

# YEAR IN REVIEW

2021-2022



QUEENSLAND  
FARMERS'  
FEDERATION



# CONTENTS

---

<b>President's Report</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CEO's Report</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2021-22 Snapshot of Achievements</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>About QFF</b>	<b>6</b>
Queensland Agriculture Representation History	6
<b>Key Priorities</b>	<b>7</b>
Water and Energy	8
Planning and Local Government	15
Natural Resource Management	16
Farm Business Resilience	19
Biosecurity	21
Workforce	23
<b>Commodity Reports Tier 1 &amp; 2 Members</b>	<b>25</b>
Canegrowers	26
Cotton Australia	27
Growcom	28
Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland	29
eastAUSmilk	30
<b>Advocacy</b>	<b>31</b>
Advocacy and Government Relations	32
<b>2021-22 Submissions</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Industry Members</b>	<b>38</b>
Commodity Members	38
Irrigator Members	38
<b>Corporate Partners</b>	<b>39</b>

## COPYRIGHT 2022 Queensland Farmers' Federation Ltd

This work is Copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be 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](mailto:qfarmers@qff.org.au)

CITATION Queensland Farmers' Federation Ltd 2022. Year in Review 2021-22. 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 relate to, or be relevant to, a reader's particular circumstances.

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

---



**Allan Dingle**  
**PRESIDENT**

As we look back on the year that has been, it is also a good time to pause and reflect on the important role QFF has played on behalf of our members and Queensland agriculture more broadly, since its inception.

You may be aware that QFF kicked off in a fashion in 1922 as the Council of Agriculture but then really began in earnest in 1969 as the Qld Producers Federation. After a couple of iterations, the Queensland Farmers' Federation was officially registered in 1992 and has been a strong advocate for our members ever since.

As an organisation, QFF is home to agricultural peak bodies in Queensland and we represent our members on the issues, challenges and opportunities that are common across our membership and collective areas of interest.

Today our membership is made up of 21 peak bodies and includes some of Queensland and Australia's most eminent peak agricultural bodies from Cotton Australia, Queensland Canegrowers and Growcom through to eastAUSmilk and Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland.

Collectively, QFF represents over 13,000 primary producers across Queensland, through our membership.

The year of 2021 / 22 has certainly been one of ups and downs for our members as the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 ensued, farmers faced increasing workforce shortages, upwards pressure on input costs and extreme weather events across the state. On the upside, the year saw commodity prices continue to strengthen and the sector demonstrate its resilience with exports rebounding and record growth realised with the total value of Queensland's primary industry commodities exceeding \$23 billion by the end of the period.

QFF has proudly and steadfastly represented the interests of our members ensuring they have a seat at the table and a strong voice in the strategic and policy matters, important to their future. We have worked hard to make sure our members are well informed on the issues that matter to them. QFF have played an active role in policy issues relating to water, energy, disaster management and business resilience, workforce development, natural resource management and biosecurity throughout the year.

At the end of 2021, QFF farewelled Dr Georgina Davis as outgoing CEO and welcomed Jo Sheppard who commenced the role in February 2022. On behalf of the QFF board, I would like to thank Georgina for her service to QFF and congratulate her for what she achieved during her time with the organisation. The board and I welcome Jo to the role of CEO and look forward to working with her in advancing the interests of our members and Queensland agriculture in the future.

On behalf of QFF I would like to thank my fellow board directors, the QFF Council representatives, QFF Policy Committee representatives and QFF members for their ongoing support and active participation in working with us to ensure a positive future for agriculture in this state. I look forward to continuing to work with you over the year ahead.

# CEO'S REPORT

---



Ms Jo Sheppard  
GAICD

I was pleased to take up the role of CEO in February this year. After a lifetime working in and around Queensland agriculture, joining the QFF team very much felt like coming home. I am relishing the opportunity to work on behalf of an industry that is so dear to my heart and as a member of the QFF team who are so committed and passionate about making a difference for our members and for Queensland agriculture.

Queensland agriculture is a significant contributor to the state's economy and an integral part of regional and remote communities. QFF has a valuable role to play in advocating for our members on their shared challenges and opportunities and ensuring a favorable operating environment for Queensland agriculture in the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of Dr Georgina Davis during her time with QFF and in particular congratulate Georgina on leading the creation of "Walking the Wire" a valuable resource to help strengthen the financial security of rural agribusiness women. This project was indeed a labor of love and has left a legacy that all those involved can be proud of.

Since my commencement in the role, I have enjoyed spending time with our members to fully understand the issues that matter to them. It comes as no surprise that water, energy, workforce, biosecurity and risk management are priorities across the QFF membership. Interesting though to hear from our members about the complexities facing farmers as they navigate the energy transition, natural capital, biosecurity readiness, workforce planning and building business resilience and how QFF can support and provide leadership from a policy, advocacy and on farm project perspective.

The Energy Savers Program is a great example of an on-farm innovation that has seen energy audits delivered to over 300 farms across all sectors throughout Queensland since its commencement in 2015. This year we saw the Energy Savers Plus Extension Program conclude with participating farmers achieving impressive energy savings along with emission reductions.

QFF have continued extensive resilience and recovery work on drought and natural disasters supporting our members to build risk management capacity across Queensland agriculture. The Farm Business Resilience Program and the commencement of a collaborative project investigating appropriate insurance products and improving the understanding of insurance and its use as a risk management tool is working to assist Queensland agriculture in preparedness.

Another highlight of the year was the development of the Queensland Agricultural Industry Workforce Plan 2022-2027 in partnership with Jobs Queensland and the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance. As workforce shortages continue to impact farming enterprises across the State, QFF sought to understand the current and emerging workforce issues experienced across the sector with the consultation findings informing this important strategic five-year strategy.

It has been an eventful year on the policy front with QFF making representation on a number of important issues including proposed work health and safety regulations (Quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles); regulatory review of CSG-induced subsidence on agricultural land; Queensland Competition Authority (QCA) draft determination regulated retail electricity prices for 2022/23 and Queensland's non-urban water policy positions, just to name a few.

The year saw QFF work closely with intensive livestock members to help build industry capacity, support farming enterprises across the state grow their agritourism opportunities and champion the needs of our members in the Federal election campaign debates.

I would like to thank the QFF Board, Council, members, staff, corporate partners and key stakeholders for your collective efforts in advancing the future of Queensland agriculture and ensuring QFF members have been well represented on the issues that matter for the future of farmers. I look forward to working with you all over the year ahead to continue building a strong, unified voice for agriculture.

# 2021-22 SNAPSHOT OF ACHIEVEMENTS

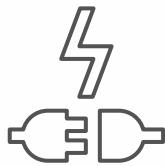
---



**Five-Year Agworkforce Strategy for Queensland Agriculture Announced**



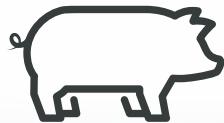
**Launch of Walking the Wire e-Kit – QFF Supports Farm Businesswomen to 'Walk the Wire' of Financial Security**



**Successful outcomes of Energy Savers Plus program**



**Agricultural Extension Work Placement Program –**  
**11 agricultural extension officers graduate 2021 Agriculture**



**Establishment of QFF Intensive Animals Policy Group bring government and industry together to strengthen the future of intensive animals sector across Qld.**



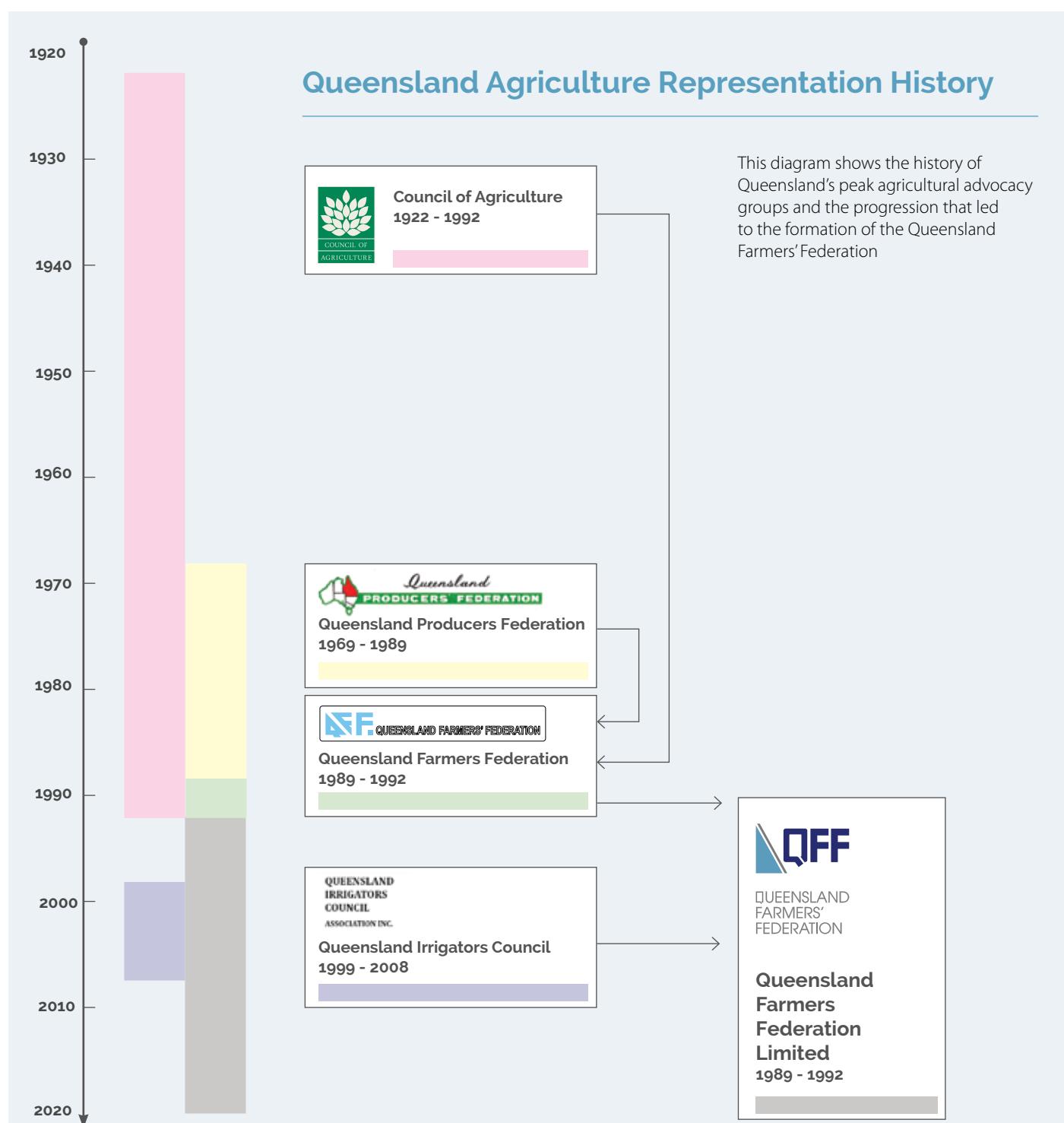
# ABOUT QFF

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

For more than 30 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.

Currently uniting 21 peak national, state, and regional agriculture industry organisations and the state's irrigation groups.



