial dinner at the Treasury Building to commemorate the organisation's 25th anniversary. The official milestone date for QFF as it exists today (see diagram) was in November 2017, but the state election followed by the Christmas period delayed the festivities.

The event was well represented by government ministers and senior staff including:

- Hon. Mark Furner MP, Minister for Agricultural Development and Fisheries
- Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham MP, Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy
- Hon. Leeanne Enoch MP, Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts
- Mr David Barbagallo, Chief of Staff to the Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, Premier of Queensland
- Ms Tam Van Alphen, Chief of Staff to the Hon. Mark Bailey MP, Minister for Transport and Main Roads
- Mr Brett Murphy, Chief of Staff to the Hon. Mark Furner MP, Minister for Agricultural Development and Fisheries
- Mr Daniel Lato, Chief of Staff to the Hon. Leeanne Enoch MP, Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts
- Mr Dan McIntyre, Senior Adviser to the Hon. Mark Furner MP, Minister for Agricultural Development and Fisheries
- Mr Matthew Pitman, Senior Adviser to the Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham MP, Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

The informal dinner was a great opportunity for QFF, industry members and government to reflect on the organisation's proud history, long list of achievements and its future.

ADVOCACY

ENERGY

Following the 2017 State Election (November 2017), machinery-of-government changes saw the Department of Energy and Water Supply (responsible for energy and water pricing) dissolved, and its functions incorporated into the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME). To date this has been a mixed blessing for energy policy – there is now a greater ability to deal the energy/water nexus, but the nimbleness of the former DEWS has been lost.

Throughout 2017-18, QFF made 19 submissions on energy policy impacting Queensland's primary producers and processors to state and federal processes. Encouragingly, independent reports are now reflecting QFF's positions on inefficient pricing, inflated regulated asset bases and profiteering. The ACCC report 'Restoring Electricity Affordability and Australia's Competitive Advantage' released in June 2018 will likely have the most impact on starting to mend a broken energy system. The report noted several recommendations which support QFF's stated policy positions. QFF continues to work with stakeholders including members, the Queensland Treasury, DNRME, and Energy Queensland (EQ) to develop a range of strategies and policy opportunities to assist the agricultural sector manage increasing and unsustainable energy costs and transitional irrigation and business tariffs.

Programs such as the Agricultural Tariff Trial and the Large Customer Adjustment Trial (LCAT) supported under the Queensland Government's \$10 million Regional Business Support Package remain ongoing with a further round of LCAT and the Energy Savers Program announced in 2017-18. QFF is negotiating what our role in the renewed 'Energy Savers Plus Program Extension' (ESPPE) will be.

Nearly 200 farm meters continue to participate in the Agricultural Tariff Trial. The trial has already provided much needed data to farmers and EQ, resulting in a commitment from EQ to deliver a controlled load and seasonal demand tariff (with reduced peak time window) as an alternative to the current transitional agricultural tariffs due to expire in 2020. QFF continues to work with EQ to develop other fit for purpose tariffs for agriculture.

QFF is currently working with EQ and other stakeholders to develop its next regulatory price-path and Tariff Structure Statement (2020-25) for submission to the Australian Energy Regulator.

QFF continues to advocate for affordable, reliable energy and suitable tariffs for the sector. As part of this advocacy, QFF developed an election manifesto in October 2017 with over 20



recommendations to State and Federal Governments to address electricity pricing inefficiencies through a range of mechanisms including efficient tariff design. This advocacy is strengthened by QFF's membership of the Agricultural Industry Energy Taskforce and of the Queensland-based Energy Alliance.

SOLAR

Following the rapid expansion of large-scale solar energy generation in the state, QFF successfully raised awareness amongst critical stakeholders of the growing land-use contention associated with the siting these facilities on high-quality agricultural land. In response, the Queensland Government developed and released for consultation a Draft Solar Planning Guideline. The consultation resulted in considerable feedback (51 submissions) from the agricultural community and is being documented in a formal response by government. QFF continues to advocate for a Solar Planning Code or an alternative regulatory model to control the on-site and off-site impacts from large-scale solar developments on agriculture.

ENERGY CONSUMERS AUSTRALIA (ECA) FUNDED STUDY

A study looking into options to provide better access to more affordable energy for farmers is being conducted by QFF with industry member Cotton Australia and the NSW Irrigators' Council (NSWIC). The study is funded by ECA as part of its grant process for consumer advocacy and research projects for the benefit of electricity consumers.

The study explores the challenges agricultural producers face in installing solar generation assets on farm and their ability to feed excess energy back into the grid. The aim is to better align agricultural energy consumers and network business interests in relation to grid-connected solar on farm and identify possible future opportunities with the network distribution businesses for renewable energy projects through rural Queensland and New South Wales.

It is anticipated that results from the study will be included in QFF's submission to the new connection policy within the Energy Queensland (EQ) Regulatory Proposal and will assist farmers by simplifying the connection process associated with the grid-connected embedded generation.



WATER

REGULATORY AMENDMENTS

Changes to several provisions in both the Water Act 2000 (Water Act) and Water Regulation 2016 are ongoing. Following the announcement of the state election at the end of October 2017, the government entered caretaker mode resulting in the Mineral, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017 and fact sheets developed by the Water Engagement Forum (of which QFF is an active member) to support the Water Act amendments proposed in the Bill to lapse. Whilst these amendments and associated resources are being revised, matters arising in the Murray Darling Basin and the subsequent Audit have resulted in a further delay to these amendments.

Work on amendments to the Water Act through the Mineral, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 recommenced in February 2018. The primary policy objectives of the Bill were to:

- Give effect to the Queensland Government's response to four recommendations of the 'Independent Review of the Gasfields Commission Queensland and Associated Matters';
- Remove the automatic referral of compensation matters to the Land Court of Queensland under the Mineral Resources Act 1989;
- Ensure the consideration of the water-related effects of climate change on water resources is explicit in the water planning framework;
- Provide for the inclusion of cultural outcomes in water plans to support the protection of the cultural values of water resources for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders;
- Provide a mechanism to allow for temporary access to unallocated water held in strategic water infrastructure reserves; and
- Establish new powers for dealing with urgent water quality issues.

