





Annual Report

2025-26

QUEENSLAND FARMERS' FEDERATION



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President's report



Aaron Kiely
President
Queensland Farmers' Federation

It has been a privilege to continue serving as President of the Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) and working alongside our members to represent Queensland agriculture during another important year for our sector.

Over the past 12 months, QFF has advocated strongly for farmers at all levels of government. With our peak body members, we pursued practical outcomes across biosecurity, water, energy, workforce, transport and infrastructure, land use, disaster recovery and farm business resilience. Together, we maintained a united and respected voice on the issues that matter most to farmers and regional communities.

A major focus was ensuring government policy recognises productive agriculture while balancing demands on land, water and natural resources. QFF continued advocating on regional planning, agricultural land protection and renewable energy development, supporting frameworks that give farmers certainty while enabling regional investment. We welcomed Queensland Government amendments responding to industry concerns and continued pressing for practical protections for productive agricultural land.

Biosecurity remained a priority. We worked with government and industry to strengthen Queensland's preparedness, raise awareness of emerging threats and increase industry participation in risk management. The Biosecurity in the Boardroom program helped position biosecurity governance as a strategic business priority, while industry welcomed continued government investment in frontline capability.

Water security, affordability and infrastructure investment also remained central to our agenda. QFF and our members championed coordinated planning, sustainable resource management and critical infrastructure that supports productivity and regional growth. We also advocated for transport improvements, recognising that efficient supply chains and safe freight routes connect Queensland producers with domestic and international markets.

Our project portfolio continued delivering value for farmers and regional communities. SmartAg Queensland supported thousands of producers and agricultural workers to access training in safety, business, technology and production. We also delivered the Agricultural Extension Work Placement Program, Farm Business Resilience Program, Industry Workforce Advisor Program, Energy Information Service for Landholders and crisis communications training among other projects across our priority areas. Together, these initiatives help producers navigate change, strengthen resilience, build workforce capability and make informed decisions.

Collaboration between our member organisations remains one of QFF's greatest strengths. During the year, we worked together on budget priorities, policy submissions and advocacy campaigns, reinforcing the value of a coordinated industry voice. We were also pleased to welcome Timber Queensland as a peak body member, broadening the federation's representation.

Throughout the year, I engaged directly with producers, industry leaders and stakeholders across Queensland. These conversations keep QFF connected to farmers' challenges, opportunities and aspirations. Whether discussing workforce shortages, energy projects, biosecurity risks or water security, the message was consistent: strong collaboration and practical advocacy deliver results.

I thank my fellow Board members, our member organisations, corporate partners and stakeholders for their support and commitment. I also acknowledge CEO Jo Sheppard for her leadership ahead of her departure in mid-July 2026. Over four and a half years, Jo drove significant team growth, expanded QFF's capacity to serve members, formalised systems and strengthened our brand and influence, leaving the organisation well positioned to advance Queensland agriculture.

I look forward to working with incoming CEO Kylie Porter, whose deep experience in regional economic development, industry advocacy and stakeholder engagement will be invaluable to QFF's future success.

Looking ahead, QFF will continue championing policies and initiatives that support a productive, profitable and resilient agricultural sector. By working together, we can ensure Queensland agriculture is ready to meet future challenges and seize new opportunities for growth.

CEO’s report



Jo Sheppard
CEO
Queensland Farmers’ Federation

QFF has stood firmly at the intersection of advocacy and action, working alongside our members to shape outcomes that matter. Our purpose hasn't wavered: pushing for the policy conditions that let Queensland farming businesses stay resilient, profitable and built for the long term.

The past year has asked a lot of the sector. Persistent energy cost pressures, an evolving planning landscape, and ongoing biosecurity threats all demanded attention, layered on top of the slow, uneven recovery still playing out across communities hit by natural disasters. QFF's job throughout has been to keep translating that pressure into practical, workable solutions for the people on the land.

And while communities recover from these disasters, the sector contends with a fuel and input crisis. Escalating global tensions and mounting supply disruptions placed real pressure on the fuel and fertiliser Queensland farmers rely on to operate, prompting the Federal Government to stand up a dedicated fertiliser taskforce and, through National Cabinet, a National Fuel Security Plan. What the sector needs is continued, targeted action on distribution, small business support for those facing acute cash flow pressure, and greater transparency through tools like a supply chain dashboard so farmers can plan with confidence. More fundamentally, we pushed for this moment to mark the start of a long-term national fuel security strategy, not just a crisis response, so Queensland agriculture is never again this exposed to shocks outside our control.

It has been a difficult period for Queensland farmers when it comes to Federal Government policy decisions. We were incredibly disappointed by the Federal Budget's cuts to the Inland Rail project, the Regional Tech Hub and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and by its failure to address mounting food security concerns or provide targeted support for the small and medium enterprises that make up more than 90 percent of farming businesses and the regional supply chains around them. We joined disaster-hit regions in calling on the Federal Government to reverse its rejection of a restocking allowance for drought and flood-affected producers, and raised serious concerns, alongside our peak body members, about proposed changes to the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements that risk failing Queensland farmers and communities when they need support most. We also flagged concerns about the implications of changes to capital gains tax and outdated small business thresholds for farm succession planning and continued to press for clarity for growers navigating changes to the Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act. Taken together, these decisions have left regional Queensland feeling forgotten by Canberra at the exact moment it needed support the most.

Thankfully, QFF has experienced a more positive period of engagement with the state government. On planning, we welcomed the Queensland Government's move to retain the Regional Planning Interests mechanism protecting the Condamine Alluvium and other prime agricultural land, a win for long-term farmland protection. And on biosecurity, we drove the Biosecurity in the Boardroom initiative alongside Biosecurity Queensland, extending awareness of biosecurity risk into sectors well beyond agriculture.

None of this happens without the strength of our relationships with our peak body members, corporate partners, government, and the broader stakeholder community. QFF remains proud to speak with one voice for Queensland agriculture, representing more than 13,000 primary producers through our member organisations.

The road ahead holds both promise and hard work. QFF will keep playing a constructive role as the Queensland Government progresses Prosper 2050, its 25-year vision for the state, and we'll continue advocating hard on the reforms still ahead, with energy, water, biosecurity, disaster resilience, workforce and skills chief among them.

To our Board, our staff, our peak body members and our corporate partners: thank you for the continued commitment to building a stronger future for Queensland agriculture, together.

As this financial year draws to a close, so too does my time as CEO of QFF. It has been an enormous privilege to lead this organisation and to work alongside such a dedicated membership and team. I am proud of what QFF has achieved during my tenure as CEO, but it has been a team effort. We have successfully built a culture where people and organisations genuinely want to work together for the good of Queensland agriculture.

I'm pleased to welcome Kylie Porter as incoming CEO, and I have every confidence QFF will continue to go from strength to strength under her leadership.

About the Queensland Farmers' Federation

The Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) is the united voice of agriculture in Queensland.

Our members are agricultural peak bodies who collectively represent more than 13,000 farmers who produce food, fibre and foliage across the state. QFF's peak body members come together to develop policy and lead projects on the key issues that are important to their farmer members and the Queensland agriculture sector.

Together, we form a strong, unified voice leveraging our effectiveness by working together to drive policy and initiatives that support a strong future for Queensland agriculture.



Our areas of expertise

- Water
- Energy
- Biosecurity
- Workforce
- Land Use and Water Planning
- Farm Viability and Food Security
- Transport and Infrastructure
- Environment
- Risk Mitigation, Climate and Disaster Response

2025-26 policy submissions

In 2025–26, QFF delivered 40 submissions to government, regulators and parliamentary inquiries, at both the state and federal level, ensuring the voices and expertise of Queensland farmers were reflected in policy and regulatory decisions. These submissions addressed a wide range of issues affecting the sustainability, productivity and competitiveness of agriculture, spanning water, environment, biosecurity, energy, workforce, food security and land-use planning.

Water remained a key focus, accounting for a quarter of all submissions. QFF advocated on behalf of members through multiple water plan reviews, regional water assessments, irrigation pricing reforms and national water policy processes. This work reinforced the importance of secure, affordable and reliable water access as a foundation for productive and resilient farming businesses.