# KEY PRIORITIES



## Water and Energy

### Snapshot of achievements

- QFF received detailed research maps from the Department of Environment and Science, on updates of the environmental values (EV) and water quality objectives. QFF noted inconsistencies in data utilised for the Burdekin water quality objectives (WQOs) and EVs with further investigation required. QFF and Burdekin River Irrigation Area Irrigators (BRIA) successfully advocated for a change to be implemented in the amendments to the *Environmental Protection (Water and Wetland Biodiversity) Policy 2019*, which will now list Baratta Creek in the Burdekin as highly disturbed.
- Tariff literacy was again highlighted as a key area to be addressed from the QCA regulated retail electricity prices for 2022-2023, and QFF developed a communication strategy with Ergon and Energy Qld earlier in 2021, to help stakeholders best utilise tariff options available and develop solutions to reduce electricity costs.
- QFF in partnership with the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (DRDMW)

developed a more user-friendly map to display water plans which is available online for all stakeholders. QFF has requested the department further develop the map to enable water users to utilise the details more efficiently.

- QFF developed and presented a report to the Minister Glenn Butcher and the Department on water pricing and the inequity in above lower bound prices. Negotiations and research into pricing are continuing through the Minister's Department and QFF. QFF's policy position is:
  - o Where prices are higher than lower bound costs, prices should be reduced to reflect efficient lower bound cost; and
  - o Examine strategic challenges facing existing bulk and distribution schemes, including appropriate maintenance of irrigation infrastructure, as well as scheme modernisation



## Policy and Submissions

Developed in conjunction with Growcom, a water and energy policy position statement for Growcom's Queensland Horticulture Council (available to Growcom members only).



**Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority** – QCA Rate of return review, Draft report (June 2021) – September 2021

### Water



**Submission to Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water** – Draft Strategic Water Infrastructure Reserve, Dawson River Pilot Project review report (July 2022) – August 2022



**Submission to Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water** – Queensland's non-urban policy positions (September 2021) – December 2021



**Submission to the Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment** – Consultation Draft Underground Water Impact Report (UWIR) 2021 for the Surat Cumulative Management Area – November 2021



**Submission to the Productivity Commission** – Register of Foreign-owned Water Entitlements – Draft Report (August 2021) – September 2021



**Submission to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment** – Draft default guideline values for the Water Quality Guidelines (August 2021) – August 2021

### Energy



**Submission to the Department Energy and Public Works** – Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement: Electricity supply options for the North West Minerals Province (December 2021) – March 2022



**Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority** – QCA Draft Determination: Regulated retail electricity prices for 2022-23 (February 2022) – April 2022



**Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority** – QCA Interim consultation paper: Regulated retail electricity prices for 2022-23 (December 2021) – January 2022



**Submission to Australian Energy Market Commission** – Directions Paper on the Review of the Regulatory Framework for Metering Services (16 September 2021) – October 2021



**Submission to Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources** – ERF Methodology Development Priorities for 2022 – August 2021

## Advocacy

### Energy

Energy continues to be a significant focus for QFF. In 2021-22, QFF made 5 submissions on energy policy and regulation impacting Queensland's primary producers, to state and federal processes.

Over the past twelve months, there have been further developments in regulatory and technology change across the energy sector, with Electric Vehicles (EV) being one new parameter entering and disrupting the electricity market, without a plan considering how this extra load on the electricity network will impact tariffs and pricing. Most of this year's advocacy effort has been in the ongoing development of a suite of suitable tariffs and affordable pricing, Drought Relief from Electricity Charges Scheme (DRECS) and Electricity Tariff Adjustment Scheme (ETAS) for the food, fibre and foliage sectors.

Matters highlighted from the delivery of the QCA Regulated Retail Electricity prices for the 2022-23 year, included the continual rise in electricity pricing, with QFF advocating that electricity prices need to be set at a sustainable level along with the call to government to increase the small business customer threshold to 160MWh per year; and have the state Government pay the solar rebate from consolidated revenue.

QFF highlighted the continuing problem of network charges that the QCA are yet to thoroughly address regarding the cost build up components and tariffs that reflect the seasonal use of the electricity by the agricultural sector. These concerns have all been addressed in previous submissions, with the recurrent topic of equitable pricing still a primary concern as the continual increase in costs for energy impact farm design and the long-term sustainable development of our agricultural sector.

As the transition to renewables becomes a bigger focus for industry and government, so too will the options to transfer to more affordable energy sources on farm. This transition will require an intensive overhaul of the existing regulatory framework, which QFF is currently working on at both a State and Federal level, and what it will mean for the sector.

### Water

In 2021-22 QFF made six submissions on water policy and regulation that are impacting Queensland's primary producers. Throughout this period, extensive advocacy work by QFF and its industry members was undertaken. This included stakeholder engagement with government departments both Federal and State, the Minister's Office, Sunwater, Seqwater and Unity Water. Ongoing stakeholder engagement has enabled QFF to have input into the development and changes to policy and water efficiency projects, including a more efficient water planning delivery process.

Through effective engagement, QFF was able to provide advice and solutions that enabled our members and external stakeholders to identify how water is managed in the water plan area with greater details placed on map areas. The changes have allowed all stakeholders to identify water plan areas in a more succinct and practical manner.

To address the complexities of water security, QFF is continuing to work towards a comprehensive strategy on water, incorporating the quality of available land resources such as soil, water infrastructure, energy costs for supply, and the implications of climate change on the availability of water and associated impacts on the irrigation sector.

## Stakeholder engagement

### Ministerial Energy Council

QFF participates in the Ministerial Energy Council (MEC), and for the past twelve months has been involved in discussions about what the future of energy looks like for Queensland, including a market overview, current challenges, wholesale prices, market signals, National Electricity Market (NEM) functionality; retail market and consumers and retail protections.

For the first half of 2022, MEC energy discussions have been about the transition to renewables. As part of these discussions, QFF is developing a new energy policy, integrating renewables and current innovative on farm practices, required to meet demand and lower costs.

As part of this strategy, QFF has held direct discussions with the Department of Energy and Public Works (DEPW), including the Ministers Office to develop a consultation pathway for the future energy plan. QFF along with other industry stakeholders are working together on developing a long-term plan for energy-efficiency, reducing farm energy costs and integrating alternative energy solutions through reform initiatives.

**QFF is developing a new energy policy, integrating renewables and current innovative on farm practices, required to meet demand and lower costs.**

### Lake Eyre Basin

The Lake Eyre Basin (Qld) Stakeholder Advisory Group (LEBSAG) was established to inform the development of a consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS). It includes Traditional Owners, industry bodies, environment groups, local government, and scientific experts. QFF plays a key role in the LEBSAG, representing the agricultural sector for Queensland, ensuring a coherent policy approach is established to support other agricultural interests in the region. It is also vital that the interests of our members located outside of this region are protected, that could potentially be impacted by any regulatory changes.

QFF along with other stakeholders submitted position statements that will formulate the basis for a RIS for the Lake Eyre Basin which will be finalised by government in 2023.

### Future Fields with Growcom

QFF participated in Growcom's Future Fields workshops in Bowen, South Johnstone and Mareeba, where we led discussions about both energy and water. QFF was invited to provide guidance on the development of a Queensland Horticulture Council Energy and Water Policy which was presented to Minister Furner in December 2021. As part of the field workshops in the North Queensland region, QFF along with Growcom visited various farms, to discuss various issues impacting the region, including a visit to recent scheme modernisation by Sunwater.



## Regional Water Assessments

The Queensland Government has invested \$9 million to deliver Regional Water Assessments (RWA) in three of Queensland's most significant food bowls – the Southern and Darling Downs, the Bundaberg and Burnett, and the Tablelands regions. The aim of the assessments is to identify water supply solutions to drive future economic growth. RWAs will provide a region-level assessment of water needs and options to improve water security and maximise economic development opportunities in the project area.

QFF and other stakeholders are helping with the development process, that will build on previous studies to make the best use of existing knowledge. The overall approach has been divided into three phases:

- a) **Phase one** will establish the service need and a short list of options.
- b) **Phase two** will focus on the detailed analysis of options and generating the overall strategy for the RWA.
- c) **Phase three** will be the creation of the final report.

The process will consider both infrastructure and non-infrastructure options including improving the efficiency of existing water supply schemes and maximising the benefit from existing water resources and infrastructure. QFF is on stakeholder advisory groups and working groups for all three RWAs, advocating for water security, economic growth and long-term viability of the agricultural sector through effective policy development.



QFF worked with BOM on climate solutions to help the agricultural sector, which could be integrated into the development of the Climate Services for Australia platform, which is part of the Future Drought Fund.

## Bureau of Meteorology

QFF over the past year has worked with the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) to discuss the release of two new projects being delivered through the Enhanced Water Monitoring and Information Program. The first project will include new sources of information, which will come from enhanced hydrometric monitoring, remote-sensing, and modelling in the northern Basin. The second project is centred on climate.

QFF also worked with BOM on climate solutions to help the agricultural sector, which could be integrated into the development of the Climate Services for Australia platform, which is part of the Future Drought Fund. The delivery of the platform prototype will have future involvement with various QFF member groups in the Burdekin and Condamine regions, which will allow direct user feedback prior to release.

## Paradise Dam Reference Group

The role of the Paradise Dam Reference Group (PDRG or Group) is to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas between key stakeholders and Sunwater while the Paradise Dam Improvement Project (PDIP) is implemented. QFF sits on various panels to ensure our members are supported when it comes to water policy and decisions that may impact their grower's businesses. As such QFF have developed a policy statement for Paradise Dam, noted as:

*The Queensland Government must continue to safeguard existing water entitlements, and the reliability of those entitlements, while investigating and remedying water supply constraints more broadly in the Bundaberg region. Market based mechanisms need to be used to manage all environmental externalities that are associated with water usage. The Queensland Farmers' Federation, and its member bodies, calls on the Queensland Government to take the following actions to better manage water resources and mitigate the impacts of Paradise Dam remediation works on the productivity and profitability of primary producers:*

- Ensuring consistency for existing nominal allocation holders, including reliability.
- Protecting and retaining nominal allocations within the Bundaberg Irrigation Area.
- Delivering alternative water infrastructure including, but not limited to, weirs and irrigation pipelines to facilitate future growth and ensure water security for the future.
- Identifying water constrained areas that require water security which will contribute to the development and economic growth of the region.
- Remediating the impediments (reliability, infrastructure) affecting the long-term water utilisation of this region particularly with regards to capacity of the various parts of the distribution system that will help to facilitate development and economic growth.
- Identifying and removing impediments to the efficient and effective operation of the local water market.



### **Cotton Australia QMDB Irrigator Workshop**

At the recent Cotton Australia Qld Murray-Darling Basin Irrigator Workshop, a high priority was the overview on the current metering process that is currently with government, and the potential impacts on irrigators from these changes. Farms located in the Murray Darling Basin region have been undergoing various trials, with metering and telemetry the focus – which continue to be the main focus going into the next year – with policy to be set before 2024 in line with Commonwealth obligations.

### **Canegrowers Economic and Trade Committee**

QFF was invited by the Canegrowers Economic and Trade Committee to present on water and energy and areas of policy that Canegrowers needs to consider. Ongoing discussions also included the drivers of change the economic and trade committee needs to be aware of when assessing water and energy policy. Undertaking a detailed analysis for each industry allows our members to be well informed when making decisions and providing evidence-based advice in relation to water and energy policy.

### **Agriculture Energy Taskforce (National Irrigators Council)**

QFF has continued to work closely and present to the Agriculture Energy Taskforce, with a focus on energy and water. QFF has given updates on our policies for water and energy, where Queensland is heading with water and energy, and what that means for farmers.