The Bill also made minor and miscellaneous amendments to the Mineral Resources Act 1989 and attendant regulations, the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act 2014 and attendant regulations, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Geothermal Energy Act 2010, the

Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009 and the Water Act 2000.

The 2018 MWOLA Bill was substantially the same as the 2017 MWOLA Bill, seeking to provide a mechanism for temporary access to water that has been reserved for strategic water projects – something QFF continues to strongly advocate for. These projects are in their approvals or planning phase or are not being progressed.

Proposals have also been made to develop Queensland's water markets through the collection and publication of price data for seasonal water trades, which is important for meeting Queensland's national commitment to increasing the efficiency of water use, will be required to facilitate trade and ensure transparency, and should lead to greater certainty for investment and productivity.

QFF continues to advocate for an easy and cost-effective mechanism to permit efficient water trading, particularly temporary trades.

New amendments to the Water Regulation were also announced to reflect the final report and findings from the audit of non-urban water measurement and compliance.

INDEPENDENT AUDIT OF QUEENSLAND NON-URBAN WATER MEASUREMENT AND COMPLIANCE

The Audit was undertaken in 2017-18 by an independent panel to determine the adequacy of Queensland's rural water measurement and monitoring governance arrangements, for all forms of take (including metered and un-metered take) and considered the regulatory framework/model, including responsibility for installation, reading, maintenance of water meters and measurement infrastructure (ownership models). The final report was released 23 March 2018.

The Audit considered how the metering and measurement framework ensured consistency with water plans and the Water Regulation 2016, including take of unsupplemented water (water harvesting and overland flow rights), Resource Operations Licence Holder obligations (for supplemented schemes), and the actions that have been taken by the state to support compliance.

There was an appraisal of compliance arrangements including complaint and investigation management practices and how



they are applied and the operational efficiency of the framework to support compliance and penalties.

The adequacy, sufficiency and capability of Queensland's water measurement and monitoring system, including identifying opportunities presented by new technologies was assessed. While Queensland's interim metering standard and progress to transitioning to meet Australian Standard 4747 and other appropriate national performance measures for non-urban water metering was reviewed.

Finally, the Audit examined the ongoing resourcing requirements (including CAPEX and OPEX) to deliver sustainable metering and compliance arrangements to support Queensland's water management framework state wide with reference to ensuring Queensland's accreditation under the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, including consideration of alternative provider models.

WATER PLANS

Several Queensland water plans are currently under review or development. QFF made submissions to various water plans and called for amendments including but not limited to both the Border Rivers and Moonie and the Condamine Balonne Water Plans.

Gulf Water Plan

On Friday 18 May 2018, the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy published a notice to extend the life of the plan for 10 years. The proposed extension is based on there being no ecological or water security risks that warrant a change in approach.

Cape-York Draft Water Plan

On 4 June 2018, the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the Chief Executive of the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy released the draft Water Plan (Cape York) 2018, draft Cape York Water Management Protocol and draft Water Entitlement Notice for public review.

Burdekin Basin Water Plan

The Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy proposed to amend the Burdekin Basin water plan for the Upper Burdekin, Cape Campaspe and the Belyando Suttor sub-catchments.

PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION'S FINAL REPORT INTO NATIONAL WATER REFORM AND WATER PRICE PATH 2019

The Australian Government Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources released the final Productivity Commission Inquiry

Report into National Water Reform. This report was distinct from the PC's current five-yearly assessment of the implementation of the Basin Plan, which will be provided to the government by the end of 2018. The report determined that transparency with regards to water pricing in Queensland could be improved, noting that the Queensland Competition Authority had been limited in the advice it could provide on water prices due to constraints imposed by the relevant Queensland Minister.

QFF is working with various stakeholders in consideration of the next price-path for water. As part of this work, QFF has secured funding from the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy to appoint an independent reviewer to assist agricultural users of water across various schemes to understand water charges and assist with their submissions to the Queensland Competition Authority.

QFF notes that the next price path was due to commence July 2019. However, in the absence of a Referral Notice from the relevant Minister to the Queensland Competition Authority in 2017-18 as expected, a new price path is unlikely to commence before July 2020, resulting in a shorter price period. QFF remains concerned over the possible inclusion and pass-through of additional costs including dam safety and electricity.

GROUNDWATER RECOVERY IN THE UPPER CONDAMINE ALLUVIUM

Throughout the year, QFF and member organisations Central Downs Irrigators Limited and Cotton Australia worked with the Australian and Queensland governments on an industry-led proposal to better manage the required recovery of 40,400ML of groundwater licences in the Upper Condamine Alluvium (UCA) by 30 June 2019 under the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

The industry-led proposal provides entitlement holders with a high degree of certainty and access to market-based payments for water, the option to sell all or part of their entitlements, and importantly, protection from further reductions in their entitlements. A consultation process with licence holders in late September 2017 identified very strong support for the recovery program proposal, and universal acceptance of the need to better manage the sustainability of the Central Condamine Alluvium (CCA).

A few unexpected challenges – including the Queensland general election, the withdrawal of a water use efficiency program, late notification of differential pricing for water across sub-areas and the treatment of carry-over water – threatened to derail the proposal, but all parties were able to constructively work through them and a three-month tender process opened on 19 April 2018. At the close of the financial year, it was looking promising that the required recovery would be achieved for the CCA.



BIOSECURITY

During the year, funding of \$411.4 million over 10 years was announced for the National Red Imported Fire Ant Eradication Program – a comprehensive eradication plan to find, contain and destroy fire ants in South East Queensland. The 10-year eradication strategy is to reduce the size of the infestation in a staged, rolling planned treatment program starting from the west and progressively moving to the east. With fire ant detections outside the existing biosecurity zones continuing to occur, QFF raised the public profile of the issue calling on all Queenslanders to do their bit for biosecurity. Among the QFF members, the nursery industry is currently impacted the most, with more than 60% of the industry is based in SEQ that relies on \$150-200 million annual interstate trade.

In July 2017, an independent review of the capacity of the national biosecurity system and its underpinning Intergovernmental Agreement – 'Priorities for Australia's biosecurity system' – was released. The review confirmed that the challenges facing government stewardship of the national

biosecurity system continues to build. The review made 42 recommendations aimed at strengthening the national system over the next 5-10 years, to be advanced by governments, industry and other parties, including under a refreshed intergovernmental agreement (IGAB2). QFF outlined its position on the 42 recommendations in a letter to the Minister on March 2018.

