

1. Findings: Regions.

1.1. Central Queensland

The following report presents the results of the Rural Industries Job and Skill Research for Central Queensland. Results are also provided for the top two industries in the region; beef (intensive and pastoral) (38%) and sugar cane (29%).

A summary of the key results for Central Queensland is provided below.

- In Central Queensland, 31% of businesses employ staff on a full time basis and 16% currently employ part time staff.
- Less than half (42%) of businesses employ casual staff on an annual basis. The key roles performed by casuals include stockwork (14%), manual / general labour (11%) and transportation / driving (9%).
- Approximately six in ten (59%) use contractors for roles such as harvesting (21%), stockwork (12%), shearing (10%) and manual / general labour (10%).
- One fifth of businesses (21%) have employed new staff in the past 12 months, with 67% sourcing new staff through a contact / friend / family member (incl. word of mouth) and 14% using newspaper advertisements.
- In Central Queensland 9% of businesses currently have employment vacancies.
- Almost all businesses (84%) state there is no preference to employee staff with certificate 2 and above qualifications.
- The preferred delivery method for workforce training is field days (29%), participating in workshops or classes (27%) and hands on / on-site training (17%).

For further information regarding this research project, including methodology and background, please refer to the full Rural Industries Job and Skill Research Report.

1.1.1. Number of staff.

Table 1: Number of full time and part time staff (Central Queensland)

	Nett 1 or more (% of businesses with ANY of these staff)	Number of employees in each position description						
		0	1	2	3	More than 3	TOTAL	Mean
Central Queensland		n=175						
Full time staff	31%	69%	13%	10%	2%	6%	100%	0.9
Part time staff	16%	84%	7%	3%	1%	5%	100%	0.4
Sugar Cane		n=50						
Full time staff	26%	74%	8%	10%	2%	6%	100%	0.7
Part time staff	10%	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.1
Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)		n=67						
Full time staff	31%	69%	7%	12%	4%	7%	100%	1.2
Part time staff	15%	85%	6%	4%	1%	3%	100%	0.3

Q1. Excluding yourself and any family members, how many full time staff do you employ? RECORD NUMBER 0 – 999 (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Q2. Again excluding yourself and any family members, how many part time staff do you employ? RECORD NUMBER 0 - 999 (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

1.1.2. Use of casual labour.

Table 2: Number of casual staff employed annually (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
Casual staff			
Nett 1 or more (% ANY)	42%	42%	39%
0	58%	58%	61%
1	15%	14%	12%
2	11%	12%	15%
3	6%	6%	7%
More than 3	10%	10%	4%
Mean	1.4	1.2	1.0

Q3a. And what about casual/seasonal staff on an annual basis? RECORD NUMBER 0 – 999 (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Table 3: Casual labour roles (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
Most common roles			
Stockwork incl. mustering, cattlegwork, branding, husbandry, feeding stock*	14%	4%	24%
Manual / general labour	11%	6%	13%
Transportation / driving, i.e. operating tractors, forklifts, farm vehicles	9%	16%	3%
Shearing	6%	0%	0%
Fencing	5%	0%	10%
Planting	5%	14%	0%
Harvesting	4%	10%	0%
Least common roles			
Machinery operation	3%	4%	3%
Irrigation	2%	4%	0%
Repairs & maintenance*	2%	0%	0%
Picking	1%	0%	0%
Customer service incl. sales, retail	1%	0%	1%
Vegetation management incl. weeding, thinning, moving, watering, pruning, garden maintenance etc.*	1%	0%	1%
Other	2%	0%	3%
Not applicable - do not employ casual labour	58%	58%	61%

Q3b. What does your casual labour do for you? DO NOT READ OUT. MR. (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

* Response option added to pre-existing codeframe - coded up from 'other (specify)' verbatims

1.1.3. Contractor supply.

Table 4: Use of contractors (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
Use of contractors (Q4a)			
Yes	59%	62%	55%
No	41%	38%	45%
Number of contractors (Q4b)			
0	41%	38%	45%
1	23%	30%	19%
2	15%	18%	13%
3	9%	12%	9%
More than 3	12%	2%	13%
<i>Mean</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>1.1</i>	<i>1.4</i>