### **QFF Water and Energy Policy Committee**

QFF's Water and Energy Policy Committee (WEPC) met 12 times during the year, with further issue-specific meetings taking place throughout, involving select WEPC members. During this period numerous discussions were held about water planning, water quality, metering, with numerous water and energy policy objectives and solutions proposed as part of increasing both water and energy

efficiency and reducing costs on farm. Water prices will stay stable due to QFF's advocacy until 2024 where they will be addressed again.

WEPC also identified a range of current and future critical water-related issues, risks and impediments, as well as opportunities and enablers that may be available for the achievement of success across a range of themes from process-driven reforms to targeted investment in research and development. This reflects the ongoing complexity of the regulatory processes and particular ongoing challenges for the sector, including the upcoming transition to renewables as part of the state energy plan. Key areas QFF have contributed to are:

- QFF has been working with Minister de Brenni's office to develop a consultation pathway for the future energy plan.
- QFF are advocating to have above lower bound pricing reduced, by seeking policy amendments through the State Government and Sunwater. Further case studies are required from QFF for the next stage of application.
- QFF will develop an infrastructure policy through WEPC. Infrastructure to include changes to existing infrastructure to increase water security for the future.
- Utilisation of sewage water and recycled water as agricultural water supply options.
- Water and energy efficiency projects on farm via QFF's Energy Savers Program.
- The water and energy nexus requires integration into policy which also incorporates direct impacts of climate change.
- QFF is working on a new energy policy, integrating renewables and the current on farm innovative practices required to meet demand and lower costs.

### **Research and Development**

Over the past decade Australia's irrigated agricultural sector has responded to continual pressures of water resource scarcity, climate variability and productivity challenges by making large-scale structural adjustments on farm. Identifying gaps in these pressures that enable better on farm practices, and increase economic viability is vital to ensure the future of food, fibre and foliage continues to grow.

Through involvement with the whole of agriculture and vital State and Federal Government research and development opportunities, QFF has provided feedback into the development of CSIRO, BOM and DRDMW's Future Drought Fund apps. Climate variability is a vital component for crop production, including the use of fertilisers and pesticides. Having up to date access to information that enables farmers to have access to soil moisture loss, evaporation, weather, and other vital factors, will help towards on farm efficiencies and future economic viability.

QFF continues to work with external stakeholders to maximise efficiency on farm, by ensuring we are continually integrating the latest science to help guide technology, innovative practices, and policy development.

**We are continually integrating the latest science to help guide technology, innovative practices, and policy development.**

## Energy Projects

### Energy Savers Plus Program Extension

In 2021-22, QFF and its member partners continued to deliver the Energy Savers Plus Program Extension (ESPPE) with the Department of Energy and Public Works (DEPW). The program has delivered 180 energy audits to farms across Queensland.

The ESPPE includes a co-contribution grant of up to \$20,000 per farm and the team has been working with farms to encourage and facilitate implementation of recommended energy management opportunities.

QFF was successful in gaining an extension for farms to claim the rebate funding until the end of February 2022 (for farms that had applied to QRIDA for funding approval by 30 June 2021) in recognition of the disruption caused by natural disasters and the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**As a result, QFF worked to assist farms as necessary and during this extension period, an additional 38 participants were able to claim a co-contribution grant resulting in an additional \$645,228.91 in grant expenditure and included:**

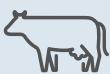
**15**  
sugar cane farms



**1**  
nursery



**11**  
dairy farms



**2**  
cattle farms



**6**  
horticulture farms



**1**  
cotton farm



**2**  
grain farms



**In addition, 9 additional M&V reports delivered, 10 additional Case Studies published, and 4 more e-news were distributed.**



**9**  
M&V reports



**10**  
case studies



**4**  
e-news

The project team also supported 2 master students from The University of Queensland to complete projects. Two recent studies focussing on (a) Recommendations for emission reduction for dairy production in Queensland and (b) Hydrogen potential and water allocation in the Darling Downs.

#### The Project has delivered

**180**

On-farm energy audits

**47**

Follow-up tariff reviews

**53**

Energy monitoring devices installed

**39**

Energy extension events

**90**

New case studies

**30**

M&V's completed

**16**

eNewsletters

#### Outcome for farms

**42,000**  
kWh

Annual energy savings per farm per year

**3.1**  
million

Annual farm cost savings

**675**

Recommendations across various technologies

**33**  
tonnes

Greenhouse gas emissions identified per farm

**138**

Farms have applied for co-contribution grants

## Flow on Benefits of Microgrids for Agriculture

In 2020-21, QFF and the project consortium executed the first half of the Flow on Benefits of Microgrids for Agriculture project funded by the Commonwealth's Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund (RRCF).

The microgrid study moves beyond efficiency and tariff insights and seeks to understand the feasibility of farmers engaging with the electricity network as non-traditional customers. By measuring energy flows with real-time smart meters over a year the project team will model scenarios where microgrids and other smart grid infrastructure could offer greater benefit to the farmer and the network.

During the second year of the project the extensive data gathering and analysis has proceeded, with business cases for different potential microgrid models occurring.

## Farmers Experience of Tariff Switching

QFF has partnered with Energy Consumers Australia to identify the variables influencing farmers' tariff choices and the impacts of new tariffs on their operations and behaviour. The study wanted to understand when and why farmers switch electricity tariffs and what (if any) impact the recent 2021-2023 Queensland tariff reforms have had on farmers. The study aims to assist farmers when deciding on the most suitable tariffs and to advocate for agriculture in tariff design. An additional objective of this project is to improve farmers' energy literacy and promote tools to better manage energy as an internal factor of agribusiness to enhance productivity and reduce costs.

Between August 2021 and June 2022, 35 farmers were interviewed about the role of electricity in their operations. Specialists from Ergon Energy Retail and QFF were invited to comment on some of the key findings. This involved:

1. Data collection on farms' electricity tariffs, connection points, usage patterns, and solar generation.
2. Conducting Interviews with farmers to understand the decision-making process and impacts of tariff switching, identifying the main challenges.
3. Developing resources and tools to raise awareness of issues and opportunities on farm operations in order to assist farmers in managing their tariffs and promote a better representation in tariff design.

The results will be collated into a web resource incorporating recorded interviews with Ergon, QFF and farmers.

## Digital Agriculture Project

The Queensland Farmers' Federation is working with Enzen Australia (Enzen) and National Narrowband Network Company (NNNCo) on a digital farming project which will plant smart meters and sensors on farms to grow resilient and profitable agribusinesses. The project aims to support industry to develop, trial and promote smart farming solutions in agriculture and food supply chains, while enhancing digital skills, creating regional jobs and driving efficiencies for businesses.

The project aims to create an innovative Internet of Things (IoT) solution to cover the end-to-end operations of two demonstration farms in Queensland. The project has engaged two complex farms with in the South East with horticulture, mixed cropping, intensive animals and cattle grazing.

It is expected to provide an understanding of the significant potential that can be achieved through digital farming.

The project has established a Low Power, Wide Area (LoRaWAN) network technology and over 50 smart meters, sensors and control devices have installed on the demonstration sites to capture data on livestock; the environment; assets; soil health; health and safety; security; water and energy; weather and processes.

Farmers are receiving this granular data in real time and have had an onboarding session to understand the data dashboard and begin to use them day-to-day. In-depth data analytics has commenced to assist farmers identify business improvement opportunities aimed at reducing energy costs, water losses, waste and emissions.

Operations are being monitored and recommendations will be made to optimise efficiency of the properties over the life of the project. The learnings from this project will then be shared with the agricultural sector and Queensland universities to ensure the broader farming community can benefit from the value achieved.

**In-depth data analytics has commenced to assist farmers identify business improvement opportunities aimed at reducing energy costs, water losses, waste and emissions.**



# Planning and Local Government

Planning for agriculture is necessary to ensure the best agricultural land remains available for food, fibre and foliage production. Land suitable for agriculture is a finite resource that cannot be created or replaced. Planning in rural areas aims to allow the establishment and operation of productive agricultural industries while conserving important natural areas and allowing non-agricultural uses in appropriate areas.

QFF has continued to play a role in this important policy issue through:

## Review of Agricultural Land Classifications for Statutory Planning in Queensland

- QFF undertook a review and developed a Discussion Paper on the current agricultural land use classification system. The review identified how the planning framework does and does not work in maintaining agricultural values, as well as proposed reforms and options to address planning barriers and information gaps to facilitate planning outcomes. This Discussion Paper provides an industry position to inform government through the Agricultural Ministerial Advisory Council (AgMAC) in its capacity to promote collaboration between industry and government.
- QFF seeks to advance discussions on matters of concern it has with the implementation of the state's agriculture policy. These include matters pertaining to the effectiveness of the current regulatory frameworks for land use planning and decision-making.

## Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan

- The Queensland Government has created a Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan (QRIDP), which aims to set out a long-term vision to ensure the future of the state's resources industry.
- QFF provided a submission in the first instance and provided further feedback on the draft plan. The final plan has been released and identifies 6 areas of focus with targeted actions to achieve its 2050 vision.

## Commission RPI Act Review Consultation

- The GasFields Commission Queensland (GFCQ) has finalised its review of the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014 assessment process for gas developments. The report was released late last year and proposed seven recommendations.
- These recommendations are now with the Minister for action and implementation by the Queensland Government.

## Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment (QGIA) Underground Water Impact Report

- The Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment prepares the statutory underground water impact report every three years to keep up to date with changes to industry development plans and new information about the groundwater flow system.
- QGIA released the consultation draft of the Surat Underground water impact report 2021 on 29 October 2021. QGIA considered all submissions in finalising the report. In March 2022, DES approved the report which took effect on 1 May 2022.
- QFF has met with GFCQ regarding further measurement and modelling of subsidence in the Surat Basin. QFF have suggested that OGIA be the body that undertakes this work.

## Airbnb Agritourism Report

- QFF partnered with Airbnb to complete a discussion paper, compiled by agritourism experts Regionality Pty Ltd, identifying planning issues with local government schemes to ensure that farmers are acting lawfully with regards to a range of agritourism activities.
- The discussion paper can be read on the QFF website. [www.qff.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Unlocking-Queenslands-agritourism-potential-Discussion-Paper.pdf](http://www.qff.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Unlocking-Queenslands-agritourism-potential-Discussion-Paper.pdf)



# Natural Resource Management



Approximately 84% of the State – 144 million hectares – is used for agricultural production with farmers producing some of the world's very best in food, fibre and foliage. With agriculture an important steward of the land, it plays a major and critical role in managing the state's natural resources.

## The Reef Catchment

The Great Barrier Reef is an Australian icon. It is firmly fixed in people's minds, particularly Queenslanders, and there is a lot of work going on to ensure farming has a strong and sustainable future alongside the reef.

The Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan, Australia's overarching long-term strategy for protecting and managing the Great Barrier Reef to support its health and resilience, has recently been revised. The updated version of the Plan intends to guide governments, key sectors and individuals on actions they can take to improve the Reef's future. The 2050 Plan has been updated in response to increased pressures on the reef, such as successive coral bleaching events, and identifies priorities for immediate attention and new actions to protect the reef.

Farmers will be particularly interested in the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP), which is found within the Reef 2050 Plan framework. The WQIP identifies all land-based sources of water pollution including run-off from urban, industrial and public lands. It sets targets for improving water quality for the 35 catchments flowing to the Reef, for the six regions, and for the whole reef to refocus effort and partnerships with our sector. This Plan and its actions and targets are also due to be updated in 2023 and as a member of the Reef 2050 Advisory Committee, QFF will be participating in the process.