At the state level, in March 2018, the Queensland Government released its five-year plan to build the framework for Queensland's future biosecurity system and to protect the state's ecosystems, industries and way of life. The 'Queensland Biosecurity Strategy: Our Next Five Years (2018-2023)' was co-developed by the Queensland Government, more than 30 peak industry organisations and members of the community. Six strategic themes were identified to underpin the vision for the system over the next five years:

1. Collaborative governance and leadership
2. Every Queenslanders plays their part
3. Empowered to act
4. Bright ideas and better ways
5. Valuing and building on our investments
6. Better intelligence systems.

Long term biosecurity leader John McDonald represented the QFF family on the strategy's writing group and we thank John for his work.

The Biosecurity Liaison Project ended in early December 2017. QFF thanks former Department of Agriculture and Fisheries officer Frank Fox for his work explaining the new legislation, discussing its impacts, and looking for collaborative options for future biosecurity management across the member industries. Unfortunately, the outreach project was not renewed. The department did commit to a resource sharing arrangement between QFF, AgForce and LGAQ, but this had yet to evolve into anything meaningful for QFF or members.





RISK MANAGEMENT

During 2017-18, QFF continued to actively promote agricultural insurance as a risk management tool and advocated for further investment in developing the agricultural insurance market in Queensland. Project work to target the barriers to agricultural insurance in Queensland continued with updates under 'Major Projects'.

QFF and some industry members continued to pressure the Queensland Government to abolish stamp duty on agricultural insurance. Investigating the removal of stamp duty was an election commitment from both the major parties. The Queensland Government has committed \$200,000 and will appoint a consultancy firm to investigate the removal of stamp duty. QFF will continue working with the government and the yet to be determined consultant to remove this inefficient tax.

Severe Tropical Cyclone Debbie Recovery and Resilience project was funded in September 2017. QFF has been working with member organisations CANEGROWERS, Growcom, Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland and Queensland Dairyfarmers' Organisation, and AgForce to deliver a recovery and resilience project to farms impacted by STC Debbie. Due to the timing of the project the focus has been on resilience planning. QFF continues to advocate for a change in the way natural disaster assistance is administered under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) and will be working with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to review the Economic Recovery package that is delivered under Category D assistance.

The drought has continued to affect much of Queensland through 2017-18. At the close of the financial year, 57.4%

of the state remained drought declared. Some regions are now entering their sixth year of drought. The Queensland Government will soon be commencing a Drought Program Review. Drought also gained importance on the national agenda with QFF due to attend the Minister for Agriculture's drought Roundtable in July 2018.

CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

In partnership with Growcom and AgForce, QFF delivered the the Agriculture Sector Adaptation Plan (Ag SAP). The AgSAP identified critical barriers, gaps and industry needs, and recommended future actions to assist in building a stronger and more sustainable sector. For our sector, climate adaptation means continuous improvement in the capacity of farmers to deal with a changing climate by ensuring they have access to the required tools. An increased understanding of climate change results in more resilient farm businesses, and better climate modelling and management will deliver a more resilient sector.

QFF is again working with Growcom and AgForce and looking to deliver regional implementation plans for the AgSAP. These plans, along with accompanying case studies, will be delivered next financial year and enable farmers to understand the risks and opportunities from climate change and have practical adaptation options.



RURAL PLANNING

Queensland's disjointed planning framework continued to present challenges for realising logical planning outcomes for agriculture, and there continues to be an uncoordinated and inconsistent approach to the protection of agricultural resources.

We continue to see the permanent loss of the best farm land in the state to manufacturing, industrial uses, urban sprawl, services, utilities, and mining. Work undertaken through the vegetation management legislation review revealed that since 1999 at least 113,690 hectares of the best agricultural land has already been lost to alternative uses.

In addition, the rush to solar energy generation in Queensland has accelerated the loss of prime agricultural land. QFF conservatively estimates that at least 5,000 hectares of additional prime agricultural land has been lost to large-scale solar facilities in the past few years. An exact figure is unknown because this information is not captured by the Queensland Land Use Mapping Program (QLUMP) and the Queensland Government does not actively monitor it.

Throughout the year, QFF worked with the State Government to attempt to deliver better planning outcomes during this period of unprecedented growth in applications and development approvals with a solar guideline. The guideline was to be released in 2017 but probably won't be released until September 2018. Regardless, the proposed large-scale solar development in Warwick entirely on both ALC Class A agricultural land and Strategic Cropping Land reaffirms QFF's position that a State Code for solar is needed and the current planning framework and process must be simplified, strengthened and consistently applied.

INLAND RAIL

The designated corridor for the Queensland section of the Inland Rail was determined this year. The NSW/QLD Border to Gowrie has been particularly concerning for some QFF members and agriculture more broadly. In September 2017, the Australian Government announced that the corridor via Brookstead, Pittsworth and the Wellcamp-Charlton Industrial Precinct was the preferred study area to progress to detailed design and take forward into the formal planning and approvals process.

The Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) accommodated QFF's request that two community consultative committees (CCCs) be established for the NSW/QLD Border to Gowrie project area – Southern Darling Downs and Inner Darling Downs – to better address community concerns with this part of the route; and a Condamine floodplain crossing study be completed prior to the environmental impact statement (EIS) process to ensure landowners' concerns and previous flood events were properly assessed before going any further. QFF nominated Graham Clapham to chair the Southern Darling Downs CCC, and this was also accommodated by ARTC.

Four of the five Queensland sections – NSW/QLD Border to Gowrie, Gowrie to Helidon, Helidon to Calvert, and Calvert to Kagaru have now entered the EIS process. ARTC has awarded an engineering and environmental investigation contract to Future Freight Joint Venture (FFJV), a joint venture between Aecom and Aurecon, to conduct this work. The Kagaru to Acacia Ridge and Bromelton section is still in the feasibility stage.



ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (NRM)

REEF REGULATIONS

The Queensland Government continues to press ahead with its agenda of increasing regulation in Reef catchments with a Bill to be introduced into Parliament late 2018.