Energy was another significant area of engagement, with submissions addressing electricity affordability, transmission infrastructure, renewable energy development and opportunities for bioenergy. QFF continued to advocate for an energy transition that supports regional communities, protects agricultural interests and delivers practical benefits for farm businesses.

QFF also made substantial contributions on environmental policy, including Reef regulations, biodiversity conservation, environmental standards, carbon methodologies and environmental offsets. Alongside this work, biosecurity remained a major priority, with submissions covering national biosecurity reforms, pest management, animal welfare standards and reviews of Queensland's biosecurity framework.

QFF also contributed to policy on farm viability and food security, workforce and land-use planning. Submissions addressed national food security, agricultural science and innovation, research partnerships and food safety regulation. They also covered apprenticeships and skills, farm safety and rural mental health, and the impact of critical minerals development on agricultural land. Across these areas, QFF continued to advocate for policy settings that keep farm businesses viable, support a skilled and healthy rural workforce, and protect productive agricultural land.

A defining feature of QFF's policy advocacy is its collaborative approach. Many submissions were informed by extensive consultation with member organisations, specialist policy committees and industry stakeholders. This enabled QFF to draw on practical, on-the-ground experience from across Queensland's diverse agricultural sectors and present a coordinated, evidence-based position to decision-makers.

Several submissions carried particular significance for members. QFF's submission on the Condamine Alluvium Bill addressed the protection of one of Queensland's most important groundwater resources and the farmland it supports. Water plan reviews and the Queensland Competition Authority's irrigation pricing review will shape water access and costs for irrigators for years to come. On Queensland's Energy Roadmap, QFF pushed for landholders and agricultural production to be protected as new transmission and energy hubs are rolled out. On national biosecurity reform, QFF called for stronger early detection and surveillance, and for industry to have a say in funding decisions. Through the review of the Reef Protection Regulations, QFF worked to make sure the regulated farm standards are practical for producers in Reef catchments.

Together, these efforts demonstrate QFF's ongoing commitment to advancing policy outcomes that support a productive, resilient and prosperous agricultural sector for Queensland.

All submissions are available at qff.org.au/submissions.

Policy Area	Submissions
Water	10
Environment	9
Biosecurity	7
Energy	6
Farm Viability and Food Security	4
Workforce	3
Land Use Planning	1



2025-26 highlights

July 2025

QFF welcome the Queensland Government's decision to extend a 15 percent rural irrigation price discount for the next two years, following substantial engagement with Minister for Water the Hon. Ann Leahy.





August 2025

QFF team members joined our peak body members on their stands at the Ekka, providing volunteer assistance.

August 2025

QFF joined Minister for Primary Industries the Hon. Tony Perrett and the Premier the Hon. David Crisafulli for the launch of the Prosper 2050 Blueprint. QFF and our members will continue to engage throughout the next stage of the blueprint as five year regional and industry-specific action plans are developed to deliver on the vision of Prosper 2050.



JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

August 2025

QFF hosts our Annual Celebration of Queensland Agriculture event held as part of the 2025 Ekka – bringing together QFF's members, corporate partners, politicians and other key decision makers and stakeholders at Parliament House. The event celebrates Queensland agriculture and provides an opportunity to build the relationships to drive a strong future for the sector.



August 2025

QFF releases the Intensive Animal Industries Roadmap. The 10-year roadmap sets a clear and collaborative pathway for future growth, resilience, and sustainability across the sector, while supporting food security for Queenslanders and Australia.





October 2025

QFF, in partnership with Biosecurity Queensland, formally launches the Biosecurity in the Boardroom initiative in Brisbane, highlighting the growing risks biosecurity incursions pose to businesses across all sectors of the Queensland economy, not just agriculture.







May 2026

QFF, Cotton Australia and Central Downs Irrigators Limited (CDIL) welcomed several key recommendations from the Primary Industries and Resources Committee's (PIRC) report following their inquiry into the Regional Planning Interests (Condamine Alluvium) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026 (the Bill). QFF, Cotton Australia and CDIL advocated strongly throughout the process, appearing before the PIRC.

May 2026

Seven new graduates complete the Agricultural Extension Work Placement Program, joining QFF's growing alumni of nearly 40 extension officers who've completed the 15-month program.

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN

November 2025

More than 300 guests attend QFF's annual National Agriculture Day Breakfast at the Royal International Convention Centre in Brisbane. The event featured keynote speaker, Queensland Premier Hon. David Crisafulli, who reflected on his first 12 months in office and shared his vision for the future of agriculture in Queensland.



May 2026

QFF hosts our first Corporate Partner Networking Evening of 2026 bringing together our valued Corporate Partners, Members and Queensland agriculture industry leaders for an evening of conversation and collaboration.



June 2026

QFF announces Kylie Porter's appointment as incoming CEO, following Jo Sheppard's departure from the role in mid-July 2026. Jo led QFF since February 2022, overseeing a period of growth and organisational maturity, underlined by a constant focus on aligning QFF's operations across projects and policy with the priorities of its peak body members.





Our priorities





Water

QFF's water policy and project work has focused on securing the reliable, affordable and productive use of water as a foundation of Queensland agriculture. With climate variability, competing demands and evolving water markets placing increasing pressure on the resource, QFF advocated for pricing and planning frameworks that provide certainty for irrigators, protect existing agricultural water entitlements and support access to water for current and future production.

This work spanned rural water pricing reform, water planning and allocation, market transparency, water efficiency and the protection of critical agricultural water resources. QFF also worked to strengthen water literacy and ensure farmers are better equipped to navigate increasingly complex regulatory and market environments. Through state and national reform processes, industry engagement and practical project work, QFF advocated for evidence-based settings that support agricultural productivity, protect regional communities and build long-term water security and resilience.

Our top 3 priorities

1. Affordable and transparent rural water pricing through our ongoing engagement with SunWater and Seqwater to ensure water prices remain fair, efficient, and aligned with a commitment to lower bound pricing principles.
2. Advocacy on the protection and timely release of water allocations to support current and future agricultural production, contributing constructively to the national and state water reform and planning processes to prioritise long-term agricultural prosperity.
3. Improving water literacy by simplifying regulatory frameworks, enhancing transparency and confidence in water markets, and equipping growers with the knowledge to make informed water access and efficient use decisions.



Our advocacy highlights



- Advocated for fair rural water pricing reform, leading industry engagement on the Queensland Competition Authority's review of irrigation pricing and strongly supporting retention of the Renewal Annuity framework to protect irrigators from the volatility of price shocks under a Regulated Asset Base model.
- Defended critical agricultural water protections in the Condamine Alluvium, opposing proposed changes to the Regional Interests Development Approval (RIDA) framework and advocating for the retention of robust assessment pathways to protect prime agricultural land and groundwater resources from extractive industry impacts.
- Influenced key water planning reforms across Queensland, providing submissions and stakeholder input into multiple water plan reviews and assessments to ensure agricultural water security and improve access, flexibility and trading arrangements for growers.
- Provided constructive input into national water reform discussions, contributing submissions to the Productivity Commission's National Water Inquiry and the Murray Darling Basin Plan Review to advocate for practical, evidence-based policy settings that protect water reliability, existing entitlements and regional communities.
- Progressed practical water efficiency and supply initiatives, including advocacy to unlock unallocated water, improve market transparency and support on-farm water use efficiency projects that enable farmers to maximise productivity while strengthening long-term water resilience.



Project

Water Use Efficiency Trial Project

The Water Use Efficiency Trial (WUET), delivered in partnership with Goanna Ag, provided valuable insights into how Queensland farmers can maximise water productivity through enhanced data, technology and decision-making. Conducted across six horticulture and dairy farms in South East Queensland, the trial assessed irrigation and energy performance using real-time monitoring tools, including soil moisture sensors, crop canopy sensors, and rainfall guages.

This project confirmed that most participating growers were already using water prudently, with inefficiencies typically linked to operational constraints such as rainfall timing, pump performance and energy tariff mismatches. The trial demonstrated that improved visibility of water and energy use can help identify opportunities to optimise irrigation scheduling squeezing more crop from every drop.