QFF will continue to champion Queensland's farmers who are implementing new and innovative strategies to improve water quality for the future of the Reef. The Smartcane Best Management Practice (BMP) and Banana BMP programs, Hort360 GBR and Agriculture Extension Work Placement Program, are examples of strong partnerships involving agricultural industries, land managers and

governments, to improve productivity, profitability and sustainability of farm enterprises. These important actions are improving the quality of water leaving the farm and are contributing to the health and resilience of the Reef.

It is essential that the agricultural sector's voice is heard throughout the WQIP review. Farmers, extension officers and community members are continuing to make positive commitments to improve land management practices. Their actions ensure farming has a strong and sustainable future alongside the Reef.

QFF has continued to play a role in this important policy issue through:

- The Reef 2050 Advisory Committee (RAC), chaired by the Honourable Penelope Wensley AC is one of two advisory bodies for the Reef 2050 Plan. Established in 2015, to facilitate engagement with industry and the broader community on the implementation and review of the Reef 2050 Plan and to provide strategic advice to the Australian and Queensland Governments on Reef policy matters. QFF attended and participated in two Reef 2050 Advisory Committee meetings in the 2021-22 years.
- Participation in a Stakeholder Partnership Group to provide representative input on reviewing the agricultural land management practice targets.
- Advising the government that the industry remains opposed to increasing the regulatory burden for farmers in the Reef catchments. It is widely accepted by the sector that the best way to realise long-term practice change is leading by example, incentivising people and giving them a sense of ownership of change. Applying a blanket and blunt approach to regulating agricultural activities across all six Reef regions in the belief that this will rapidly reduce farm run-off is misguided.
- The Reef Champion Awards, an initiative of QFF in collaboration with Princes Trust Australia and the Australian and Queensland governments, recognising the achievements of outstanding individuals and organisations who are making a significant contribution to the future of the Great Barrier Reef.

## Natural Capital/Carbon

QFF believes that Natural Capital offers the opportunity to reconcile economic and environmental interests. It also provides the basis for better decision-making and can incentivise and reward farmers for existing sustainable land use and management, and/or encourage the adoption of additional innovative sustainable agricultural practices that deliver specific biodiversity and environmental outcomes. Natural Capital assets underpin industry operations as part of business risk, such as drought, natural disasters, price fluctuations and a new evolving risk i.e., pandemics. Vital services come from natural capital elements, such as pollination, flood control, clean air, and fresh water. All of this makes life possible for people.

Australia's rural industries and businesses have the potential to participate in carbon markets that are rapidly being developed around the world. International top 500 companies are quickly learning how they can participate in formal and voluntary carbon schemes, undertake abatement activities, and sequester carbon by creating carbon sinks or purchasing carbon credits; agricultural communities and businesses have an opportunity to be part of this conversation.

The Queensland Government has set a state target to reach zero net emissions by 2050 with an interim target for at least a 30% reduction in emissions on 2005 levels by 2030. This target is seen as a critical first step to drive the investment and action needed to transition Queensland's economy to a zero emissions future. The Queensland Climate Transition Strategy outlines how Queensland proposes to prepare for this transition and set itself on the pathway to meet this target.

Addressing agricultural emissions is challenging due to the dispersed nature of farming and the critical role of the sector in the life (and livelihoods) of millions. There are entry points for mitigation of agricultural greenhouse gases outside government price policies, but many questions remain about their scalability and efficacy. A comprehensive and accelerated effort will be needed to bridge the gap from modelled emissions to realistic policy pathways. Reducing agricultural emissions requires changes to how we farm, what we eat, how much we waste, and how we manage our forests and natural carbon sinks. This will have wide-ranging implications which may impact an internationally competitive, sustainable agricultural sector.

QFF continues to work closely with its members to navigate opportunities and challenges in the Natural Capital space, and has welcomed the chance to be involved in developing the draft Low Emissions Agriculture Roadmap, believing this is an important first step in supporting agriculture on this important journey. Finding and implementing ways to reduce net emissions is our contribution to the state's economy.

## Nature Refuges

QFF this year welcomed state government funding to help farmers undertake projects to protect and enhance the conservation value of the nature refuges on their properties.

Following continued advocacy by landholders, farming and pastoral bodies, natural resource management, Indigenous and conservation organisations, this funding assistance is a positive first step in recognising the practical conservation work farmers undertake on their land.

Queensland had the largest private protected area network in Australia, with over 500 landholders managing a total of 4.5 million hectares for conservation through the Nature Refuges Program.

Queensland farmers are responsible land managers and play an essential role by actively engaging in managing wildlife habitat on their land through weed control, feral animal control, provision of wildlife corridors and replanting native trees. However, farmers receive little compensation for their efforts.

This year's announcement of grants between \$2,500 and \$20,000 for nature refuge landholders, presents an opportunity to achieve much-needed conservation outcomes for the benefit of all Queenslanders. While this was welcomed news, further funding will be needed for future program expansion and delivery so as not to compromise the potential of the nature refuges program.

In the meantime, QFF is encouraging eligible farmers to apply for a Nature Refuge Landholder Grant to conserve important environmental and biodiversity values, while ensuring the sustainable and productive use of farming land.

## Waste Management, Resource Recovery and Organics

Much of the focus over the past 12 months has been on organics, with almost \$70 million committed by the Federal Government towards investment in new Food and Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) initiatives, coupled with organics strategies and targets either developed or in development across all state jurisdictions.

Earlier in 2022, DES released the Queensland Organics Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2032. Organic waste has been identified as priority area for action under the Waste Strategy due to the significant contribution of organic waste to the waste stream, the potential environmental and economic impacts associated with disposal of organic waste, and the identified beneficial uses for this material.

QFF is a member of the Queensland Government's Organic Waste Stakeholder Advisory Group and has articulated the existing circular approach to organics and nutrient cycling on farm, thus acknowledging the role of on-farm composting, as well as bioenergy opportunities and valorisation of organics.

**Queensland farmers are responsible land managers and play an essential role by actively engaging in managing wildlife habitat on their land through weed control, feral animal control, provision of wildlife corridors and replanting native trees. However, farmers receive little compensation for their efforts.**

## Other Policy and Submissions

### Independent Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The Queensland Government has committed to investigate and consult on the potential establishment of an independent Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to protect the environment, create jobs and support economic growth.

The role of Queensland's environmental regulator is currently undertaken by DES. In a submission to DES, QFF strongly opposed the establishment of a new agency, with the belief it would highly inhibit development and future investment in Queensland agriculture.



[Submission to the Department of Environment and Science – Independent Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) consultation Discussion Paper – July 2022](#)

## Projects

### 1. Land Restoration Fund Knowledge Brokers Project

- The aim of this project is to link the people supporting landholders to understand and participate in the Carbon Farming Market in Qld.
- QFF has continued facilitating the Queensland Carbon Community of Practice (The Carbon CoP) in 2022.
- The Carbon CoP is comprised of agricultural industry bodies, NRM regions in QLD and the Land Restoration Fund. It is a network set up to support staff working with landholders to assist with the access to information they need to make informed decisions when considering entering the carbon market.

### 2. Agriculture Sector Adaptation Plan Project

- This project has engaged Queensland agricultural industry bodies along with representatives from the agricultural finance and insurance sector to share information and encourage financial and insurance discussions on climate-related strategies.
- The final project report was presented in June 2022, incorporating a summary of actions taken and outputs delivered, and recommendations.

The development and commercialisation of such technology aims to make measuring soil carbon easier and more affordable for farmers enabling them to be able to participate more effectively in carbon market opportunities.

## Research and Development

### Pre-feasibility study into mobile soil carbon measuring technology

The high cost and long turnaround time for soil testing are the key challenges for wide adoption across the sector of the current testing methods for routinely determining soil carbon sequestration and calculating carbon credits. The conventional soil sampling and carbon analysis methods (e.g., Leco TruMac combustion) are widely used to determine the change in soil carbon over time as a response to a shift in land use or management practices.

QFF was pleased to support Griffith University as part of the National Soil Carbon Innovation Challenge in a pre-feasibility study into a mobile and integrated system for accurate in-situ analysis of soil carbon. The development and commercialisation of such technology aims to make measuring soil carbon easier and more affordable for farmers enabling them to be able to participate more effectively in carbon market opportunities.

The study tested the potential use of Near-Infrared (NIR) technology as a way of more conveniently being able to determine soil carbon sequestration over various types of terrain. The most important outcome at the end of this project was the development of a prototype mobile system guided by GIS and equipped with a NIR camera, data storage device, data transmission device, long-term power supply, and data interpretation software (at the base station). Further work is required in developing this prototype and concept. QFF looks forward to future developments in this space.



*Photo courtesy of Spectroscopy Europe World*

## Farm Business Resilience



One of the key outcomes of the project was the obvious benefits of collaboration between research, insurance and the agriculture sector to identify and potentially commercialise a crop insurance program.

### Insurance and Risk

During the year, QFF secured project funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund Innovation Grants Program, to explore and develop crop insurance products that integrate insurance solutions with optimal crop management strategies to maximise profitability and income stability for primary producers. Project partners are University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ), Willis Towers Watson and CelsiusPro.

The new project builds on the project work led by the Centre for Applied Climate Sciences at UniSQ and funded through the Queensland Government's Drought and Climate Adaptation Program (DCAP).

QFF has developed a collaborative working relationship with the project partners with the DCAP project concluding in September 2022, following focused reviews on climate risk in agriculture and how insurance products could be used to address these risks. One of the key outcomes of the project was the obvious benefits of collaboration between research, insurance and the agriculture sector to identify and potentially commercialise a crop insurance program. During the year, QFF continued discussions with Queensland Treasury to seek capitalisation funding to commence implementation of an Industry

Discretionary Mutual Fund, the vehicle identified as best suited to facilitating crop insurance products into the sector.

QFF worked with UniSQ to deliver the Enhancing climate change adaptation processes for farmers and agribusiness project. Funded through the Australia-India Strategic Research Fund, with a purpose to develop resilient climate risk management systems, best practices and innovative insurance products. These will help shield smallholder farmers and agri-businesses engaged in the cotton, sugar, coffee, mango, and tea industries across agricultural value chains in India and Australia from physical and financial disasters associated with climate change.

The project commenced through obtaining an understanding of the climate risks which farmers confront in their decision making, existing management systems, application of best management practices and knowledge of available insurance products. Activity during the project included facilitated workshops and discussions between producers, agriculture and insurance industries, case studies on 'focus farms', and awareness of insurance as a strategy in managing risk within these industries.



## Disaster Management and Response

QFF worked closely with the State and Federal Government from November 2021 to June 2022, where all QFF member industries experienced flood or storm that often caused major to catastrophic damage. The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) provided a link to an online Damage Assessment Survey, which QFF and its industry members shared and encouraged primary producers to complete to report flood and storm damage.

During the period, there were multiple disaster activations, with grant and loan schemes available to primary producers through the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA).

QFF was active in the response phase of each disaster activation, representing and supporting industry representation to the Queensland Government for assistance during the events. QFF successfully advocated for the speedy activation of disaster assistance and worked closely with QRIDA and DAF to ensure industry issues were managed.

## Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) Policy

During the year QFF participated in the Minister's Drought Roundtable, hosted by then Federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources David Littleproud and the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment. QFF continued to make a submission to the Australian Government Minister's Drought Policy Framework of Shared Responsibilities Discussion Paper.