Q4a. Do you use contractors on a semi-regular or regular basis? IF REQUIRED: not just a once off need or specialist need (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Q4b. How many contractors do you use? RECORD NUMBER 0 - 999 (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Table 5: Contractor roles (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
Contractor roles (Q4c)			
Harvesting	21%	48%	7%
Stockwork incl. mustering, cattework, branding, husbandry, feeding stock*	12%	0%	24%
Shearing	10%	0%	4%
Manual / general labour	10%	4%	15%
Transportation / driving, i.e. operating tractors, forklifts, farm vehicles	9%	0%	16%
Machinery operator / maintenance	9%	6%	12%
Fencing	9%	0%	16%
Spraying	7%	8%	4%
Planting	2%	6%	0%
Vegetation management incl. weeding, thinning, moving, watering, pruning, garden maintenance etc.*	1%	0%	3%
Picking	1%	0%	0%
Build modules	1%	0%	1%
Irrigation	1%	2%	0%
Other	7%	14%	1%
Not applicable (do not employ contractors)	41%	38%	45%

Q4c. What do your contractors do for you? DO NOT READ OUT. MR (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

* Response option added to pre-existing codeframe - coded up from 'other (specify)' verbatims

1.1.4. Employment positions.

Table 6: Position descriptions occupied (Central Queensland)

	Number of businesses with staff in particular position descriptions	Number of employees in each position description						
		0	1	2	3	More than 3	TOTAL	Mean
Central Queensland		n=175						
Owner / manager	95%	5%	21%	59%	9%	7%	100%	2.0
Farm worker / farm hand	41%	59%	19%	9%	4%	9%	100%	1.2
Machinery operator / maintenance	26%	74%	13%	5%	2%	6%	100%	0.6
Office manager / administration	20%	80%	18%	1%	1%	0%	100%	0.2
Stockman	17%	83%	4%	3%	2%	7%	100%	0.7
Labourer (including pickers)	13%	87%	5%	2%	2%	3%	100%	0.4
Supervisor	10%	90%	7%	2%	1%	1%	100%	0.2
QA / marketing / sales	6%	94%	3%	2%	1%	0%	100%	0.1
Technical specialist	5%	95%	3%	1%	1%	0%	100%	0.1
Packing shed worker	2%	98%	1%	1%	0%	0%	100%	0.0
Other	4%	96%	1%	2%	1%	1%	100%	0.1
Sugar Cane		n=50						
Owner / manager	94%	6%	18%	58%	12%	6%	100%	1.9
Farm worker / farm hand	44%	56%	26%	10%	6%	2%	100%	0.8
Machinery operator / maintenance	26%	74%	14%	6%	0%	6%	100%	0.7
Office manager / administration	16%	84%	16%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0.2
Stockman	2%	98%	0%	0%	0%	2%	100%	0.1
Labourer (including pickers)	2%	98%	0%	2%	0%	0%	100%	0.0
Supervisor	4%	96%	4%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0.0
QA / marketing / sales	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0.0
Technical specialist	2%	98%	0%	2%	0%	0%	100%	0.0
Packing shed worker	2%	98%	2%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0.0
Other	4%	96%	2%	2%	0%	0%	100%	0.1

	Number of businesses with staff in particular position descriptions	Number of employees in each position description						
		0	1	2	3	More than 3	TOTAL	Mean
Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)		n=67						
Owner / manager	96%	4%	22%	61%	4%	7%	100%	2.0
Farm worker / farm hand	37%	63%	9%	10%	4%	13%	100%	1.5
Machinery operator / maintenance	19%	81%	12%	1%	3%	3%	100%	0.4
Office manager / administration	19%	81%	16%	1%	1%	0%	100%	0.2
Stockman	30%	70%	7%	7%	1%	13%	100%	1.3
Labourer (including pickers)	10%	90%	6%	0%	4%	0%	100%	0.2
Supervisor	10%	90%	7%	1%	0%	1%	100%	0.2
QA / marketing / sales	7%	93%	4%	1%	1%	0%	100%	0.1
Technical specialist	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0.0
Packing shed worker	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0.0
Other	4%	96%	0%	1%	1%	1%	100%	0.2

Q5a. Can you indicate how many employees you have using each of the following position descriptions?
 READ OUT. (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Table 7: Types of roles versus type of employment (Central Queensland)