In January 2018, the 'Broadening and enhancing reef protection regulations' Consultation and Regulatory Impact Statement was re-released for public consultation. QFF's submission to this process was unchanged. We continue to advise government that industry is principally opposed to increasing regulation in the Reef catchments, as it is not considered to be the best way to achieve the desired outcomes. It is widely accepted that the best way to realise long term practice change is leading by example, incentivising people and giving them a sense of ownership towards change; not through regulation.

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Vegetation management was again a controversial and highly politicised issue. The Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 was introduced into the

Queensland Parliament in March 2018 and referred to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee for detailed consideration. QFF made two submissions to the committee process and appeared before the committee.

Notably, the committee process demonstrated that there was inadequate consultation and incomplete underpinning data to develop the balanced, enduring vegetation management framework that QFF has long advocated for. However, the political realities (it was a Labor election commitment) meant that the Bill passed the Parliament on 3 May 2018.

QFF continues to acknowledge the importance of biodiversity conservation and sustainable agricultural industries, which are both central to realising a sensible and sustainable vegetation management framework. While the hyper-partisan politics remain, this will not be achievable. QFF continues to advocate for an objective, transparent and evidence-based consultation process with all key stakeholders as a pivotal starting point towards a long-term solution.



MINING & RESOURCES

The Queensland Government released its 2018 exploration program. Notably, an additional 44,300km² was made available for mineral, petroleum and gas, and coal resource exploration – more than double the 19,140km² of land that was opened up in 2017. QFF remains concerned about the increasing encroachment of the coal seam gas (CSG) industry into intensively farmed areas of the state. This includes potential CSG activities on existing tenures in the Bundaberg region. QFF is engaged in this process and has highlighted that the risks and impacts associated with the current CSG industry must be fully addressed before any future developments associated with other gas deposits are permitted.

Gas is one of the cleanest fossil fuels and will be a critical component in supporting the necessary increase in renewable energy production and the overall decarbonizing of the economy, but protections for quality agricultural land across Queensland continue to be inadequate. The impacts of off-site gas activities, to groundwater in particular, are also an increasing concern to QFF's membership where the future ability to farm may be jeopardized.

Part of QFF's advocacy in this area is the continued consultation work as part of the Land Court Resources User Group. Through this group, QFF has provided comment on a range of documents and processes such as the Draft Guidelines for Expert Evidence in the Land Court. QFF recognises that many land owners, due to their circumstances, represent themselves in Land Court processes which are a considerable burden on a farms resources and that they also rely on the provision of expert evidence.

QFF recognises that expert evidence is integral to the court process, providing informed critique on the assessment material of the proponent, using the accepted scientific method of peer review. This guidance is particularly timely, given the growing divide between professional review and opinion. The increasing substitution of facts and evidence with opinion, which continues to undermine the training and experience of professionals and experts, is concerning.



WASTE MANAGEMENT & RECYCLING REFORM

The Queensland Department of Environment and Science (DES) has been undertaking reviews of the regulated waste classification and waste-related Environmentally Relevant Activity (ERA) frameworks. QFF has been working with DES for over two years on earlier drafts of this document to retain exemptions where they apply to farm activities and to ensure that future regulation does not impact the sector. For example, current regulation in the Environmental Protection Regulation 2008 requires on-farm composting of over 200t/annum to hold an Environmental Authority. QFF has worked with DES to extend exemptions for on-farm composting to reduce the administrative burdens and costs associated with the beneficial use of organic resources on-farm.

QFF is a member of the DES External Reference Group to produce a Plastic Pollution Reduction Plan (PPRP) for Queensland. As part of this advocacy, QFF is also a member of a Technical Working Group to develop an industry-specific plan.

QFF was a member of the Australian Government's Primary Production Supply Chain Advisory Group (through the Department of Environment and Energy) responsible for the

formulation and finalisation of Australia's Food Waste Strategy which was launched in November 2017. The Strategy contributes towards reducing food waste by aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 12 (ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns) in the United Nations 'Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. The Strategy includes reference to various Queensland farmers who have piloted innovative value-add product design and development.

QFF continues to seek further support for recycling and material efficiency opportunities across the agricultural sector and is working in partnership with government and the private recycling sector to offer on-farm collections for recyclable materials, as well as drop-off points for material recovery including plastics and oil.

QFF acknowledges that on-farm managed material recovery opportunities, such as material collection schemes, will be critical to manage the rising costs associated with waste disposal in Queensland, particularly from 4 March 2019 when the new landfill levy commences.



WORKPLACE HEALTH & SAFETY (WHS)

Agriculture continues to be a focal point for WHS issues. The sector represents 2.6% of the workforce but 21% of fatalities ('Work Health and Safety in the Agriculture Industry', 2016). Across Australia, 40 workers were killed in 2015 ('Work-related Traumatic Injuries', 2015). The most frequent causes of death and injury being attributable to tractors, mobile plant machinery, and quad bikes.

There are around 1,700 general workplace injuries in Queensland's agricultural sector annually, affecting one in every 35 agricultural workers. One in every 70 workers suffers a serious injury and around 13 agricultural workers die each year as a result of a workplace injury. Approximately \$19 million is paid out annually for agriculture workers' compensation claims.

Agricultural workers are at considerable risk. The sector has the highest proportion of self-employed workers (46%) of any industry and it employs a higher proportion of older workers than any other industry – 16% are aged 65 and over. One in four injuries in agriculture affect workers aged between 25 and 34 years.

Electrical asset safety also continues to be an issue with over 100,000km of overhead lines in regional Queensland. In 2017, the sector had 67 direct contacts in the Ergon area. QFF continues to work with stakeholders to increase the awareness of WHS, particularly electrical safety on-farm and regarding strategies for managing risk including the 'Look Up and Live' app and to increase understanding across the industry of exclusion zones and options to relocate or raise powerlines.

Mental health is also a rising workplace health and safety issue on many farms. Australian males between 15 and 45 years of age are in the highest risk category for suicide. Across the country, men are approximately three times more likely to take their own life than women, and male farmers are dying by suicide at rates significantly higher than non-farming rural males – the further you move from the coast into regional, rural, and remote Australia, the more that figure climbs.