[Submission to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment – Shared Responsibilities in Drought Response, Recovery and Preparedness: Discussion Paper – December 2021](#)

QFF responded to the depiction of the roles and responsibilities of those involved in drought response, recovery and preparedness and the proposed pillars to guide an integrated and strategic response to drought.

QFF agreed in principle with the concepts outlined in the Discussion Paper, however noted a possible risk to practical adoption of the intended outcomes. QFF discussed a need for a clearer definition of drought, taking into consideration the different severity levels of drought and aligning those levels with water availability and use for irrigation.

As part of a continued and evolving approach to drought mitigation, QFF discussed a need to develop a catchment-by-catchment basis to enable specific and measurable metrics per catchment in each location.

## Projects

### Farm Business Resilience Program (FBRP)

The Farm Business Resilience Program commenced in December 2021, jointly funded by the Australian Government Future Drought Fund and DCAP, helping farmers and graziers to prepare for and manage business and climate risks. The QFF project was delivered in collaboration with Cotton Australia, Nursery & Garden Industry Queensland, Turf Queensland, Australian Cane Farmers Association (ACFA), Pork Queensland, and Queensland United Egg Producers. Separate projects offered through the FBRP are managed by Growcom, eastAUSmilk and Canegrowers.

During the year, QFF resumed activity for the Farm Business and Economics Committee, with Michael Murray, General Manager of Operations of Cotton Australia, as Chair. The scope of the Committee is to act as the reference group for the FBRP, and assess issues that impact farm debt, farm profitability and economic stability.

**Activities of the program include the development of customised business plans for producers to assess priority risks including:**



Climate variability



Production risks



Seasonal weather risks



Financial and market risks



Biosecurity



Workforce



Family business risk



Personal and Industrial reputational risks

These activities were delivered in the form of a monthly webinar series 'QFF Farm Business Hour' and industry-specific drought frameworks. The project activity continues until June 2024.

## Biosecurity

The biosecurity risk to Queensland agricultural industries in 2021-2022 had never been higher. QFF continues to call for a long-term commitment to developing and maintaining strong biosecurity measures including significant, adequate investment and ongoing capacity building at national, state and regional levels.

This year has seen Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) and African Swine Fever continue to be a very high risk. These diseases continue to spread through the Indonesian archipelago, threatening our cattle and pig industries. One disease, Japanese Encephalitis (JE) caused by mosquitoes is believed to have been blown over by weather events from Indonesia, affecting pigs in 4 states and causing some human deaths. It is an example of needing to expect the unexpected given that JE has previously only been found in humans in the Torres Strait. In the plant arena, fruit fly, Kapra beetle, exotic invasive ants are but some of the national priority plant pests that need constant vigilance.

QFF continues to work with all levels of government to ensure that biosecurity is prioritised.

**Japanese Encephalitis (JE) caused by mosquitoes is believed to have been blown over by weather events from Indonesia, affecting pigs in 4 states and causing some human deaths.**



### Policy and Submissions



QFF has been active in advocating for better biosecurity measures throughout 2021-22. This included:

Submission to the [Australian Biosecurity Strategy](#) – March 2022

#### Input into policies:

- Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) – Egg Standard Review
- Compliance Plan for FSANZ Standard 4.2.5 Primary Production and Processing Standard for Eggs and Egg Product
- Cape York Biosecurity Centre Review

### Stakeholder Engagement

The QFF Intensive Animal Industries Policy Committee was formed in 2021 and has identified mitigating biosecurity threats as a key component in the development of resilient industries. A collaborative agreement with DAF resulted in the development of Issues Papers and Plans for an emergency disease response exercise for late 2022.

#### Other engagement

- Biosecurity Queensland Ministerial Advisory Committee (BQMAC)
- Queensland Invasive Pests Advisory Committee (QIPAC)
- African Swine Fever and Preparedness Project Reference Group
- Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) Preparedness Taskforce for Northern Australia
- Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) Preparedness Taskforce for Queensland



## Building Capacity

Capacity to respond to biosecurity threats has and will continue to be a priority for QFF with early detection and containment key to dealing with serious but manageable disease incursion or a large devastating disease that can wipe out an entire industry. The impacts of such events may cause not only direct economic losses but social disruption to rural and regional communities.

For animals, FMD is by far the most significant biosecurity threat to Australia's livestock industries while in plants, citrus canker, Panama tropical race 4 disease and sugarcane smut can cause devastating losses for Queensland's industries.

QFF mitigates current issues by promoting on farm biosecurity plans, raising awareness of what is in place to support industries, inputting into government policy including communication strategies and training.

The loss of experienced and skilled personnel over the past few years in government and industry has been a key factor in loss of capacity to deal with biosecurity events. An example of building capacity in the poultry industry is QFF's work with government to assist in a focussed disease exercise response in poultry to increase skills and identify gaps in this area. QFF also actively worked throughout the year on a collaborative agreement with DAF to develop capacity in the intensive animal industries.

## Plant and Animal Balance

Strategies to deal with disease in both the plant and animal industries are priorities for QFF, as is the incursions of pest animals and weeds. QFF is active in the Queensland Invasive Pests Advisory Committee (QIPAC) which reports to BQMAC. Feral pigs were a huge concern this year with their prevalence and potential to spread diseases such as FMD, African Swine Fever and Panama disease of bananas. QFF was also active in the Reference Group for the DAF African Swine Fever Preparedness project which included Feral pig control strategies.

## Cross Border Certification and Interstate Trade

The closure of interstate borders due to COVID-19 and differing jurisdiction decisions on border closures was a significant challenge in 2021-2022. QFF liaised and worked with the Queensland government to ensure products could cross borders with relevant permits. This resulted in agricultural trade being able to function relatively smoothly throughout this difficult period.

## Risk-based Approach

Because of the nature of animal and plant disease incursions, and its predictability uncertain, it is difficult to allocate sufficient funding for all threats. QFF continues to advocate for a risk-based approach with transparency and equitably based, with a view to maximising impact.

# Workforce

## Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance

QFF through the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance (RJSA) has a pivotal role in providing strategic advice to the Queensland Government for skills and workforce planning issues. RJSA is the point of reference for bodies charged with the development, review and maintenance of national packages relevant to Queensland agriculture and rural and related industries.

RJSA was in its sixth year of operation in 2021-22 and continued to provide recommendations and advice to government, service providers and other stakeholders about employment, skills, industry training and workforce planning on behalf of Queensland agriculture.

The membership of the Alliance includes: QFF, AgForce, Canegrowers, Cotton Australia, Growcom, Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland (NGIQ), Irrigation Australia, Timber and Building Materials Association, Australian Prawn Farmers' Association, eastAUSmilk, and the Carbon Farming Hub. The Alliance is also supported by DAF.

A key output achieved during the year was the completion of the Queensland Agriculture Industry Workforce Plan 2022-2027 developed in partnership with Jobs Queensland (JQ) in collaboration with the RJSA. The plan identified the current and emerging trends and critical issues impacting the Queensland agriculture sector's workforce. The plan identifies four focus areas: Adaptability and Business Capability, Workforce Attraction and Diversity, Retention, and Skilling. The plan highlights actions to ensure that critical gaps and needs are addressed.

**Queensland Agriculture Industry Workforce Plan 2022-2027 identified the current and emerging trends and critical issues impacting the Queensland agriculture sector's workforce.**

## Workforce Development

The RJSA worked with industry and government to develop an effective model for getting industry specific intelligence. Through industry expertise this assisted the RJSA in identifying workforce supply gaps and the opportunities for training and skills expenditure.

RJSA partners and DAF continued providing strategic advice to ongoing projects and initiatives which included:

- Working with regional networks, in particular the Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network (QAWN), to help industries engage with government programs that will boost workforce development for rural and related industries.
- Providing input to the Agribusiness Gateway to Industry Schools Program (AGISP) with 78 schools taking part in the program across Queensland.

## Projects

- *Agriculture Extension Work Placement Program* saw 11 graduates mentored and trained to develop the skills to engage with primary producers in the Reef catchments and assist them to enhance their land management practices and business outcomes. To date there have been 32 graduates of this program with 28 still involved in a related role.
- *The Pre-Induction Micro-Credential Program* offered in partnership with the online FarmReady Hub, that provides online training to prepare jobseekers for on farm work. The number of participants enrolled as of 31 May 2022 was 226, out of these 115 (50.9%) have completed the training and 89 participants have gained successful employment.
- Agriculture Workforce Planning Connect a webinar series targeted at small to medium businesses on effective workforce planning.
- *Queensland AgWorkforce Summit* delivered by QFF and RJSA in partnership with Jobs Queensland and the Queensland Government. An online event the summit addressed the current and future workforce challenges and plan for the future of work in Queensland. The summit had 196 registrations over three days, 50 speakers including 12 keynote speakers, 5 panel discussions and 5 industry case studies. The Summit brought agribusiness and experts together to learn and share experiences about innovative strategies in attracting, retaining and skilling workforce.
- *Supporting Financial Security of Farm Businesswomen in Queensland* project a discussion paper and eKit titled 'Walking the Wire' aimed at providing guidance to help rural women take the next step in securing their financial future.
- Several tailored training courses were designed in partnership with training organisations and delivered in partnership with RJSA. TAFE Qld, University of Melbourne, Nutrien Advantage and Back Paddock were some of the organisations for which tailored training was designed.



## Ongoing projects

- *Digital Agronomy Skill Set* delivered by the University of Queensland (UQ), a short course aimed at developing farmers' ability to use sophisticated GIS technology and interpret complex, online data for better on-farm yields and management. RJSA works closely with UQ to submit successful business cases for state government funding and through the successful advocacy for funding, 90 places are now funded under the Job Trainer Fund.
- RJSA will continue with its collaborative relationship with TAFE Qld and continues to progress the industry consultation process to progress agriculture training at TAFE Qld. Similarly, RJSA has had extensive input into TAFE QLD's "Taster Program" to introduce students to careers within primary industries.
- The RJSA Project Manager is a member of the Steering Committee for the UQ Agri-Food Innovation Alliance. This Alliance aims for greater collaboration between UQ Researchers and educators and SMEs so to create change in engagement and delivery of research and training impacts.
- The development of a *Career in Agriculture Magazine* with the objective of the resource to provide information of job opportunities, career pathways, internships, and traineeships in agriculture, to schools, career advisors, parents, and students. With the first edition to be released in 2023.
- The *Leadership Compendium* project comprising of a draft compilation of programs aimed to build the leadership capacity within the agricultural industry. The resource is due for release in 2023.
- *Farm Business Management Skill Set (Special Edition)* delivered by UQ with support from RJSA, the program aims to celebrate and encourage women's participation in agriculture.

## Workforce Shortage Advocacy

In March 2022 the Queensland Government announced \$15 million for new training and skills strategies as part of the \$200 million Future Skills Fund. An initiative of this investment was the Vocational Education and Training (VET) Emerging Industries, which aims to help build better pathways to skilled workforce development and more job-ready Queenslanders. Through RJSA, QFF is a member of a VET Emerging Industries Agribusiness Working Group which was established to develop and implement an Agriculture Skills Fund Implementation Plan (\$2M) to be submitted to the VET Emerging Industries Steering Committee.

Immigration has traditionally accounted for approximately one third of the increased skills required of the Australian economy and it is expected that this requirement will accelerate over the coming years. The RJSA actively worked with the Queensland Government to disseminate the Queensland Nominated Skilled Migration Survey with the aim of the survey to determine if the Skilled Migrant Program is meeting its intended objectives, if any immediate adjustments are required and Australia's international competitiveness to attract skilled migrants.