Importantly, the project highlighted the value of combining water and energy data, simple decision-making support tools and peer learning. These findings have strengthened QFF's evidence-based advocacy for future investment in on-farm water efficiency, enhanced water productivity, and long-term water resilience.

Energy

QFF's work across energy policy, projects and industry engagement has focused on ensuring Queensland's agricultural sector is well positioned to navigate a rapidly evolving energy landscape. Throughout the year, QFF has advocated for an integrated approach that supports the needs of farm businesses today while enabling the sector to adapt, innovate and maintain its global competitiveness into the future.

This work has focused on regulatory settings that empower farmers to optimise energy use, adopt renewable generation and storage solutions, and explore opportunities such as local microgrids. QFF has also supported farmers to build the knowledge and confidence needed to make informed decisions about energy investments, while working with industry and stakeholders to identify practical pathways towards a more resilient, affordable and sustainable energy future for agriculture.

Our top 3 priorities

1. Supporting fit-for-purpose energy infrastructure and improving energy literacy across Queensland agriculture, while helping producers understand and adopt technologies that can improve energy efficiency, reliability and productivity.
2. Advocating for stronger and more reliable regional energy networks, alongside greater choice and competition in retail energy markets, to ensure agricultural businesses and regional communities have access to energy solutions that meet their operational needs.
3. Advocating for greater transparency across energy markets and pricing, while supporting innovation and reform that delivers fair, equitable and sustainable energy costs for Queensland's agricultural sector.



Our advocacy highlights

- Represented members' interests through active participation on Powerlink Queensland, Energy Queensland and the Australian Energy Regulator's customer and stakeholder forums, influencing regulatory and network planning processes, advocating for fair treatment of landholders, and ensuring agricultural and regional perspectives were reflected in energy policy and infrastructure decisions.
- Participated in the Australian Energy Infrastructure Commissioners' national roundtable on public liability and renewables to inform the hold harmless expectations for renewable energy developers to address landholders' concerns around public liability risk.
- Direct advocacy to the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) on Powerlink Queensland's 2027-32 transmission revenue proposal to highlight the challenges and issues members are facing with regards to rising electricity costs and to urge the AER to take a holistic approach to the impacts of electricity pricing in Queensland in its final revenue determination.



Project highlights

Ag Energy E-News and Ag Energy Hub

QFF continues to maintain the Queensland Ag Energy Hub, a website hosting information pertaining to energy efficiency, funding, and other topics across all agricultural industries. In the 2025-26 period more than 5,000 users visited the site, with more than 9,000 total views and an average session duration lasting 2m 15s.

In 2025-26 QFF also sent five Ag Energy E-News newsletters, promoting QFF energy projects, policy submissions, events, case studies and other agricultural energy information to our growing subscription list of around 700 stakeholders, including farmers, agribusinesses and professionals in the agriculture and energy sectors.

Energy Information Service for Landholders

The Energy Information Service for Landholders (EISL) continued to provide Queensland farmers and landholders with trusted, independent advice on energy-related matters during 2025–26. The service responded to 75 enquiries, supporting landholders on issues including renewable energy developments, energy efficiency, electricity tariffs and energy costs.

A key priority this year was ensuring landholder perspectives informed government policy and renewable energy industry practice. Insights gathered through EISL directly supported QFF's advocacy on the Code of Conduct for Renewable Energy Developers, community consultation processes, decommissioning arrangements and coexistence outcomes for farming communities.

The service's demonstrated value helped secure continued government support and reinforced QFF's reputation as a trusted source of energy information and advocacy. EISL continues to play an important role in helping landholders make informed decisions and navigate an increasingly complex energy landscape.



Energy Engagement and Education Advisor

Over 2025–26, the Energy Engagement and Education Advisor role strengthened the agriculture sector's voice in Queensland's energy transformation through targeted advocacy, meaningful engagement, and practical outcomes for landholders. Key priorities focused on improving farmer awareness of Queensland's evolving energy landscape, influencing policy, and embedding agricultural considerations in renewable energy development.

Through more than 170 meetings, forums and stakeholder engagements, the role connected with government, industry and community leaders to advocate for landholder concerns, address emerging issues such as public liability insurance, battery safety and coexistence, and inform feedback on major initiatives including the Queensland Energy Roadmap and Code of Conduct for Renewable Energy Developers.

Engagement remained strong through workshops, briefings and via the Energy Information Service for Landholders, providing timely advice and escalation pathways. A key achievement was coordinating the update of the QFF Renewable Energy Landholder Toolkit, informed by extensive consultation, to deliver practical, accessible guidance for farmers.

This work contributed to improved policy outcomes, stronger collaboration, and greater confidence for landholders navigating the energy transition.

Understanding Energy in Agriculture Microcredential

The "Understanding Energy in Agriculture" Micro-credential is a practical and structured training program being designed to improve energy literacy and workforce capability across Queensland's agriculture sector.

The Micro-credential project will translate more than a decade of QFF experience working with farmers on energy efficiency, renewable technologies and farm energy management into structured vocational learning materials delivered in partnership with TAFE Queensland.

The project responds to a recognised gap in energy knowledge within agriculture. As the energy system transitions and new technologies such as solar, batteries and electrification become more common on farms, practical training is required for farmers, service providers and regional industries to understand how energy systems work and how they can be applied effectively in agricultural operations.

The program will synthesise existing QFF data, insights from on-farm energy audits and industry engagement into modular learning content. Initial modules will focus on farm energy fundamentals, on-farm energy assessment and auditing, and energy efficiency and cost-benefit analysis, with future modules covering renewable technologies, batteries and emerging energy opportunities for agriculture.

The project will be delivered until December 2026, and the final Micro-credential course will be hosted on the TAFE Queensland learning platform, with supporting information and case studies available through the Queensland Ag Energy Hub.

Building Energy Literacy to support drought resilience for farmers

Energy is closely connected to how farmers access, move and use water, making energy decisions an important part of drought preparedness, farm productivity and business resilience. During 2025–26, QFF progressed the development of practical energy literacy resources designed to assist farmers better understand their energy use, costs and technology options, and make more informed decisions about energy and water management.

Delivered through the Southern Queensland and Northern NSW Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub, administered by the University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ), the project builds on QFF's extensive experience in on farm energy and water efficiency. During the year QFF developed the resource framework and progressed content covering farm energy use, electricity bills and tariffs, demand, energy efficiency, irrigation and pumping, renewable energy, batteries and practical investment decision making. The project also drew on engagement with farmers, agricultural industry organisations and research partners to ensure resources reflect the realities of agricultural businesses.

A digital resource pathway is also being developed through the Queensland Ag Energy Hub, supported by practical case studies, workshops and additional resources. The project focuses on providing practical, accessible information that assists farmers to better understand their energy use, assess relevant options, ask informed questions and recognise when specialist advice may be needed. This supports stronger on farm decision-making across energy use, water management, operating costs and drought preparedness.

Single Wire Earth Return (SWER) Project

QFF collaborated with Ergon Energy Network to understand energy consumption on selected Single Wire Earth Return (SWER) lines, under the Demand Management Innovation Allowance Mechanism (DMIAM). This project increased the understanding of current and future electricity needs for a selection of agricultural SWER customers located in rural and remote locations.

The project involved surveys, energy data reviews and visits to agricultural properties connected to SWER lines across regional Queensland in 2025, in partnership with Ergon Energy Network. The work explored how farms use electricity, the challenges they experience with power supply quality and reliability, and practical opportunities to improve energy management, reliability and electricity costs through a combination of behavioural changes, efficiency upgrades and distributed energy technologies. QFF and Ergon Energy Network acknowledges and thanks those farmers for their participation.



Queensland Renewable Energy Landholder Toolkit

QFF has completed an update to the Queensland Renewable Energy Landholder Toolkit (Toolkit) in 2025–26 to ensure landholders have access to current and practical information when considering renewable energy projects on their land.

The updated Toolkit was being developed through extensive consultation with more than 30 landholders, developers, peak bodies, local councils, government agencies, and legal and financial professionals, capturing a wide range of experiences and perspectives to inform its content.