QFF has led a conversation in the media and with stakeholders to support the importance of good mental health. QFF has called on governments to work alongside mental health support organisations, key industry associations and community groups to help overturn the negative trends affecting farmers in rural and regional communities. Recognizing the direct contact that personnel have with farms, particularly those who may be vulnerable, QFF has commenced the provision of accredited mental first aid training; and developed a mental first aid kit listing various resources and local services.

FARM FINANCE & DEBT

The Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) delivered the 2017 Queensland Rural Debt Survey, with the final report being tabled in Parliament on 25 July 2018. The Survey ascertains the extent, nature and size of total rural indebtedness in Queensland as at 31 December 2017. Total debt for the sector now stands at \$17.24 billion (up 1.6% from the 2011 Survey at \$16.989 billion), spread between 18,335 borrowers (up 16% from the 2011 Survey at 15,822 borrowers). QFF continues to support the QRIDA Survey and advocates for a national survey of the same standard to better inform government and policy development.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

COMPETITION

The degree of change over the last 30 years to the environment farmers and the broader agribusiness sector operate in has made running a farming enterprise much more complex. In some agricultural industries, the trend of greater consolidation in pre and post-farm gate markets has negated some of the benefits expected from the competition reforms that have occurred over this period. While this has delivered lower prices for consumers, it has also challenged the profitability and competitiveness for some farm businesses, and in some industries, power imbalances mean getting a 'fair price' for agricultural products at the farm gate is becoming increasingly challenging.

During the year, QFF became more involved with the work of the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC). Queensland based staff from the Agriculture Unit attended QFF Council and follow up work into some alleged conduct regarding heavy machinery was pursued. The ACCC's concern was that several heavy machinery dealers are refusing to quote for supply unless the customer is in their geographic area and they are encouraging customers to contact a supplier that is in the customer's area. The ACCC welcomed the on-ground intelligence and experience QFF members were able to provide and passed this information onto the Cartels branch, as this behavior may constitute market sharing under the Competition and Consumer Act 2010.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

QFF continued to support the work of the Regional, Rural and Remote Communications Coalition (RRRCC). Led by the National Farmers' Federation, the 21-member Coalition continues to advocate for better telecommunication services in rural and regional Australia. Core policy outcomes sought by the Coalition are:

1. A universal service obligation that is technologically neutral and provides access to both voice and data.
2. Customer service guarantees and reliability measures to underpin the provision of voice and data services, to deliver more accountability from providers and the nbn.
3. Long term public funding for open access mobile network expansion in rural and regional Australia.
4. Fair and equitable access to Sky Muster for those with a genuine need for the service, and access which reflects the residential, educational and business needs of rural and regional Australia.
5. Fully resourced capacity building programs that build digital ability, and the development of effective problem-solving support for regional, rural and remote businesses and consumers.



2017-18 SUBMISSIONS

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

Submission to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee - [Land, Explosives and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018](#) - February 2018

Submission to the Land Court of Queensland - [Draft Guidelines for Expert Evidence in the Land Court](#) - February 2018

Submission to the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries - [Agriculture and Food Research, Development and Extension 10-Year Roadmap](#) - August 2017

EDUCATION & TRAINING

RJSA submission to the Queensland Training Ombudsman - [VET Investment Plan, Market Performance Review, Rural Operations Qualifications](#) - February 2018

RJSA submission to the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries - [Agriculture and Food Research, Development and Extension 10-Year Roadmap](#) - August 2017

ENERGY

Submission to the COAG Energy Council Secretariat - [AER Powers and Civil Penalty Regime](#) - June 2018

Submission to Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy - [Review of Queensland's Energy Legislation: Issues Paper, May 2018](#) - June 2018

Submission to Australian Energy Regulator - [Profitability Measures for Electricity and Gas Network Businesses: Draft Position Paper](#) - May 2018

Submission to Energy Queensland - [Network Tariffs 2020-25 Customer Consultation Issues Paper April 2018](#) - May 2018

Submission to Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy - ['Queensland Solar Farm Guidelines: Practical Guidance for Communities, Landowners and Project Proponents'](#) and ['Draft Queensland Solar Farm Guidelines: Guidance for Local Governments'](#) - May 2018

Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) - [Draft Determination: Regulated Retail Electricity Prices for 2018-19](#) - April 2018

Submission to the COAG Energy Council Secretariat - [Facilitating Access to Consumer Energy Data Consultation Paper by the COAG Energy Council and the related publication, the Review of Open Banking by the Treasury](#) - March 2018

Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) - [QCA document on the 'Review of Guaranteed Service Levels to Apply in Queensland from 1 July 2020'](#) - March 2018

Agriculture Industries Energy Taskforce submission to the Energy Security Board - [Draft design consultation paper National Energy Guarantee \(the Guarantee\)](#) - March 2018

Submission to the Energy Security Board - [National Energy Guarantee: Draft Design Consultation Paper \(15 February 2018\)](#) - March 2018

Submission to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee - [Electricity and other Legislation \(Batteries and Premium Feed-In Tariff\) Amendment Bill 2018 \(the Bill\)](#) - February 2018

Submission to the Clean Energy Finance Council (CEFC) - [CEFC Statutory Review: Consultation Paper, January 2018](#) - February 2018

Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority - [Interim Consultation Paper: Regulated Retail Electricity Prices for 2018-19 \(Queensland Competition Authority, December 2017\)](#) - January 2018

Agricultural Industries Energy Taskforce submission to the Australian Energy Regulator - [AER Discussion Paper: Profitability Measures for Regulated Gas and Electricity Network Businesses](#) - December 2017

Submission to the Australian Energy Regulator - [AER Discussion Paper: Profitability Measures for Regulated Gas and Electricity Network Businesses](#) - December 2017

Agricultural Industries Energy Taskforce response to COAG Energy Council - [Consumer Participation in Revenue Determinations](#) - November 2017

Submission to COAG Energy Council Secretariat - [Consumer Participation in Revenue Determinations and Associated Regulatory Processes: Consultation Paper on Consumer Resourcing \(5 October 2017\)](#) - November 2017

Joint submission to the Australian Energy Market Commission - [Consultation Paper: National Electricity Amendment \(Alternatives to grid-supplied network services\) Rule 2017](#) - July 2017