The Department for Small Business and Training (DESBT) has continued to consult RJSA on several initiatives including member testimonials on skill shortages, a School Leavers Guide and a funding review of the Skills Priority List (SPL). The SPL provides a detailed view of occupations in shortage, nationally and by state and territory, as well as the future demand for occupations in Australia. DESBT in consultation with the RJSA submitted a funding review of the SPL with the aim to ensure adequate resources are allocated to the areas most in need of skilled workers.

QFF through RJSA contributed and provided feedback on several other initiatives including the Senate Select Committee on Job Security, an inquiry established to investigate the impacts of Seasonal Worker Programs, member testimonials on skill shortages submitted to DESBT, the skills reform process, and the skills gap that has arisen following the closure of the Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges.

QFF through RJSA continues to work closely with available registered training organisations to improve the development, attraction and retention of skilled workforce into Queensland.

Immigration has traditionally accounted for approximately one third of the increased skills required of the Australian economy and it is expected that this requirement will accelerate over the coming years.

## Alignment with the Industry Skills Adviser

A key education advocacy role that sits with QFF, is the Industry Skill Advisor (ISA) who engages with employers, small businesses and industry stakeholders to provide high-quality, evidence-based industry advice and intelligence about current and emerging industry direction, regional skills needs and training solutions, jobs growth and employment opportunities.



# COMMODITY REPORTS

## TIER 1 & 2 MEMBERS

## Canegrowers

---

2021-22 was a mixed year for the Queensland sugar industry.

While the number of hectares harvested, tonnes crushed, and raw sugar produced were all down on the previous year, the sector also enjoyed some positive news, particularly in relation to Australia's successful World Trade Organisation's (WTO) action against India's market-distorting sugar export subsidies.

For a number of years India has been providing excessive subsidies to prop up sugar exports. The impact on the market has been profound and Australia in partnership with Brazil and Guatemala was successful in proving our case to the WTO at the end of 2021. Notwithstanding this, the world price for sugar, a market that Australian producers are completely exposed to, has been strong. A welcomed outcome in an otherwise volatile season.

The total hectares of sugarcane harvested across Queensland's 13 cane-growing districts in 2021-22 was 329,116, a drop of 11,498 hectares on the previous year. From this, 28,479,333 tonnes of cane were crushed by the state's 19 sugar mills, a drop of 851,000 tonnes. This cane produced 3,921,975 tonnes of raw sugar, down 202,000 tonnes on previous year.

COVID 19 restrictions and supply chain restraints led to workforce shortage issues during the crush, with mills and harvest contractors in some areas having trouble filling skilled positions.

The ongoing effects of the pandemic also saw the delayed introduction of a new tranche of Reef regulations. The rules, regulating new or expanded cropping, horticulture and industrial activities in Reef catchments, were originally slated for introduction on 1 December 2020, however this was delayed until 1 June 2021 to allow farmers and businesses more time to prepare.

The industry was successful in securing a commitment from the Queensland Government that sugarcane growers accredited in the industry's best management practice program, Smartcane BMP, would not be targeted by reef compliance officers.

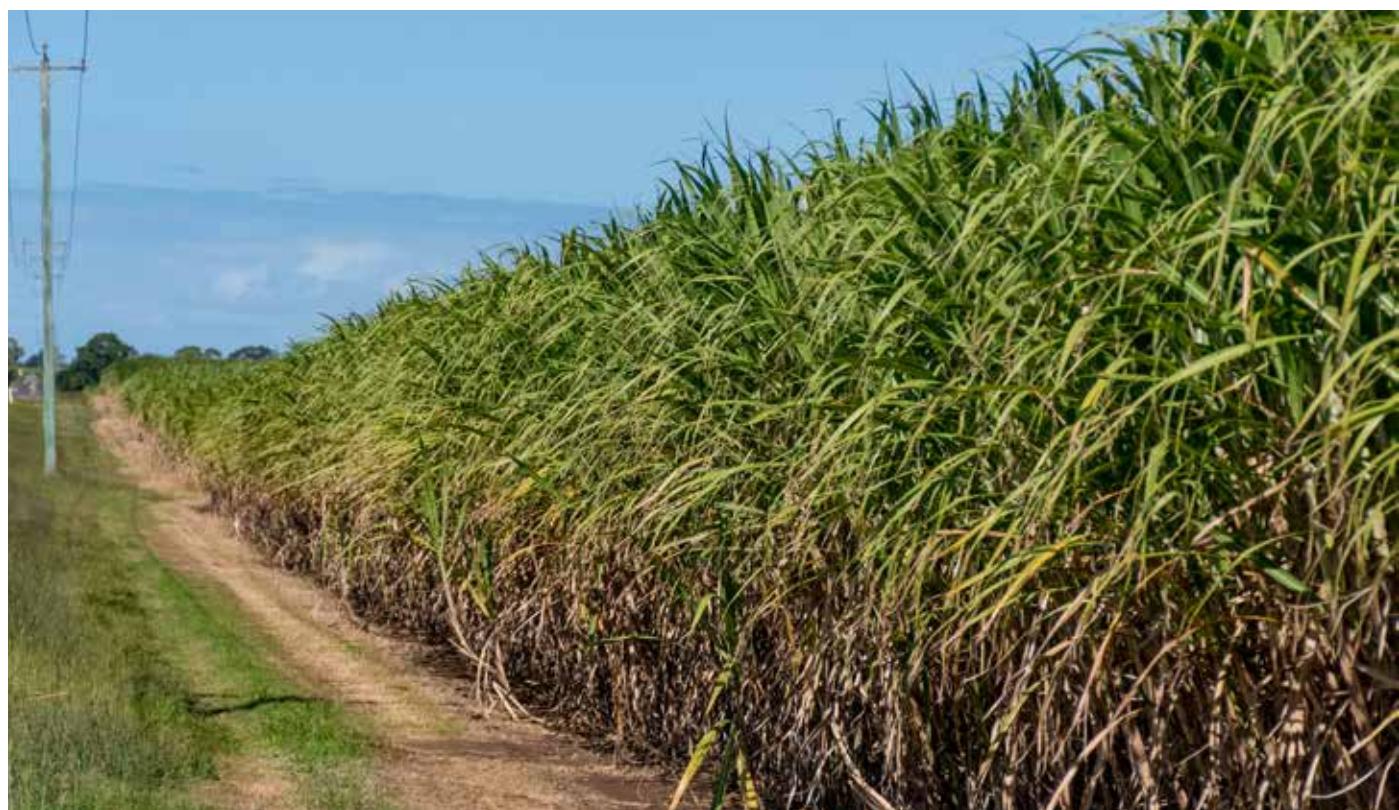
At the federal level, the Post-Implementation Review of the Federal Sugar Code of Conduct was conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. While acknowledging different views across the industry, the review found the Code had delivered a net benefit to the Australian sugar industry because it provides a mechanism for resolving potentially lengthy and costly negotiation deadlocks.

In light of this review, the Federal Government maintained the Code unaltered. The Code, in place since 2017, guides the conduct of growers, mill owners and marketers in relation to contracts and agreements.

At the international level, Australia secured an emphatic World Trade Organisation win against India's price-distorting sugar production supports and export subsidies.

Industry research had calculated that Queensland cane growers and sugar millers had incurred an estimated \$1 billion revenue hit between 2017/18 and 2020/21 – or almost \$5 million every week – as a direct result of India's subsidised sugar exports.

While India has appealed the ruling, their decision to not export such high volumes of sugar during the year had a dramatic impact on the world sugar price, which increased significantly over the first six months of 2022.



## Cotton Australia

---

The 2021/22 Queensland cotton season has been a particularly challenging, but also a largely successful season for our growers.

It is estimated that Queensland production will be in the order of 1.8 million bales, out of a total Australian production of approximately 5.5 million bales, an Australian production record. It is a major turn-around from just two seasons' ago when Qld's production was just 170,000 bales, out of a national total of 590,000 bales.

This year's Qld crop should generate approximately \$1.5 billion (Farmgate) from lint and seed production.

Around the State, most production areas produced historically large crops, with the key exception being the Central Highlands, where water availability remained stubbornly low. However, the Central Highlands produced some exceptional (world leading) yields, with some producers recording yields in excess of 20b/ha, from long-season cotton crops.

While actual plantings are still modest (around 10,000ha) enthusiasm for cotton in North Qld remains very strong, and both hectares and grower numbers are expected to increase again in 22/23. The Australian cotton industry participated in numerous activities in Far North Qld this year to support this emerging growing area.

While our growers were able to produce a record crop, and prices were historically high, they were challenged by severe labour shortages, and dramatically rising input costs, particularly for fertiliser and diesel. During the season Cotton Australia launched its Cotton Job's Australia webservice, and commenced a program to actively promote seasonal, casual work opportunities in our industry.

In conjunction with QFF, Cotton Australia has been a key partner in rolling out the Federal/State Govt Farm Business Resilience Program, as well as delivering workshops/programs on Farm Safety, myBMP and better spray application.

During 2022 Cotton Australia celebrated its 50th Birthday, and celebrated with a presentation at the Qld Rural Press Club where CEO Adam Kay spoke, and an event hosted by Minister Furner in Parliament House where the industry was able to highlight its achievements and engaged directly with a broad-cross section of politicians, industry supporters and media.

A highlight of the year was planning for the return to the Gold Coast (after a forced Covid absence) in August of the Australian Cotton Conference, where we are expecting record number to come together to learn and network.





The 2021/22 period has been another challenging one for the Queensland horticulture industry with ongoing labour shortages, rising input costs and back-to-back natural disasters just some of the challenges faced this past year.

Late 2021 saw the announcement from the Morrison Government that it would deliver on the Ag Visa to provide real long-term workforce relief to Australian farmers. Little did we know how short-lived this would be as a change of government brought with it a change in priorities.

As part of its plan to build a stronger Pacific family, the Albanese Government announced a policy agenda that prioritised the expansion of the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme. Although welcomed by horticulture, it is seen as only one piece of the complex labour shortage puzzle. Local workers, working holiday visas, and pensioner workers all are required to ensure produce is grown, picked, packed and to market.

The Fair Work Commission's announcement in February 2022 of piece

rate provisions within the Horticulture Award caused a great deal of uncertainty and extra workload for growers. Although horticulture has, of course, stepped up to this challenge, it is hoped more efficient and effective processes can be implemented into the future.

A very successful Hort Connections Conference was held in Brisbane in June with thousands of people a day networking on topics such as farm data value, input costs, fresh produce consumption, biosecurity, waste and primary industries education. Future Fields, a co-created industry vision for where the sector wants to be in ten years was also launched.

The result of an extensive consultation process, Future Fields will ensure Queensland remains the preeminent state for horticultural production, supply chain innovation and food processing.

The next twelve months looks like an exciting mix of opportunity and challenges. The sector will unite with those who rely on it, to both capitalise on, and overcome anything thrown at it into the future. Horticulture is as strong, resilient, and passionate as ever.

**Late 2021 saw the announcement from the Morrison Government that it would deliver on the Ag Visa to provide real long-term workforce relief to Australian farmers. Little did we know how short-lived this would be as a change of government brought with it a change in priorities.**

## Nursery and Garden Industry Queensland

---

The year began with continuing uncertainty surrounding Covid however the industry has been very pro-active in securing excellent support from the previous Federal Minister David Littleproud which has ensured that retail nurseries continued to trade in Queensland.