The refreshed Toolkit reflects significant changes across the sector since its original release in 2023, including changed planning legislation, the emergence of hybrid and battery storage projects, and increasing expectations around community engagement.

The Toolkit provides practical guidance for landholders across all stages of a renewable energy development, including:

- clear information on the project lifecycle and what to expect when approached by a developer
- updated guidance on key issues such as decommissioning, biosecurity, and managing complaints and disputes
- updated information on financial, tax and legal considerations, including the importance of seeking independent advice
- considerations relating to overlapping uses such as mining, oil and gas projects
- guidance on community engagement, benefit sharing and social licence considerations
- access to additional resources and supporting information.

The updated Toolkit continues to support Queensland landholders to make informed decisions about their businesses and helps them navigate opportunities associated with renewable energy development.

Land use, transport and infrastructure

QFF recognises land use and transport infrastructure as foundational to Queensland's agricultural productivity, food security, regional resilience and economic growth. QFF's advocacy and engagement continues to focus on protecting productive agricultural land, strengthening the planning frameworks that support its ongoing use, and advocating for strategic investment in transport networks that connect farmers to markets, processors, ports and essential services.

This work reflects the importance of ensuring agriculture is appropriately considered within broader regional development and infrastructure planning. Effective land-use planning, combined with safe, reliable and resilient transport infrastructure, is essential to maintaining the sector's competitiveness and supporting the long-term viability of rural and regional communities. QFF continued to advocate for policy and investment settings that enable agriculture to adapt to future challenges, including disaster impacts, population growth and increasing infrastructure demands.

Our top 3 priorities

1. Protecting Queensland's agricultural land by strengthening planning protections, securing greater zoning certainty, and advocating for fair and effective offset policies to safeguard high-value agricultural land from encroachment, fragmentation and displacement.
2. Building resilient transport and freight networks by advocating for strategic, long-term investment in major transport corridors, local road upgrades and alternative inland freight routes to improve connectivity, supply chain efficiency, safety and resilience.
3. Driving integrated, evidence-based planning by promoting regional planning approaches that draw on robust data, cumulative impact assessments and climate modelling to ensure agricultural needs and long-term productivity are embedded in infrastructure and development decisions.





Our advocacy highlights

- QFF, alongside members Cotton Australia and Central Downs Irrigators Limited, played an active role in the Parliamentary Committee process concerning the future of the Condamine Alluvium and the Regional Interests Development Approval (RIDA) framework. QFF strongly advocated for the retention of RIDA as a critical front-end mechanism to ensure potential impacts of resource development on agricultural land, water assets and production are properly considered before development occurs.
- QFF also advocated for stronger protections for agricultural landholders, including measures addressing subsidence and compensation, and improved data to support understanding of CSG-induced subsidence. The retention of the RIDA framework and adoption of the Committee's recommendations represented important outcomes for the agricultural sector, supporting the long-term protection of the Condamine Alluvium, one of Queensland's most productive food and fibre growing regions and a critical groundwater resource for agriculture and regional communities.
- QFF continued its involvement with the Bruce Highway Advisory Council providing a strong agricultural and regional perspective on the planning, investment and delivery of improvements to Queensland's most important freight and agricultural transport corridor. Through this engagement, QFF advocated for investment that improves safety, reliability and resilience, while recognising the Bruce Highway's critical role in connecting farmers with markets, processors, ports and essential services across the state.

QFF advocated for investment that improves safety, reliability and resilience, while recognising the Bruce Highway's critical role in connecting farmers with markets, processors, ports and essential services across the state.

Farm viability, risk, recovery and resilience

Queensland's agriculture sector and its supply chains are increasingly exposed to natural hazards and extreme weather events that can disrupt productivity, damage critical assets, undermine farm business viability and threaten food security. The impacts extend beyond immediate losses, with disasters and drought placing sustained pressure on farmers, their businesses and the broader economic and social resilience of regional communities.

QFF focused on strengthening disaster recovery and drought assistance, building long-term resilience, and improving preparedness and risk management across the sector. This included advocating for more timely, transparent and accessible recovery assistance; supporting a shift from reactive drought assistance towards greater preparedness and in-drought response; and promoting risk-sharing approaches that improve the affordability and accessibility of tools such as crop insurance. QFF also continued to ensure the experiences and needs of farmers were represented in disaster and drought policy, recovery processes and national emergency management discussions, with a focus on building a more coordinated, proactive and resilient approach to future events.

Our top 3 priorities

1. Improve disaster recovery and drought assistance through timely, flexible support that helps farmers and regional communities recover and remain viable.
2. Build long-term resilience by strengthening the ability of farm businesses and communities to withstand, adapt to and recover from future shocks.
3. Enhance preparedness and risk management by promoting proactive planning, timely information and practical tools to anticipate and respond to emerging risks.



Our advocacy highlights

- Representation continued at DPI's Agriculture Disaster Taskforce; NEMA's National Coordination Mechanism; and the Drought Hubs.
- Ongoing engagement with QRIDA to improve processes to access grants and loans; improving transparency; and member insights into the 2025 Rural Debt Survey.
- Advocacy continued in drought preparedness with a view to move towards in-drought response.
- Continued advocacy for the removal of the 9% stamp duty on crop insurance and adopt a risk layering approach that encourages sharing of the cost burden of disasters and drought.
- Consultation to the Australian Human Rights Commission review into Emergency Response and Human Rights during Disasters and Natural Hazards examining the human impacts of emergency responses to natural hazards and extreme weather events across Australia, such as bushfires, floods, heatwaves, and cyclones.
- QFF featured in Vol. 22, No. 2, 2025 – Breaking the hydro-illogical cycle of the Australian Farm Institute's Farm Policy Journal, discussing the impact of media crises and their impact on agricultural policy development in Australia.



Project highlights

Farm Business Resilience Program

The QFF Farm Business Resilience Program, delivered in partnership with Cotton Australia, Greenlife Industry Queensland, and Queensland Turf Producers Association, concluded its first phase in September 2025. The program supported primary producers across six intensive industries (cotton, green life, turf, pork, chicken meat, and eggs) to strengthen their capacity to manage drought and climate variability. The program exceeded its targets, delivering:

288
self-assessment checklists

186
farm business resilience plans

Collaboration with the QFF IRRO program extended reach, connecting growers with resilience planning and QRIDA funding opportunities. A well-attended webinar series covered business planning, financial literacy, and disaster preparedness, driving improvements in productivity, water-use efficiency, and profitability.

Phase 2 commenced in October 2025 and will operate until June 2029, with GIQ and QTPA developing industry-tailored delivery models, and QFF adapting delivery for the remaining intensive industries. Phase 2 delivery to date has included:

- 45 participants
- 10 capacity building sessions
- 20 farm business plans
- 15 self-assessment checklists

FBRP is jointly funded through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the Queensland Government's Drought and Climate Adaptation Program.

Industry Recovery and Resilience Program

QFF's Industry Recovery and Resilience Officer (IRRO) program supports primary producers operating in intensive agriculture to recover from natural disasters and strengthen their long-term business resilience.

The IRRO program is jointly funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments under Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). The project continues until June 2027.

From April 2026, two IRROs are working across disaster-impacted regions in Southern Queensland to provide primary producers with practical, on-the-ground support tailored to their individual farm business. This support includes development of a Natural Disaster Management Plan, referral pathways to technical support and service delivery partners in financial, business and mental health support. After two months, four primary producers have developed Natural Disaster Preparedness Plans.

During the reporting period, the IRROs engaged with QFF members and farmers in regions including Bundaberg, Childers, Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba, Lockyer Valley, Southern Downs, Brisbane and Scenic Rim.

Over 450 participants at events and workshops have increased awareness of the program. IRRO attendance at events include Mental Health Showcase, Dalveen Community Wellness Day, Heart of the Rim Wellness Expo and Protein 2026 and the QFF workshop, Tips and Tools for Tough Times conducted with the FBR Program.

Hailnet

QFF and the UQ HailNet project is building Queensland's first automated network of hail and wind monitoring stations to better understand and manage the impact of severe weather on communities, infrastructure, and agriculture. The project is a collaboration between The University of Queensland (UQ), the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM), and the QFF, and is funded through the Queensland Resilience and Risk Reduction Fund (QRRRF) administered by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority (QRA).