Agricultural Industries Energy Taskforce submission to ACCC - [Electricity Supply and Prices Inquiry](#) - July 2017

ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (NRM) & WASTE

Submission to the Department of Environment and Science - [Directions Paper: Transforming Queensland's Recycling and Waste Industry](#) - June 2018

Submission to the Agriculture Review (Aither) - [Review of interactions between the EPBC Act and the agriculture sector](#) - June 2018

Submission to the Office of the Coordinator-General - [Draft Terms of Reference for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for the Inland Rail NSW/QLD Border to Gowrie Project](#) - June 2018

Submission (addendum) to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee - [Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 \(the Bill\)](#) - April 2018 ([map](#))

Submission to the State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee - [Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 \(the Bill\)](#) - March 2018

Submission to the Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee - ['Nature Conservation \(Special Wildlife Reserve\) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018' \(the Bill\)](#) - March 2018

Submission to the Department of Environment and Science - [Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement \(September 2017\): Broadening and enhancing reef protection regulations](#) - February 2018

Submission to the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection - [Review of the Regulated Waste Classification and Waste-Related Environmentally Relevant Activity \(ERA\) Frameworks - Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement \(RIS\)](#) - August 2017

Submission to the Agriculture and Environment Committee - [Inquiry into Nature Conservation \(Special Wildlife Reserve\) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017](#) - July 2017

MINING & AGRICULTURE

Submission to the Department of the Environment and Energy - [Independent Expert Scientific Committee on Coal Seam Gas and Large Coal Mining Development \(IESC\) Information Guidelines and Explanatory Note, Uncertainty Analysis in Groundwater Modelling](#) - March 2018

RURAL PLANNING

Submission to the Coordinator General - [Bundaberg State Development Area Draft Development Scheme](#) - September 2017

WATER

Submission to the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy - [Draft Water Plan \(Condamine Balonne\) 2019](#) - June 2018

Submission to the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy - [Draft Water Plan \(Border Rivers and Moonie\) 2019](#) - June 2018

Submission to the Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission - [Profitability Measures for Electricity and Gas Network Businesses: Draft Position Paper](#) - May 2018

Submission to the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources - [Second review of the Lake Eyre Basin Intergovernmental Agreement](#) - May 2018

Submission to the Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission - [Issues Paper](#) - April 2018

Submission to the Australian Government Productivity Commission - [Murray-Darling Basin Plan: Five-year assessment](#) - April 2018

Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy - [Inquiry into the management and use of Commonwealth environmental water \(the Inquiry\)](#) - April 2018

Submission to the Productivity Commission - [Draft Report on National Water Reform](#) - October 2017

Submission to the Office of the Great Barrier Reef - [Draft Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan 2017-2022](#) - October 2017

Submission to the Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport - [Inquiry into 'The Integrity of the Water Market in the Murray-Darling Basin'](#) - September 2017

Submission to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee - [Mineral, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017](#) - September 2017

Submission to the Department of Natural Resources and Mines - [Draft Water Bill 2017 \(version reference: B17_0028_v17\)](#) - July 2017

MAJOR PROJECTS



ENERGY SAVERS

QFF continued to work with industry members to deliver practical on-farm energy efficiency and renewable energy advice to farmers through the Energy Savers Plus Program (ESPP). The program has worked closely with over 130 farms, undertaking Type 2 energy audits and supporting farmers implement the audit findings.

Key achievements of the program during 2017/18:

- 44% of farms having implemented projects and another 16% indicating an intention to do so (with 33% still to decide);
- 55 case studies with five video case studies, numerous articles on the Energy Savers webpage and a fact sheet on financing energy efficiency and renewable energy;
- Presentations at 22 farm field days, workshops and conferences across the state including Stanthorpe, Dalby, Bundaberg, Mackay, Kingaroy, Eulo and Koah (with 60 in total during the program)
- Over 7,500 MWh per year in energy savings identified, with cost savings of over \$3 million from audit recommended actions with a payback period of less than five years; and
- Six bi-monthly e-newsletters highlighting new case studies and energy efficiency events (with 14 sent until 30 June 2018).

The program has been completed, with QFF continuing its extension role until June 2018. QFF will play a role in the Energy Savers Plus Program Extension (ESPPE) announced by the Premier in October 2017. The extended program will include 200 on-farm audits with an implementation bonus of up to \$20,000 per farm and is expected to be completed by December 2020.

REEF ALLIANCE: GROWING A GREAT BARRIER REEF

The Reef Alliance: Growing a Great Barrier Reef Project is a collaboration involving 12 partners. The project commenced in May 2016 and invests \$45.6 million to support 1,219 farmers and graziers improve their practices over 1,917,186ha across 33 Great Barrier Reef catchments by June 30, 2019. The project targets the sugarcane, grazing, horticulture, broad acre cropping and dairy industries. QFF manages the head agreement with the Australian Government and nine sub-contract agreements on behalf of project partners.

Project partners are heavily involved in progressing on-ground implementation and will continue to do so for the remaining year of the project. Considerable work was required this year to complete a variation of project activities and expenditure across the commodities, with this 7-month process signed off by the Australian Government just prior to the close of the financial year.

Over the last 24 months, the project has achieved the following outputs:

- 1500+ farmers attended reef water quality related workshops;
- 168 farmers undertaken practice change over 163,837ha;
- 1,332 farmers receiving one-on-one extension; and
- 18,430 hours of one-on-one extension visits with land managers.

As part of the project's communication activities, QFF partnered with the Prince's Trust Australia for the inaugural Prince of Wales Environmental Leadership – Reef Sustainability Award. Recognising a local leader for their exemplary efforts above and beyond the call of duty to raise awareness, foster knowledge sharing, in sustainable natural resource management, the award was won by Frank and Dianne Sciacca, co-founders of the Ecoganic farming system at Pacific Coast Eco-Bananas. The award was offered alongside five other award categories in reef conservation, extension, nutrient, sediment, and pesticide management as part of the annual Reef Alliance Awards.

The 12 project partners are: AgForce, Australian Banana Growers' Council, Burnett Mary Regional Group, CANEGROWERS, Cape York NRM, Fitzroy Basin Association, Growcom, NQ Dry Tropics, Queensland Dairyfarmers' Organisation, QFF, Regional Groups Collective, Terrain NRM.