Trading has generally been good to outstanding, with sales well above expectations at retail level as more people stayed at home and looked for jobs to do! The hope is that there will be a flow-on effect from this, especially in the home-grown food area which has experienced excellent growth over the past 2 years. The low likelihood of water restrictions is a further benefit to the industry.

The industry continues to run 'trade days' in Brisbane and other areas along with an annual 'Green Expo' which was held at the Gold Coast in July with an excellent attendance from all States.

There is also a very strong pipeline of work in the infrastructure market and production nurseries supplying this market are optimistic as to the future. This market tends to be a high volume, low margin business with the larger growers further consolidating and expanding through buy out and new ground being put into production.

During the year more nurseries have become aware of and been positively impacted by the Energy Savers Program which has delivered real savings to those participating.

Similar to other industries, there is a definite shortage of both skilled and unskilled workers available and this is putting substantial stress on many owners and operators.

The industry nationally employs a specialist National Biosecurity Manager, John McDonald and he is based in Brisbane, working out of the State office; this is a real benefit to the local industry. John is ably assisted by Barry Naylor an experienced ex nurseryman who works as an Extension Officer in Queensland and Nth NSW. Both of these positions are funded through the industry levy and HIA Grants. The industry also completed a successful IPM project late last year; this was also funded by the industry levy.



Trading has generally been good to outstanding, with sales well above expectations at retail level as more people stayed at home and looked for jobs to do!

It was a significant year which saw the official creation of eastAUSmilk. December 1, 2021 was the day Queensland Dairyfarmers' Organisation and Dairy Connect amalgamated. The coming together is one of Advocacy, Unity, and Service both federally and at state level.

Weather conditions have hindered the dairy farming industry in 2021-2022, but support was forthcoming from both state and federal governments in the way of grants and low interest loans to farmers.

The farm-gate price increased which reflected the increase in cost of production and input costs to produce fresh milk for the marketplace.

Queensland and New South Wales dairy industry decreased their milk litres in the financial year from the previous period. This reflects the continuing decline of dairy farms and the falling milk productions from the exits.

A plan is intended to assist in stopping the decline of dairy farms within the Northern Region and Queensland. Northern Dairy Industry stakeholders will work together to identify strategies moving forward.

The Mandatory Dairy Code of Conduct (Code) has entered its second year of operation, with the oversight of the ACCC. The Code will continue to be monitored closely by eastAUSmilk to ensure that the outcomes continue to match dairy farmer expectations of the Code. eastAUSmilk will continue to liaise closely with the Government and other stakeholders as the Code continues to be enhanced. The outlook for dairy is positive but the weather, labor shortages and high input costs are proving to be challenging.

**The outlook for dairy is positive but the weather, labor shortages and high input costs are proving to be challenging.**





ADVOCACY

# Advocacy and Government Relations

## Advocacy and Government Relations

QFF continued to work to see commitment on policies that secure a sustainable future for our members, the agriculture sector, and rural economies more broadly in Queensland. The sector is a key foundation of the Queensland economy, the Australian economy and critical to the future success of our regions. In Queensland the agricultural sector is worth well over \$23B and expanding, but farmers need a favourable operating environment to enable the sector to overcome challenges and capitalise on future growth opportunities. QFF worked closely with its members throughout the year and made strong representation on several key issues and policy matters.

## Energy

Energy is a key input for Queensland agriculture and future farming is reliant on the availability of reliable and affordable energy. QFF welcomed the opportunity to provide comment on the QCA Draft Determination: Regulated retail electricity prices for 2022-23 (February 2022). A summary of the priority areas QFF addressed in its submission are:

- Equitable pricing
- Removal of the solar bonus scheme from tariff charges
- Flexible tariffs to reflect the requirements of seasonal industries
- Target of a 16c/kW ceiling on all tariffs
- Thresholds for small customers' needs to be increased from 100 to a minimum 160MW
- Ensure CSO is paid to Ergon network and not to Ergon retail



Read QFF's submission in full at [20220407-QFF-Submission-to-QCA-Regulated-retail-electricity-prices-2022-23-WEB.pdf](#)

The Queensland Government committed \$145 million to establish three Queensland Renewable Energy Zones (QREZ) in northern, central, and southern Queensland. To deliver the first stages of QREZ investment, the Government released a Technical Discussion Paper on QREZ design and access.

The Technical Discussion Paper presents the desired QREZ model attributes (as identified by the government) and how this model corresponds to renewable energy zones at the national and jurisdictional levels. There are a number of key considerations for agriculture and rural communities including the appropriate management of land use planning. QFF took the opportunity to provide comment and our submission can be found on the QFF website.

Submission to the Department of Energy and Public Works – Delivering Queensland Renewable Energy Zones – Technical Discussion Paper – January 2022

## Water

Water is the lifeblood of agriculture, regional communities and the people of Queensland. Surface water dominates our water supply sources but groundwater also plays an important role, especially for inland parts of the state.

During the year, QFF provided comment on the Register of Foreign-owned Water Entitlements – Productivity Commission Draft Report (August 2021). QFF supported the proposed recommendations outlined in the draft report if they were to be implemented, however, advocated that any future changes must be conducted in consultation with the agricultural sector particularly in relation to the following key areas for agriculture:

- Increased transparency of foreign ownership of Australian Water Assets
- Compliance by foreign owners of water entitlements in accordance with the Register of Foreign Ownership of Water or Agricultural Land Act 2015 (the Act)



[Submission to the Productivity Commission – Register of Foreign-owned Water Entitlements – Productivity Commission Issues Paper \(February 2021\) – March 2021](#)

QFF advocated that increased accountability is still required, which will allow increased transparency for the economic value of water. The future of foreign owned water entitlements must continue to see greater scrutiny and validity placed upon foreign investment water entitlement holders, as to not impact other water entitlement holders including, but not limited to those in the agricultural sector. It is essential that in making future decisions more emphasis is placed upon on transparency, compliance and risk.

QFF also provided comment on Queensland's non-urban policy positions (September 2021). QFF advocated for an affordable, efficient, and cost-effective water metering, management and compliance framework. If irrigators are to invest in new infrastructure for metering, the Government needs to invest in the compliance and management with no future costs to be borne by irrigators. QFF's full submission [here](#) 2



[Submission to Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water – Queensland's non-urban policy positions \(September 2021\) – December 2021](#)

**Surface water dominates our water supply sources but groundwater also plays an important role, especially for inland parts of the state.**

## **QFF 2022 Federal Election Position**

The regions were a major focus in the lead up to the 2022 Federal election. QFF called on all political parties to demonstrate leadership and articulate a clear vision and a willingness to work closely with industry to address the challenges and harness the opportunities relating to key areas including workforce, Natural Capital, biosecurity, connectivity and infrastructure. QFF advocated for the following priorities during the election campaign:

### **1. Securing the future of our agriculture's workforce.**

A comprehensive workforce strategy to support one of the key inputs critical to underpinning the future sustainability of the sector, enable farmers to successfully attract and retain skilled workers which will ultimately contribute to stabilising the real cost of food production in Australia.

We need a strong, sovereign workforce that is complemented by an international workforce supported by an effective Ag Visa program and strong global relationships.

A revitalisation of the VET and Tertiary sectors is needed to attract and train students with both the practical and higher-level skills that are required in today and tomorrow's agricultural sector.

Research and development, along with the development of artificial intelligence must also be part of the solution for workforce challenges and the creation of jobs of the future.

### **2. Securing the future of agricultural communities**

Social policies to compliment economic strategies to secure the liveability and long-term growth of our agriculture communities in regional and rural Queensland.

Regional and rural housing investment is a priority to address today's shortages and tomorrow's growth as well as a long-term commitment to building better digital, air, road and rail connectivity.

Policies and a commitment to developing the future of vital services in rural and regional Queensland are critical if we are to build strong communities.

### **3. Securing the future of our natural capital.**

Polices that include the consideration of climate change variability in the development of water infrastructure, on-farm water and energy efficiencies and climate mitigation technologies, to support sustainable farming practices and deliver sound environmental outcomes.

As the Natural Capital space continues to evolve rapidly, farmers require support to better understand and assess the risks and opportunities in biodiversity and crediting schemes for their individual farming enterprises.

Farmers are important stewards of a significant proportion of Queensland's landscape, and policies that reward farmers and encourage a culture of on-farm innovation and coexistence of farm sustainability and environmental stewardship is required.

Strategic investment in education, best practice and on farm technology and efficiencies will deliver tangible and sustainable natural capital outcomes for our sector and our communities on our journey to a low emissions future.

### **4. Securing the future of our water and energy supply.**

Policy underpinned by a clear plan for water security incorporating the future impacts of climate variability across the state. Water is a critical input for the agricultural sector, and essential for the future

growth of agriculture.

Strategic investment in modernising and maximising existing infrastructure and the development of new infrastructure such as the recently announced Bowen Pipeline, based on strong business cases that provide affordable and secure water solutions for key regions is required.

A focus on improving the energy and water productivity nexus on-farm to drive efficiencies must be supported by policy, and a strategy that includes investment in new energy technologies in genuine consultation with farmers to provide a secure and affordable source of energy as the complexities of the energy transition play out over the coming years.

### **5. Securing the future of our biosecurity capability**

A strong, well-resourced policy position to build Australia's biosecurity capability that includes engagement at a state and regional level, support for on-farm biosecurity programs and utilisation of surveillance, diagnostic and traceability technology.

### **6. Securing the future of farm enterprise resilience**

Well thought out policy that works closely with industry to improve food supply chain efficiencies, effective competition law reform, a future fuels strategy and the development of viable onshore manufacturing opportunities is called for to help build farm enterprise resilience.

Policy that supports farmers to build resilience, self-manage risk and be better prepared for the future makes good business sense and is important in ensuring a sustainable future for agriculture.



## Biosecurity

Strong biosecurity measures are critical to safeguarding the future of Queensland agriculture. In 2022 a number of threats arose causing concern for industry and communities more broadly.

1. **February 2022, Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV)** detected for the first time in southern Australia
2. **March 2022, Lumpy skin disease (LSD)** was reported in Indonesia
3. **May 2022**, an outbreak of the **Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD)** was reported in cattle in Indonesia, and more recently Bali
4. **June 2022, Varroa mite (Varroa destructor)** detected in Port of Newcastle (NSW) hives

QFF worked closely with the Queensland government to ensure accurate and timely information was available to industry and that farmers were supported at an enterprise level through their own on farm biosecurity plans. QFF represented the interests of its members through strategic input at both a State and a National level. QFF made a formal submission to have input on the Australian Biosecurity Strategy proposing the following priority areas:

1. **Knowledge and intelligence** of potential threats through effective surveillance and assessment of emerging threats. This will give early detection of threats, one of the most important factors in minimising impact. A surveillance strategy needs to be developed to determine a critical level of surveillance across all states. Emerging threats, including the impact of climate change, need to be evaluated and forecast.
2. **Prevention of threats.** This covers a highly skilled workforce, and training and prevention measures from border to farm through awareness, training and on farm biosecurity measures.
3. **Response and recovery.** This would include keeping Ausvetplan updated in animal industries and Plantplan for plants. The success to an effective response is planning, actively learning from past responses (so often not well done) and regular training of people who will be involved in the response. While, industry personnel will be busy managing their own productions, there needs to be good knowledge of the industry by the response participants. This means that in times of no threats, that government and other personnel who will be involved need to be actively updating themselves on how industry works on the ground. There have been alarming declines in government officers with on ground knowledge of industries.
4. **Integration** supported by technology, research and data. As per the consultation draft, this is a high priority. Laboratories however need to be specifically mentioned as they are critical.
5. **Shared biosecurity culture and stronger partnerships.** These two priority areas could be combined with an emphasis on real partnerships with shared decision making.