UQ HailNet aims to establish a long-term, scientifically robust hail monitoring system across South East Queensland and the Darling Downs.

QFF has recruited 6 horticulture farms to participate in the project. These farms are located in hail-prone regions including Southern Downs, Toowoomba, Scenic Rim, Lockyer Valley and the Sunshine Coast regions. Other locations identified by UQ include urban and periurban locations in the greater Brisbane region.





Managing Communications during a Crisis

The program has delivered 10 workshops to 96 farmers, industry and extension staff. There is a suite of resources, including a five-module digital toolkit that equips farmers with practical skills and techniques to manage farm or industry communications and, when necessary, respond to media interviews and requests for information. These resources include:

- communication plan templates that can be applied to crisis preparation
- scenarios and exercises delivered at workshops as part of the training
- a guide to managing media enquiries for farm owners and managers.

Workshop feedback showed the top risks for participants were managing business reputation during a crisis, biosecurity incursions and managing communications during a natural disaster or drought.

On average, 80% of participants increased their skills and learnings during the training and more than 96% responded the workshop met expectations and provided resources able to be put into practice. Some industry groups are using the activities and workbook within their strategic team leadership and there is further interest to extend the skills and training program beyond the current scope.

The project completed in June 2026 as a collaboration between the Queensland Government and QFF.



Workshop feedback showed the top risks for participants were managing business reputation during a crisis, biosecurity incursions and managing communications during a natural disaster or drought.

Workforce and skills

QFF's work in rural workforce development is focused on strengthening the capability, resilience and long-term sustainability of Queensland's agriculture sector in the face of ongoing workforce, skills and training challenges. By bringing together government, industry and training providers, QFF supports a more coordinated and strategic approach to identifying workforce needs, improving access to practical and relevant training, and building a skilled and adaptable agricultural workforce.

QFF also works to ensure the needs and priorities of agriculture are reflected in Queensland's workforce policy, skills programs and funding decisions. Through industry-led, evidence-based initiatives and collaboration across the sector, this work seeks to strengthen workforce capacity, address current and emerging skills gaps, and ensure Queensland agriculture is well positioned to meet future workforce demands.

Our top 3 priorities

1. Strengthening workforce coordination across Queensland agriculture by facilitating stronger partnerships between government, industry, training providers and other key stakeholders to improve collaboration, identify shared workforce challenges and develop practical, coordinated responses.
2. Driving strategic, industry-led workforce planning through evidence-based initiatives that identify current and emerging skills needs, improve access to relevant and practical training, and support the development of a capable, adaptable and future-ready agricultural workforce.
3. Strengthening agriculture's voice in workforce policy and investment by ensuring the needs of farm businesses, agricultural industries and regional communities are reflected in workforce policy, skills programs, funding priorities and training decisions.



By bringing together government, industry and training providers, QFF supports a more coordinated and strategic approach to identifying workforce needs, improving access to practical and relevant training, and building a skilled and adaptable agricultural workforce.



Project highlights

Industry Workforce Advisor

During the 2025–26 reporting period, the Agriculture and Horticulture Industry Workforce Advisor Program focused on building Queensland agriculture's workforce capability by connecting employers, industry stakeholders, government agencies, and training providers to identify workforce challenges and develop practical, industry-led solutions.

The program delivered targeted employer engagement, providing workforce planning advice, recruitment support, and connections to relevant workforce programs and services. Collaboration with key stakeholders, including Queensland Government agencies, regional councils, TAFE Queensland, universities, and industry networks, strengthened workforce coordination and supported greater alignment between industry needs and available workforce initiatives.

Participation in industry forums and stakeholder discussions enabled the sharing of workforce intelligence, strengthened relationships across the sector, and supported the identification of emerging workforce priorities. Insights gathered through these engagements helped inform strategic workforce planning, including responses to ongoing challenges in workforce attraction, retention, skills shortages, and access to job-ready workers.

Through these activities, the program elevated the voice of Queensland agriculture in workforce policy and planning discussions by capturing industry needs, providing evidence-based workforce insights, and supporting alignment between industry priorities and government workforce initiatives. Continued engagement will help improve access to practical training, workforce solutions, and policy responses that address the changing needs of the agricultural sector.

Industry Skills and Jobs Advisor Program

During the 2025–26 reporting period, the Industry Skills and Jobs Advisor (ISJA) program focused on strengthening stakeholder engagement and workforce planning across Queensland. Industry Reference Groups (IRGs) were established across the Agriculture, Horticulture and, Conservation and Land Management (AHC), Animal Care and Management (ACM), Forest and Wood Products (FWP), Seafood Industry (SFI), and Racing and Breeding (RGR) training packages, providing a structured mechanism for consultation and the collection of workforce intelligence.

Ongoing collaboration with Skills Insight, employers, industry representatives, training providers and regional networks helped identify emerging workforce challenges, skills needs and training priorities. The ISJA program also contributed to national training product development through participation in Skills Insight projects and technical committees, promoted vocational education and funded training opportunities, and supported the development of evidence to inform future qualification pathways.

Collectively, these activities strengthened partnerships across Queensland's primary industries and improved the quality and flow of workforce intelligence to support future skills development and training priorities.

SmartAg Queensland

SmartAg Queensland, funded by the Queensland Government and delivered by QFF in partnership with CANEGROWERS, Cotton Australia and Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers (QFVG), supported 1,860 training places across Queensland's plant-based industries in 2025–26. Safety training continued to dominate demand, with Chemical Safety (559 participants) and First Aid (385) recording the highest uptake. Key highlights included Cotton Picker Operator Training reaching 177 participants ahead of the picking season, the delivery of two CANEGROWERS Haul Out courses that upskilled 25 participants and led to six immediate employment outcomes, and the QFVG Skilled to Drive initiative, which enabled 10 participants to gain truck and forklift licences and other industry skills. Through its strong regional reach and industry-led model, SmartAg Queensland continues to build workforce capability, improve workplace safety and strengthen industry resilience.



Agricultural Extension Work Placement Program

The Agricultural Extension Work Placement Program (AEWPP) continued to strengthen extension capability across Queensland's Great Barrier Reef catchments during 2025–26. Funded through the Queensland Government's Queensland Reef Water Quality Program (QRWQP) and delivered by QFF in partnership with host organisations, the program supports the development of the next generation of agricultural extension professionals.

The second intake of the current program round concluded in May 2026, with seven trainee extension officers graduating after completing a 15-month placement across five host organisations:

- Farmacist (Mackay and Ayr),
- Reef Catchments,
- Burdekin Productivity Services (BPS),
- Dawson Catchment Coordinating Association (DCCA) and
- Mackay Area Productivity Services (MAPS).

This followed the successful graduation of six trainees in June 2025 through the program's previous intake. Since the program's pilot in 2018, more than 40 extension officers have graduated from the AEWPP, contributing to a growing network of skilled extension professionals supporting Queensland agriculture and natural resource management.

Throughout the program, trainees received workplace-based mentoring, practical extension experience and opportunities to build professional networks across the agricultural sector. Participants completed training in a broad range of extension and technical skills, including communication, conflict resolution, drone operations, soil fundamentals, chemical use, agronomy and crop pathology. Trainees and mentors also participated in regular online professional development sessions delivered by Ag Consulting Co, providing ongoing learning and reflection opportunities throughout the placement. In addition, participants attended major industry events and networking opportunities, including the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Reef Extension Think Tank, the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN) Conference, National Farmers' Federation AgXChange, and the NRM Regions Australia NRM Knowledge Conference.

A key feature of the program was the strong peer-learning environment, including a cross-industry tour from Theodore to Ayr, which enabled trainees to share knowledge of their region, workplace roles and gain exposure to different agricultural sectors from grazing, broadacre cropping, sugarcane and more.

Program evaluation found that the AEWPP delivered substantial benefits to trainees, host organisations, industry and government. Graduates reported increased confidence and capability to provide effective extension services, while host organisations identified increased capacity to support growers and deliver on-ground extension activities. The program continues to provide an effective model for building agricultural extension capability, strengthening regional workforce capacity and supporting the long-term sustainability and resilience of Queensland agriculture.