RURAL JOBS & SKILLS ALLIANCE (RJSA)

In its third year of operation, RJSA continued to provide advice to government, service providers and other stakeholders about employment, skills, industry training and workforce planning on behalf of Queensland agriculture and related industries.

RJSA worked alongside Jobs Queensland in the 'Anticipating Future Skills' project and contributed to a state-wide economic modelling exercise projecting the skills and training needs in 3 and 5-year scenarios. RJSA also completed the research report '2018 Agriculture Future Skills and Training Needs' for Jobs Queensland, which looked at the potential disruptive effects of emerging technological and associated trends expected to impact the agriculture workforce.

RJSA provided ongoing feedback from industry and evidence-based commentary on training needs and industry expectations including:

- The Annual VET Investment Plan;
- VET Quality Framework to inform about supplier issues and RTO/PQS monitoring via Training Market Health Checks;
- The Australian Industry Skills Council on national training package development and participation in Industry Reference Committees (IRCs);
- Skills Forecast and Schedule of Work (2018-2021) by contributing to the relevant IRCs' training package project reviews;
- National VET Reform – consultation with federal Dept. of Employment & Training in Unduly Short Courses and Training product reform; and
- Registered Training Organisations delivering to our sector.

RJSA also contributed to the market performance of the VET sector making a submission to the Queensland Training Ombudsman's review of the Rural Operations qualifications to ensure continued access to subsidised courses that meet student and industry priorities. A final determination is expected soon.

To increase the understanding of students, educators and career advisors about the career opportunities offered by our industries, RJSA supported the School Industry Partnership Program (SIPP) and Gateway Schools to Agribusiness.

To improve development, attractions and retention of skilled workforce, RJSA continued to support the work of the Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network (QAWN); and led the Agriculture Capacity Building (Pilot) Program, which included delivering 20 workshops to improve the skills of new and existing extension officers across the Great Barrier Reef Catchments.

The re-elected Labor Government committed a further \$3 million to retaining RJSA and the Queensland Agricultural Workforce Network (QAWN) over the coming three years.

The Alliance members are: QFF, AgForce, CANEGROWERS, Cotton Australia, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Growcom, Queensland Chicken Growers' Association and the Timber and Building Materials Association (TABMA).

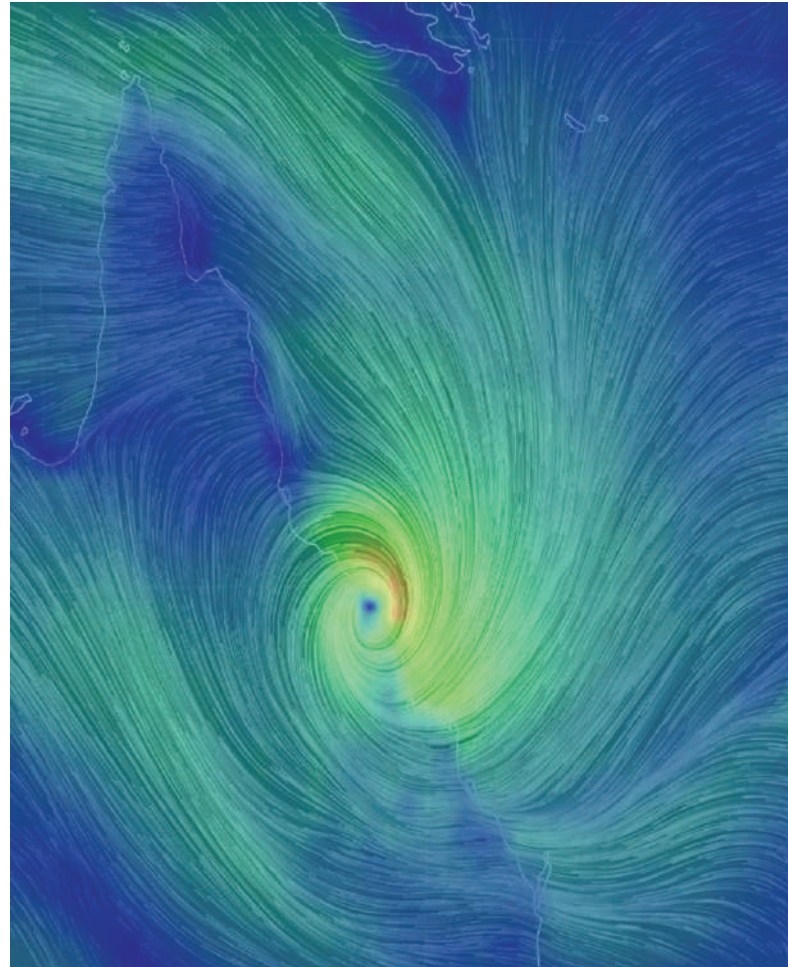


DROUGHT AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION PROGRAM – PRODUCING ENHANCED AGRICULTURAL CROP INSURANCE SYSTEMS

Funded through the Queensland Government's Drought and Climate Adaptation Program (DCAP), the project conducted focused reviews on climate risk in agriculture and how insurance products could be used to address these risks. The project finishes 30 June 2021.

Outputs of the project include:

- Cyclone parametric cover developed and case studies (with actual pricing) developed to demonstrate how the product works;
- Surveyed 26 Macadamia growers and completed a report 'Key risks for Australian Macadamia growers and potential insurance options to manage financial';
- Low rainfall cover examples developed, further work needed to incorporate irrigation and energy; and
- Started developing a concept for a mutual fund for members to manage insurance as a member benefit.



INSURANCE DATA

Delivered with QFF industry member Growcom and AgForce and funded through the Department of Agricultural and Fisheries, the project worked with industry partners to compile farm level and regional data needed by the insurance industry to develop insurance products and focus on insurance education.