QFF's full submission can be read here [Australian-Biosecurity-Strategy-QFF-submission-220325.pdf](https://www.qff.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Australian-Biosecurity-Strategy-QFF-submission-220325.pdf)

A surveillance strategy needs to be developed to determine a critical level of surveillance across all states. Emerging threats, including the impact of climate change, need to be evaluated and forecast.



## CSG Induced Subsidence Risk

Coal Seam Gas (CSG) development across the Condamine floodplain falls within Priority Agricultural Area land is causing concern for a number of landholders in relation to potential future risks of subsidence that could impact individual farms and the regional landscape more broadly. This priority agricultural land is made up of rich alluvial clay soils and home to some of the most productive agricultural land in Queensland. This is high value intensively farmed priority agricultural land with land and water resources that are not only important to the local community but to the Queensland agricultural sector. Many landholders are concerned that the potential future impacts of CSG-induced subsidence may have damaging and negative impacts in the future on farming practices, productive capacity, land values and incur a high cost of remediation and additional pressures on landholders.

QFF have been working closely with its members, Cotton Australia and Central Downs Irrigators Limited (CDIL) to represent the interests of agriculture in this important issue. QFF have advocated that it is important that farming enterprises in the area are protected by a framework that provides a clear pathway for impact assessment, determination and dispute resolution for all landholders who may become materially impacted by CSG-induced subsidence. The existing framework is fragmented, confusing and does not adequately

protect the landholder from the future risks. QFF supports the QGFC in undertaking this review as a step towards the development and implementation of a more effective framework that articulates a clearly defined pathway that is easy for landholders to access and ensures that they are protected in the case of future impact or loss. Read QFF's submission to the QGFC's Regulatory Review of CSG Induced Subsidence on the QFF website.



[Submission to the Gasfields Commission of Queensland – Regulatory review of CSG-induced subsidence – June 2022](#)

QFF continues to ensure that its members and Queensland agriculture more broadly have a seat at the table and are represented on policy issues that matter to them. QFF are proud to work collaboratively with our members to advocate on issues and opportunities that are common across the sector. The road ahead is paved with opportunity and challenges for agriculture and QFF will stand with our members to work together to ensure farmers not only have a seat at the table, but a strong voice in policy development and an active part in determining the future for the state of Queensland.

**QFF have advocated that it is important that farming enterprises in the area are protected by a framework that provides a clear pathway for impact assessment, determination and dispute resolution for all landholders who may become materially impacted by CSG-induced subsidence.**



*Photo courtesy of QMEB*

# 2021-22 SUBMISSIONS

## ANIMALS



**Submission to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee – Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022 – June 2022**

## ENERGY



**Submission to the Department of Energy and Public Works – Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement: Electricity supply options for the North West Minerals Province (December 2021) – March 2022**



**Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority – QCA Draft Determination: Regulated retail electricity prices for 2022-23 (February 2022) – April 2022**



**Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority – QCA Interim consultation paper: Regulated retail electricity prices for 2022-23 (December 2021) – January 2022**



**Submission to the Department of Energy and Public Works – Delivering Queensland Renewable Energy Zones – Technical Discussion Paper – January 2022**



**Submission to the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources – Draft biomethane method package under the Emissions Reduction Fund – November 2021**



**Submission to Australian Energy Market Commission – Directions Paper on the Review of the Regulatory Framework for Metering Services (16 September 2021) – October 2021**



**Submission to Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources – ERF Methodology Development Priorities for 2022 – August 2021**

## ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



**Submission to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry – Review of the Australian Government Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan – September 2022**



**Submission to the Department of Environment and Science – Independent Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) consultation Discussion Paper – July 2022**



**Submission to the Gasfields Commission of Queensland – Regulatory review of CSG-induced subsidence – June 2022**



**Submission to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment – Shared Responsibilities in Drought Response, Recovery and Preparedness: Discussion Paper – December 2021**



**Submission to the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources – ERF Methodology Development Priorities for 2022 – August 2021**



**Submission to the Health and Environment Committee – Environmental and Other Legislation (Reversal of Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) Amendment Bill 2021 – July 2021**

## WATER



**Submission to Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water** – Preliminary public consultation notice – Proposed postponement of expiry and replacement of the Water Plan (Fitzroy Basin) 2011 – s and s55 of the Water Act 2000 (September 2022) – September 2022



**Submission to Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water** – Draft Barron Water Plan and Draft Barron Water Management Protocol (July 2022) – September 2022



**Submission to Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water** – Draft Strategic Water Infrastructure Reserve, Dawson River Pilot Project review report (July 2022) – August 2022



**Submission to Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water** – Queensland's non-urban policy positions (September 2021) – December 2021



**Submission to the Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment** – Consultation Draft Underground Water Impact Report (UWIR) 2021 for the Surat Cumulative Management Area – November 2021



**Submission to the Productivity Commission** – Register of Foreign-owned Water Entitlements – Draft Report (August 2021) – September 2021



**Submission to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment** – Draft default guideline values for the Water Quality Guidelines (August 2021) – August 2021

## WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY



**Submission to the Office of Industrial Relations** – Quad bikes and side-by-side vehicles safety: Proposed work health and safety regulations – Discussion Paper May 2022 – June 2022

## OTHER



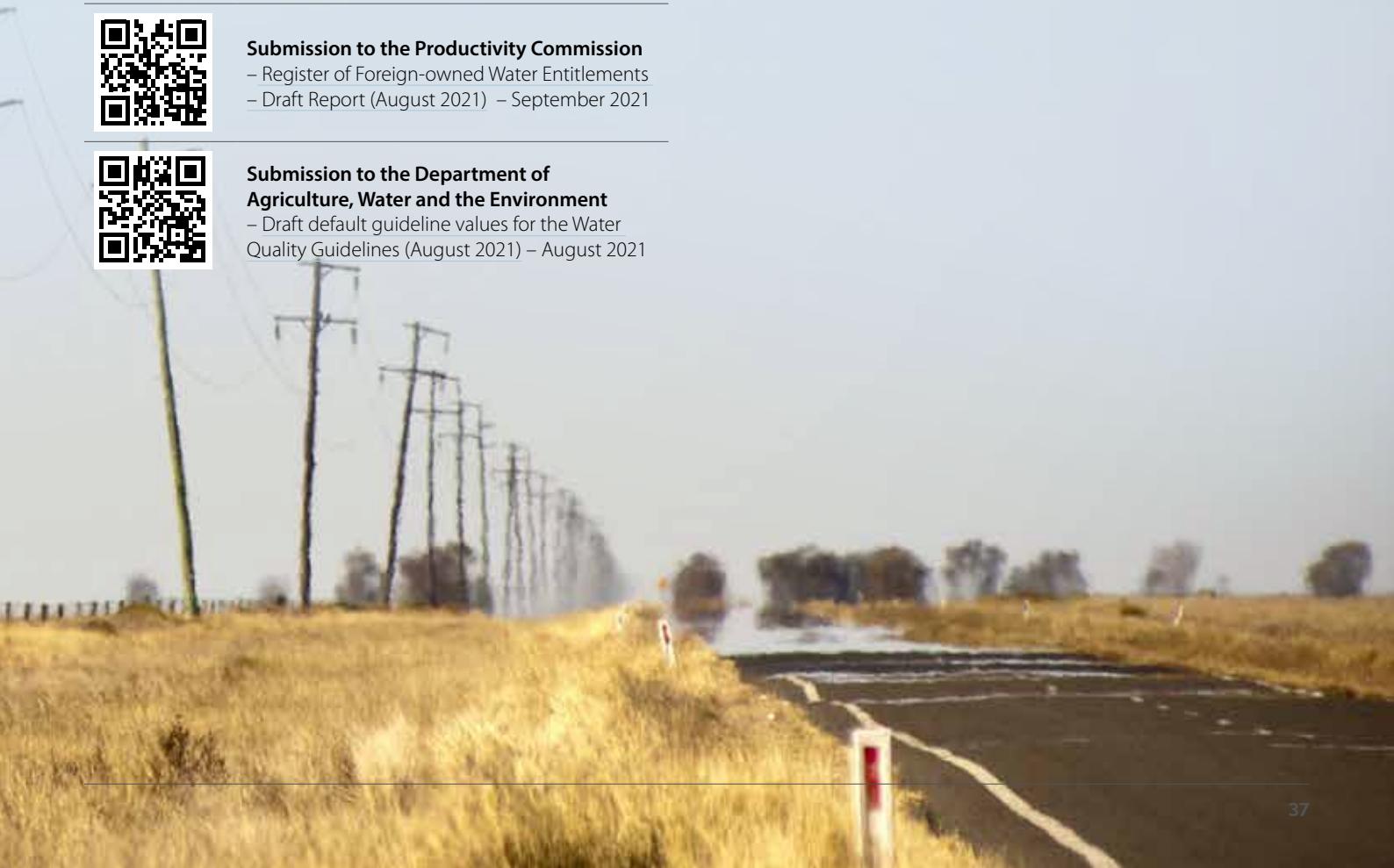
**Submission to Treasury** – Treasury Laws Amendment (Measures for a later sitting) Bill 2021: Cyclone Reinsurance – December 2021



**Submission to Treasury** – Regional Banking Taskforce Issues Paper (November 2021) – December 2021



**Submission to the Queensland Competition Authority** – QCA Rate of return review, Draft report (June 2021) – September 2021



# INDUSTRY MEMBERS

## Commodity Members



## Irrigator Members



PIONEER VALLEY  
WATER CO-OPERATIVE  
LIMITED (PVWATER)



# CORPORATE PARTNERS

---



**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.

Visit [www.holdingredlich.com](http://www.holdingredlich.com) for more information.



## Bunnings

---

Bunnings is a major supplier for commercial businesses and a major supplier to project builders, commercial tradespeople and the housing industry. Bunnings' engages with the communities in which it operates and actively contributes to causes and organisations that benefit these communities.



## Safe Ag Systems

---

As a SaaS solution for managing compliance requirements in the agricultural industry, Safe Ag Systems™ strives to improve safety, productivity and deliver high quality resources. "Our mission is to remove the paperwork associated with compliance for agribusinesses globally without compromising productivity".

Visit [www.safeagsystems.com](http://www.safeagsystems.com) for more information.



## National Salary Packaging

---

National Salary Packaging is an Ethical Salary Packaging/Sacrificing provider helping Australian businesses add real tangible financial benefits and value to their business and their staff. National Salary Packaging gives businesses around Australia the opportunity for their staff to take home more pay at payday, at zero cost, burden or FBT liability to your company.

Visit [nationalsalarypackaging.com.au](http://nationalsalarypackaging.com.au) for more information.



## AutoTender

---

AutoTender is the secret to getting the best deal on a new car and the most money for your old car. You will have access to competitive (fleet) pricing that you normally could not get your hands on and a platform that does the leg work for you – saving you an enormous amount of money time, energy, and effort.

Visit [www.autotender.com.au](http://www.autotender.com.au) for more information.



QUEENSLAND  
FARMERS'  
FEDERATION

Level 8, 183 North Quay, Brisbane QLD 4000  
PO Box 12009 Brisbane QLD 4003  
07 3837 4720

[www.qff.org.au](http://www.qff.org.au)