Agricultural Digital Support Work Placement Program

The Agricultural Digital Support Work Placement Program (ADSWPP), funded through the Queensland Government's Vocational Education and Training (VET) Emerging Industries Initiative and delivered by QFF, concluded its placement phase in April 2025. During the program, six AgTech Officers successfully graduated after completing placements with host organisations, receiving mentoring, workplace experience and targeted training to build their capability in agricultural technology and digital agriculture.

Following completion of the placement program, an extension phase was delivered throughout late 2025, shifting the focus to broader industry capability building. QFF delivered four Ag Tech Advisor Workshops across Ayr, Mackay, Cairns and Emerald, designed to further upskill agribusiness advisors, extension officers and producers.

The workshop series attracted 81 registrations, with 48 participants attending and 38 participants successfully completing assessments to receive an Ag Tech Advisor Extension micro-credential with delivery facilitated by Sonya Comiskey (Pine Tree Projects). Workshop presentations included a range of industry experts, including Tim Neale (DataFarming), Claire Mahony (Ceres and Co), Dr Rachel Hay (James Cook University), Marcus Bulstrode (Department of Primary Industries), and Dr Ana Carla Laita de Almeida (Tropical North Queensland Drought Resilience Adaptation and Innovation Hub). Training covered key topics including digital connectivity, drones, satellite technologies, precision agriculture, data-driven farming systems and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) requirements.

Participants were also offered access to additional AgTech training opportunities, including micro-credentials and specialised professional development. As a result, seven participants completed Remote Pilot Licence (RePL) drone training, building practical skills in the use of drones for agricultural monitoring, mapping and farm management applications.

The extension phase broadened the reach and impact of the program beyond the original cohort, strengthening digital capability across Queensland's agricultural sector and supporting increased awareness, confidence and adoption of emerging agricultural technologies.



38

Participants received an Ag Tech Advisor Extension micro-credential



7

Participants completed Remote Pilot Licence (RePL) drone training

Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance / Local AgriWorks Futures Project

The Local AgriWork Futures (LAWF) project, a 12-month DPI-funded initiative delivered by QFF from August 2025 to June 2026, took a systems-level approach to workforce attraction across Queensland agriculture, producing five interconnected components aligned to the Queensland Agricultural Industry Workforce Plan 2022–2027. As part of the Project, the Careers in Agriculture magazine was was refreshed featuring 25+ first-person career stories, supported by a confirmed launch and distribution strategy.



The flagship Careers in Agriculture magazine was substantially rebuilt to 47 pages featuring 25+ first-person career stories, supported by a confirmed launch and distribution strategy. Rounding out the project, a Queensland Agricultural Industry Workforce Playbook and Regional Workforce Officer Companion Guide were developed to give officers a consistent, practical framework for applying LAWF's outputs across the regions.

Natural resource management and environment

As environmental and climate policy continues to evolve, Queensland farmers require practical, balanced approaches that protect agricultural productivity while supporting improved environmental outcomes.

QFF advocates for regulatory settings, climate initiatives and natural capital opportunities that recognise farmers' stewardship efforts, strengthen business resilience and ensure agriculture remains central to the development of environmental policy and markets.

Our top 3 priorities

1. Advocated for practical Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) reforms that protect agricultural productivity and support sustainable farming businesses.
2. Ensure emissions reduction initiatives are incorporated within a broader climate adaptation strategy, rather than being developed and implemented in isolation.
3. Advocate for improved environmental market and stewardship scheme settings for farmers, including methodologies that support robust emissions benchmarking and grandfathering provisions that recognise and reward early adopters who have proactively reduced emissions.



Our advocacy highlights

- QFF advocated for practical implementation of proposed EPBC Act reforms, while engaging with State and Federal governments to minimise impacts on agricultural productivity and ensure regulatory settings support sustainable farming businesses.
- QFF advocated for the protection of water and productive land to support sustainable agriculture and environmental resilience, while ensuring agriculture remained central to the development of natural capital policies and environmental market opportunities.



Projects

Drought Climate Adaptation Program

This industry-led project works closely with producers to assess the benefits, risks and trade-offs of emerging natural capital market opportunities. By exploring carbon, biodiversity and other environmental credit markets, the project will help farmers diversify income streams, strengthen climate resilience and make informed decisions about participating in markets that reward environmental stewardship.

The project also examines how revenue generated from these markets can be strategically reinvested into on-farm climate adaptation and risk management practices, such as improving soil health and pasture productivity.

By enhancing farm profitability, reducing exposure to climate and market volatility, and strengthening drought preparedness, the project aims to create a positive cycle where investment in resilience drives ongoing improvements in productivity, sustainability and long-term farm viability.

Natural Capital Markets Community of Practice

The Environmental Stewardship & Natural Capital Markets Community of Practice brings together regional NRM organisations, QFF, Landcare, industry representatives and government agencies to share knowledge and build capability in emerging environmental markets. Since 2021, the network has met regularly to stay informed on developments in carbon farming, nature repair, environmental offsets and other natural capital opportunities.

The Community of Practice supports collaboration across Queensland, strengthens engagement with landholders, and provides valuable regional insights that help inform the development and delivery of environmental programs and initiatives.

Participation provides QFF with early visibility of emerging policy, funding and market developments affecting Queensland agriculture. It strengthens QFF's ability to advocate for practical, farmer-focused outcomes, represent producer interests in the design of natural capital initiatives, and connect members with opportunities arising from environmental markets and stewardship programs.

Biosecurity

A biosecurity outbreak remains one of the most feared events for farmers and businesses along the supply chain. It can occur suddenly causing immediate shutdown of business which may not be able to reopen or recover for months or years. Increased international trade and visitors bringing pathogens and pests to Australia brings increased risk. Over 2.5 million containers arrive in Australia from all over the world each year. Other entry pathways include pests and diseases arriving on prevailing winds from Indonesia, ships and migratory birds.

Currently, Australia is on high alert for high pathogenicity avian influenza as it has spread through every other continent in the world including Antarctica. This strain affects not only poultry but mammals including dairy cattle.

The key for biosecurity preparedness is strong on farm biosecurity, and surveillance for early detection. QFF engages with government and monitors current and emerging threats and capacity to ensure agriculture has the tools to minimise biosecurity threats.

Our top 3 priorities

1. Strategic engagement and targeted advocacy with key decision-makers to ensure agriculture plays a leading and influential role in shaping future biosecurity policy and regulatory frameworks.
2. Strengthening biosecurity preparedness across the agriculture sector by identifying current and emerging threats early, enhancing sector readiness, and supporting effective responses to minimise potential impacts.
3. Monitoring emerging biosecurity risks and proactively raising awareness among farmers and key stakeholders, including government agencies, power companies and other parties requiring farm access, to support stronger prevention and response outcomes.



Our advocacy highlights

Input into current outbreaks

QFF is an active participant in taskforces set up to deal with current outbreaks and is able to advise members of the latest developments in these outbreaks. QFF also conveys industry impact and concern directly back to government, optimizing response and recovery. In 2025-2026, Queensland outbreaks included cattle ticks, varroa mites, tomato brown rugose fruit virus, fire ants, locust swarms in central Queensland, Japanese encephalitis and feral pigs.

Strategy and planning

Strategy and planning ensure everyone is working towards the same goals, maximizing effectiveness and anticipating challenges. QFF is active in collaborative planning and strategic direction with our biosecurity partners. These include the release of the QFF led Intensive Animal industry Roadmap in August, the Primary Industries Prosper 2050 – 25 year blueprint, the Northern Australia Biosecurity Strategy round table, the National Fire Ant Eradication review, the Queensland Biosecurity Strategy and the Queensland Invasive Plants and Animal Strategy. Additionally, QFF inputted into the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy – Livestock Chapter and reviewed priorities as part of the DPI Research Review Committee in invasive plants and animals.



Advocacy

QFF advocates in multiple ways for biosecurity including both formal and informal communication in committees and meetings. The QFF Biosecurity Committee plays a valuable role in providing industry specific impacts to ensure the best outcomes for biosecurity in agriculture. As well as advocacy through committees and meetings, QFF formalizes its position with biosecurity submissions into public consultations. In 2025-26, QFF made 10 biosecurity related submissions.