Outputs:

- Small data set for the summer fruits industry in Queensland;
- Two data sets for the grains industry in Queensland;
- Presented 17 workshops to (approximately) 353 people;
- 21 meetings with insurance industries, peak industry organisations, federal government and Rural Research and Development Corporations to talk about insurance in Queensland;
- Product development – initial stages of development of a summer grains product with CelsiusPro; and
- Developed a 'fallow insurance' concept with assistance from Willis Towers Watson to assist dry land grain growers with low rainfall risk

CYCLONE DEBBIE AGRICULTURAL RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PROJECT

Tropical Cyclone Debbie was a category four severe cyclone that made landfall over central Queensland on 28 March 2017. At its peak, there were sustained wind gusts up to 195 km/h. Once it made landfall it weakened and turned to the southeast and tracked south. The remnant low-pressure system brought heavy rainfall and flooding through Central Queensland and into Southeast Queensland. The total damage cost of Cyclone Debbie and the associated rain is estimated at over \$2.4 billion.

QFF received funding under Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements - Category D Economy recovery package. In partnership with industry members CANEGROWERS, Growcom, Nursery Garden Industry Queensland, Queensland Dairyfarmers' Organisation and AgForce, QFF is delivering cyclone recovery and resilience activities through the impact zone in Central Queensland and the associated flooding impact region in South East Queensland.

The Project will provide services for affected businesses to:

- Access government and other assistance measures available;
- Access additional support where required from professionals such as financial advisors, technical advisors and health professionals; and
- Undertake natural disaster business resilience.



NU WATER

QFF, on behalf of an unofficial consortium including industry members Cotton Australia, Central Downs Irrigators Limited, Growcom and the Queensland Chicken Meat Council, AgForce, Lockyer Valley Growers, Lockyer Valley Regional Council, Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise, Queensland Urban Utilities and Seqwater successfully secured funding under the Australian Government's National Water Infrastructure Development Fund to undertake a feasibility study to test the viability of using recycled water from south-east to increase agricultural production across the Lockyer Valley and Darling Downs.

International consulting firm GHD Pty Ltd was engaged by the NuWater Consortium to investigate the feasibility of the NuWater Project and develop a Preliminary Business Case (PBC). A broad range of potential options to deliver recycled water from Brisbane to the Lockyer Valley and Darling Downs were identified.

The option to use class B/C water with the use of the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme (WCRWS) pipeline, the construction of Healthwood pump station, new delivery pipeline and pump stations from Lowood to the top of the Toowoomba Range plus distribution networks to the Lockyer Valley and Darling Downs agricultural areas was most favourable following economic, financial and commercial analysis.

Unfortunately, while the NuWater Project had merit, the PBC identified that it was not a financially viable solution to provide recycled water to the Darling Downs via the Lockyer Valley at this time. However, the PBC identified some of the key step-changes in current policy and technology that would be required to improve the economic viability of the project and may prove useful in planning better utilisation of existing water infrastructure to increase the capacity of agriculture in the future.

QFF MEMBERS

MAJOR COMMODITY MEMBERS



CANEGROWERS

CANEGROWERS



COTTON
AUSTRALIA

COTTON AUSTRALIA



growcom

GROWCOM



Nursery & Garden Industry
Queensland

NURSERY & GARDEN INDUSTRY
QUEENSLAND (NGIQ)



QUEENSLAND CHICKEN GROWERS
ASSOCIATION (QCGA)



QUEENSLAND DAIRYFARMERS
ORGANISATION (QDO)

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS



BUNDABERG REGIONAL IRRIGATORS
GROUP (BRIG)



BURDEKIN RIVER IRRIGATION AREA
IRRIGATORS LTD (BRIA)



CENTRAL DOWNS IRRIGATORS LIMITED
(CDIL)



PIONEER VALLEY WATER CO-OPERATIVE
LIMITED (PVWATER)



AUSTRALIAN CANE FARMERS ASSOCIATION
(ACFA)



QUEENSLAND CHICKEN MEAT COUNCIL
(QCMC)



QUEENSLAND UNITED EGG PRODUCERS



FLOWER ASSOCIATION



PORK QUEENSLAND

CORPORATE PARTNERS



TELSTRA

Telstra knows that connectivity is vital to regional, rural and remote communities. That is why they are committed to providing improved and expanded mobile coverage across Australia.

Telstra is investing a digital future that champions the needs of farmers. They offer a range of products to suit the specific needs of rural and regional Australians. As a partner of Queensland Farmers Federation, Telstra is making a commitment to the people of the country, providing support for the agricultural sector in Queensland and helping regional communities to thrive.

Visit www.telstra.com.au/telstra-country-wide for information on rural-based products to suit your home and farm business.



HOLDING REDLICH

HOLDING REDLICH

At Holding Redlich, great law is our starting point. We have a broad depth of specialist experience from the farm gate, through the supply chain to export and beyond. From acting for third and fourth generation family business through to large corporates, industry groups and international investors, we have the skills to meet all legal needs in agriculture.

Across our offices in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Cairns we provide solutions tailored to our clients' needs, underpinned by the very best legal thinking and expert industry knowledge. But it takes much more than great law to build enduring partnerships – our aim with every client. That's why we have a personal stake in our clients' success and longevity, a commitment to quality in everything we do and an informal culture which values respect and collaboration.

Our clients receive the benefit of our strong political, commercial and cultural networks where necessary to get results. And above all else, we understand that our role is to look after our clients and their best interests.

Visit www.holdingredlich.com for more information.



JACOBS

Jacobs is a premier global consulting, design, engineering, construction, operations & maintenance and technical services firm delivering advanced solutions for a more connected, sustainable world. Our 77,000+ employees in 400+ locations around the world serve a broad range of companies and organizations, including industrial, commercial, and government clients across multiple markets and geographies.

Our company's vision, mission and values are the cornerstones of our culture. They guide our global strategy, define our overarching goals and serve as a constant reminder of Jacobs' high performing, innovative and empowered culture. We pride ourselves on operating seamlessly around the globe. We sustain this single culture by remaining true to our values. These values address how we interact with clients, vendors and one another. They help shape our business strategy and are the foundation of our code conduct.

Visit www.jacobs.com for more information.



PHONE

(07) 3837 4720

FAX

(07) 3236 4100

EMAIL

qfarmers@qff.org.au

ADDRESS

Level 3, 183 North Quay, Brisbane, QLD 4000

POSTAL ADDRESS

PO Box 12009 Brisbane QLD 4003

ONLINE

www.qff.org.au