Communication and Information Exchange

QFF is on a number of liaison groups that allow for the exchange of biosecurity news and updates on current threats. This is reported to members on a weekly basis.

Groups include

- Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness Taskforce (Qld, NT and WA)
- Northern Australia Biosecurity Strategy (NABS)
- Poultry Health Liaison Group
- Animal Biosecurity and market Access Liaison Group
- QIPAC (Queensland Invasive Plant and Animal Committee)
- Regular meetings with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

Projects

Biosecurity in the Boardroom

QFF delivered the Biosecurity in the Boardroom project in collaboration with Biosecurity Queensland. The initiative raises awareness and drives engagement across the corporate sector to place biosecurity on their agenda.

The initiative was designed to start an important conversation with the corporate sector on how they can play a role in actively managing potential biosecurity risks. Leading these discussions at the highest level in the boardrooms, provides the opportunity for these organisations to take a leadership role in not only raising awareness, but integrating better practice biosecurity measures in their companies.

Key activities delivered through the initiative included a communications and marketing campaign targeting identified sectors as well as more generalised communications reaching broader corporate audiences. These activities were spearheaded by a launch event hosted in Brisbane's CBD featuring speeches from government, peak industry bodies including Greenlife Industry Queensland, and Queensland Tourism Industry Council. Attendees at this event included a broad range of corporates from various sectors. Following the event these attendees received a biosecurity conversation starter flyer containing core insights and questions to ask to drive boardroom discussions on operational, financial and reputational risks associated with biosecurity events.

Throughout the delivery of the initiative momentum developed as sectors outside of agriculture increasingly considered biosecurity risk, and sought information from QFF and Biosecurity Queensland to help them manage these risks. Several recommendations have been provided within this report to ensure this momentum continues through a future phase of the initiative.

The program was supported by a highly successful digital campaign targeting business leaders and small to medium enterprises. On Facebook more than 90,000 accounts were reached, achieving more than 229,000 impressions. On LinkedIn 75,000 accounts were reached, with 149,000 impressions. On LinkedIn the ads had an engagement rate of 2.09%, which is substantially higher than the 0.5% average for LinkedIn image ads.

The ads also received 2,561 clicks, 480 of which were to the QFF webpage. The click through rate for the ads was 1.72%, which is again higher than the LinkedIn average for a single image of 0.56%.

90,000 Accounts Reached	**75,000** Accounts Reached	**Ads**
229,000 Impressions	**149,000** Impressions	**2,561** Clicks
		1.72% Click-through

A note from our members



A note from CANEGROWERS



Dan Galligan
CEO

For CANEGROWERS, 2025–26 was a year of celebration as we looked back over a century of collective effort for the organisation and looked ahead to what comes next for Queensland sugarcane.

The 2025 crop was disappointing, largely due to delays during the 2024 crush that left more than one million tonnes unharvested and reduced growing time for the 2025 crop.

Wet weather, poor milling performance, workforce shortages, rising input costs and falling world sugar prices added significant pressures to the industry.

All in all, it was another tough year for cane-farming families.

In Mossman, the district's final cane was harvested and transported to Mulgrave Mill, bringing the local cane industry to an end after nearly 140 years.

On 21 January 2026, we marked 100 years since grower representatives from across Queensland met in Mackay for the first meeting of the Queensland Cane Growers' Council, today known simply as CANEGROWERS.

The growers at those first meetings knew that by working together they could have an influence that no individual farmer could exercise alone.

That principle has carried CANEGROWERS through a century of profound change and remains the basis of our work today.

While there have been centenary functions across all 13 CANEGROWERS Districts, 2026 hasn't been all about looking back – much of our attention during the year was firmly on the future, particularly biofuels and renewable energy.

The fuel crisis created by war in the Middle East exposed Australia's reliance on imports and the need for a domestic fuel security strategy. Queensland sugarcane offers a large domestic feedstock, backed by existing mills, rail and ports, that can help build a domestic biofuels industry.

At the national level, the Federal Government committed $1.1 billion to a ten-year Cleaner Fuels Program, while in Queensland, a parliamentary inquiry examined opportunities to build a sugarcane-driven bioenergy industry.

CANEGROWERS gave evidence to the inquiry in Townsville, Mackay and Brisbane, calling for investment in biofuels and cogeneration, policy certainty and markets that deliver returns at the farm gate.

QFF also made a submission, reinforcing the need for clear government commitment.

The inquiry made 12 recommendations. In its response, tabled on 30 June, the Queensland Government supported one outright and the other 11 in principle. It also named biofuels as one of its three priority industries.

Unfortunately, the response relied largely on existing programs and contained no new sugar-specific funding.

We now need to see all these words translated into projects and policies that support the development of a domestic biofuels industry.

Ensuring the continuation of fair commercial rules has also been a focus in 2026 and is an essential part of preparing for the future.

In May, the Federal Government launched a statutory review of the Sugar Code of Conduct.

With no competition between mills, growers have no choice about where their cane is crushed. That is why the Code, which provides for pre-contract arbitration, matters as much today as when it was established almost a decade ago and why CANEGROEWRS worked with all our districts to ensure the Government was made aware that our position was that the Code should be remade with sensible improvements.

As CANEGROWERS begins its second century, our focus remains firmly on growers – getting crops off efficiently, keeping fair commercial rules in place, and ensuring new markets and industry diversification deliver value at the farm gate.

We will continue to look forward to working with QFF and our industry partners to ensure growers have a strong voice in the important decisions that lie ahead.

A note from Cotton Australia



COTTON AUSTRALIA
Advancing Australian Cotton

Michael Murray
General Manager

The 2025/26 Queensland cotton season was a successful one, with the state producing more than 1.4 million bales and contributing more than $1 billion to the Queensland economy. Most of that value flows back into growing communities through local spending on supplies and services, transport, machinery, processing and employment.

Looking ahead to the coming season, water will be the key driver of planting decisions across Queensland. Most valleys are facing lower allocations than last year. Central Highlands growers are more optimistic, with an additional 30 per cent allocation providing greater certainty around planting.

The past year has also provided plenty of opportunities to put Queensland growers and their stories in the spotlight. Queensland was well represented at the 2025 Australian Cotton Industry Awards, with Tyson and Rosie Armitage from Cecil Plains receiving the AgriRisk High Achiever Award. Goondiwindi grower, agronomist and GIS specialist Grace Griffiths received the CRDC Chris Lehmann Young Cotton Achiever of the Year Award. Grace began her cotton journey at 16 by leading her family farm's myBMP certification and has since founded 101 Ag Pathways to promote careers in agriculture.

The 2025 Cotton Collective at the Toowoomba Showgrounds was another highlight, bringing growers together to share knowledge, hear from Australian and international thought leaders and explore the latest innovations and technology. The event also included a Darling Downs Innovation Bus Tour, showcasing agricultural businesses including Excel Agriculture, Bayer, RDO and SwarmFarm.

Our engagement with the broader Queensland community continued through the EKKA, where thousands of people visited the Cotton Australia display. Cotton Australia also brought the Seven Sunrise breakfast program to the Darling Downs for a live broadcast from the McVeigh family's farm at Dalby. These initiatives provided an opportunity to share the story of cotton and Queensland agriculture with urban audiences.

Building skills in agriculture remains another important area of collaboration. Our partnership with SmartAg Queensland continues to provide training and skills development for people working across the agricultural sector, supporting growers and regional communities as the industry responds to changing workforce needs.

Working with the Queensland Farmers' Federation remains an important part of our advocacy. Water security and the protection of productive agricultural land are shared priorities. This year we have worked with QFF on the State Development and Public Works Organisation (Critical Minerals) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026, advocating for amendments to ensure Queensland's prime agricultural land is appropriately protected as the state considers opportunities in critical minerals and other resource development.

We have also worked closely with QFF on water issues, including the Queensland Competition Authority's review of RAB-based irrigation prices from 1 July 2027. Reliable and affordable water, alongside continued access to productive agricultural land, is fundamental to the future of farming and the regional communities that depend on it.

The strength of Queensland cotton is ultimately its growers and the communities around them. Their contribution, innovation and willingness to share what they do continue to provide a strong foundation for the industry and the regions it supports.



A note from Queensland Fruit & Vegetable Growers



QFVG | QUEENSLAND FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS

Scott Kompo-Harms
CEO

The 2025–26 financial year has continued to present a mix of challenges and opportunities for Queensland horticulture.

For QFVG, our focus this year has remained on protecting the fundamentals of a productive and profitable horticulture sector. That means ensuring growers have access to the resources they need, reducing unnecessary regulatory burden and making sure policy decisions reflect the practical realities of growing fresh produce in Queensland.

Profitability remains a key concern. Labour, freight, energy, fertiliser and other input costs continue to place pressure on farm margins, while growers have limited ability to pass these increases through the supply chain. Creating the right conditions for viable farm businesses is essential not only for individual growers, but for the regional communities and businesses that depend on them.

Workforce continues to be an important part of that picture. Horticulture's seasonal production cycle requires access to a flexible and reliable workforce, yet growers continue to navigate labour shortages, changing migration settings and increasing employment costs. Practical workforce solutions that recognise the realities of horticultural production will remain important to the sector's future.

Biosecurity is another area where prevention and preparedness are critical. Queensland's horticulture industry has a significant stake in maintaining strong biosecurity arrangements, and QFVG has continued to advocate for approaches that are effective, science-based and workable for growers.

The ongoing management of Varroa mite reinforced the importance of preparedness. While Varroa directly affects honey bees, its consequences extend well beyond the beekeeping industry. Horticulture relies heavily on managed pollination, and QFVG advocated for that reliance to be recognised in preparedness and response planning. Protecting pollination services is ultimately about protecting the production of fresh food.

These issues are closely connected. For growers, they are not separate policy discussions but part of the same challenge: creating an environment where farms can remain productive, profitable and resilient.

There are also many positive developments across the sector, with growers continuing to adopt new technologies, improve farming practices and find more efficient ways to use resources. Supporting that innovation requires policy settings that enable, rather than constrain, investment and productivity.

As a member of Queensland Farmers' Federation, QFVG values the opportunity to work alongside Queensland's other agricultural industries. While our commodities and production systems differ, many of the issues affecting agriculture are shared. Working together strengthens our collective voice and helps ensure the practical realities of farming remain part of government and industry discussions.



A note from Greenlife Industry Queensland



Colin Fruk
CEO

The 2025/26 year has been one of strong momentum for Greenlife Industry Queensland (GIQ), with the organisation expanding its reach, strengthening its advocacy and delivering more opportunities for Queensland's greenlife businesses.

Seasonally, the year was relatively kind to Queensland's nursery production sector. While a major rain event caused significant impacts across north-western Queensland, the state avoided the kind of widespread natural disaster that can severely disrupt nursery production, particularly across the east coast and South East Queensland where most producers are concentrated. This relative stability provided welcome breathing room after more challenging seasons. Trading conditions were less straight-forward. While demand for greenlife remained broadly resilient, growers continued to manage significant cost pressures, workforce constraints, biosecurity obligations and changing retail conditions. The ongoing dominance of major retailers, together with the continued decline of some traditional independent retail channels, has reinforced the need to develop new markets and strengthen commercial opportunities across the supply chain.

Biosecurity remained a major advocacy priority. GIQ continued to press for a more practical industry partnership on red imported fire ants and welcomed the Queensland Government's renewed $10.5 million investment in suppression activities. GIQ also launched its Fire Ant Ready program, providing dedicated industry education and support to help businesses understand and meet their obligations while reducing unnecessary disruption to trade.

GIQ substantially increased its focus on urban greening and green infrastructure during the year. With South East Queensland entering an extraordinary period of development ahead of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, GIQ has advocated for early demand signals, greater recognition of green infrastructure as essential infrastructure, and procurement settings that give Queensland growers and landscape businesses sufficient lead time to build supply. This work has included closer engagement with government, planners, landscape architects and the broader construction sector.

Industry engagement also reached new levels. The Queensland Garden Show again provided a major consumer showcase for plants, gardening and horticultural expertise, while Greenscapes + Green Expo was significantly expanded in partnership with Landscape Queensland and the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, bringing growers, suppliers, landscape professionals and other greenlife businesses together at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre.

GIQ also expanded its business support and industry development programs through CEO Circle roundtables, nursery tours, trade days, workforce initiatives, the Good Growers Network and practical member advisory services.

Together, these initiatives reflect GIQ's broader ambition: to unite businesses that grow, sell and work with plants around a simple mission of putting more plants in more places. GIQ thanks Queensland Farmers' Federation for its continued partnership, policy support and important role in supporting the greenlife sector to be a strong voice within Queensland agriculture.



A note from eastAUSmilk



Eric Danzi
CEO

It has been an awful year for many of our dairy farmers. The mid north coast of NSW has had to deal with record floods with a sustained very wet period lasting over 6 months. I hope we don't see an event like this in the near future.

We ended the year with 282 members compared to 259 so an increase of 23 despite many members ceasing production during the year. We are continuing to build membership in NSW and now have almost as many members in NSW as Queensland.

Besides the flooding in the mid north coast of NSW, we also saw cyclone Alfred fizzle out before it hit the coast in Brisbane. Farmers in northern NSW and southeast Queensland were affected by Alfred with Dorrigo being especially badly damaged.

Farm gate prices were up slightly this year after the reduction in prices for some last year. The war in the middle east has started and this is putting upward pressure on fuel and fertilizer costs. A significant increase in milk prices needs to occur or farmers will reduce production or exit the industry.

The Queensland dairy industry is set to produce around 283 million litres of milk for the 2025/2026 financial year, which is up almost 10ML on the previous year. In NSW, the dairy industry will produce approximately 1100 million litres of milk for the 2025/2026 financial year, which is around 30ML above the previous year.

The Queensland Dairy Plan was finally launched in February 2025. We hope this will be the basis to lead the industry forward over the next 5 years.

The constrained budget of the Queensland government is limiting our ability to have projects funded which is unfortunate. I hope However, we have gained a 3-year extension to our highly successful FBRP project which is greatly appreciated. In positive news in Qld, the State government was very quick to respond to the impact of excyclone Alfred, matching Federal funding. Intensive political activity from EAM.

Strong relationships have been built with NSW Ministers over the past year and this will be used as a foundation to move forward further in the coming year. eastAUSmilk was central to the regulations allowing virtual fencing in NSW which occurred in January 2026. We expect many farmers to update the technology over the coming years as has already started in Queensland. We will continue to work with the NSW government to improve responsiveness to disaster events. EAM will continue to work with the NSW Government to identify blockages and remove them.

All involved at eastAUSmilk will continue to advocate, provide services and projects for our members. We hope that the weather is more kind to farmers in the upcoming year and that prices increase to a sustainable level for farmers.



Industry members

Commodity members

CANEGROWERS

COTTON AUSTRALIA
Advancing Australian Cotton

QFVG
QUEENSLAND FRUIT & VEGETABLE GROWERS

Greenlife INDUSTRY QLD

eastAUSmilk
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TIMBER QUEENSLAND
We build Queensland

Turf Queensland
Grow Green

Australian Chicken Meat Federation
acmf

Queensland United Egg Producers

pork QUEENSLAND INC.

Irrigator members

Bundaberg Regional Irrigators Group

BRIA
Burdekin River Irrigation Area
Irrigators Limited

CENTRAL DOWNS IRRIGATORS LIMITED (CDIL)

LWUF lockyer water users forum

PVWater

PIONEER VALLEY WATER CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED (PVWATER)

Fairbairn
Irrigation Network

Mallawa
IRRIGATION

THEODORE Water

ETON IRRIGATION

Corporate partners

QFF introduced our Corporate Partners Program in 2022-23 to build strong partnerships within industry, across sectors and with private enterprise to deliver positive economic, social and environmental outcomes for Queensland agriculture and regional communities.

Thank you to QFF's Corporate Partners for their ongoing support. For more information, please visit www.qff.org.au/our-partners



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