	Type of employment					TOTAL
	Full time	Part time	Casual / seasonal	Contractor	Not applicable (do not employ staff in these roles)	
Central Queensland	n=175					
Owner / manager	89%	12%	2%	0%	5%	100%
Farm worker / farm hand	27%	7%	12%	2%	59%	100%
Machinery operator / maintenance	11%	6%	6%	5%	74%	100%
Stockman	10%	2%	5%	0%	83%	100%
Office manager / administration	10%	7%	3%	0%	80%	100%
Supervisor	9%	1%	0%	1%	90%	100%
Labourer (including pickers)	4%	3%	8%	1%	87%	100%
QA / marketing / sales	2%	2%	1%	1%	94%	100%
Technical specialist	1%	1%	1%	2%	95%	100%
Packing shed worker	1%	0%	1%	1%	98%	100%
Other	1%	1%	2%	2%	96%	100%
Sugar Cane	n=50					
Owner / manager	88%	12%	4%	0%	6%	100%
Farm worker / farm hand	22%	10%	16%	0%	56%	100%
Machinery operator / maintenance	10%	4%	8%	8%	74%	100%
Stockman	2%	0%	0%	0%	98%	100%
Office manager / administration	4%	10%	2%	0%	84%	100%
Supervisor	0%	2%	0%	2%	96%	100%
Labourer (including pickers)	0%	0%	2%	0%	98%	100%
QA / marketing / sales	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Technical specialist	0%	0%	0%	2%	98%	100%
Packing shed worker	0%	0%	2%	0%	98%	100%
Other	0%	2%	0%	2%	96%	100%
Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)	n=67					
Owner / manager	90%	13%	0%	0%	4%	100%
Farm worker / farm hand	30%	6%	6%	1%	63%	100%
Machinery operator / maintenance	9%	6%	4%	1%	81%	100%
Stockman	21%	1%	7%	0%	70%	100%
Office manager / administration	12%	3%	4%	0%	81%	100%
Supervisor	10%	0%	0%	0%	90%	100%
Labourer (including pickers)	4%	0%	4%	1%	90%	100%
QA / marketing / sales	1%	3%	3%	0%	93%	100%
Technical specialist	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Packing shed worker	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%
Other	1%	1%	3%	1%	96%	100%

Q5b. And do these roles tend to be full time, part time, casual or contractor positions? READ OUT. MR.
(Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

1.1.5. Changes in staffing.

Table 8: New staff (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
New staff roles (Q6b)			
Farm worker / farm hand	11%	6%	15%
Stockman	5%	2%	12%
Labourer (including pickers)	5%	0%	6%
Machinery operator / maintenance	3%	4%	3%
Sales / marketing / retail personnel	1%	0%	1%
Office manager / administration	1%	0%	1%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Not applicable (no new staff)	79%	90%	67%

Q6b. With those new staff you employed within the last 12 months, what position descriptions were they filling? DO NOT READ OUT. MR (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Table 9: Sourcing of new staff (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
How new staff are sourced (Q7)			
Through a contact / friend / family member (incl. word of mouth)	67%	64%	73%
Newspaper ads	14%	10%	18%
Online job ads	10%	6%	15%
Walk-bys	5%	8%	0%
Cane Growers Association	3%	10%	0%
Labour hire company	3%	6%	1%
Recruitment company	2%	0%	3%
Facebook	2%	0%	4%
Through the unis / TAFEs / accreditation courses / other education	2%	2%	3%
Ads on-site e.g. sign on gate / window	2%	0%	3%
Contractors used on a regular basis*	2%	0%	0%
Ads on bulletin boards / around town	2%	2%	3%
Backpacker lodgings	1%	0%	1%
Other	1%	0%	0%
Do not source / look for staff*	17%	20%	15%

Q7. How do you currently source staff? DO NOT READ OUT. MR. (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175) * Response option added to pre-existing codeframe - coded up from 'other (specify)' verbatim

1.1.6. Current employment vacancies.

Table 10: Current employment vacancies (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
Current employment vacancies (Q8a)			
Yes	9%	2%	12%
No	91%	98%	88%
Positions currently vacant (Q8b)			
Farm worker / farm hand	3%	0%	1%
Labourer (including pickers)	2%	0%	4%
Machinery operator / maintenance	2%	0%	4%
Stockman	2%	0%	4%
Owner / Manager	1%	0%	0%
Other	1%	2%	1%
Not applicable (no vacancy gaps)	91%	98%	88%

Q8a. Do you have any current vacancy gaps? (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Q8b. And what position descriptions are those vacancies for? DO NOT READ OUT. MR (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

1.1.7. Skills shortages.

Table 11: Skills shortages in entire workforce (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
Types of skills shortages (entire workforce) (Q9a)			
Previous farm / horticulture experience	5%	2%	6%
IT / computer literacy	3%	2%	0%
Machinery skills – mechanical skills incl: maintenance / welding / fabricator	3%	6%	3%
Strong work ethic	2%	0%	4%
Stock knowledge incl: manager / supervisor	2%	0%	3%
Good experienced workers	2%	0%	3%
Machinery operators	2%	2%	1%
Positive attitude	1%	0%	0%
Appropriate licence to operate	1%	0%	0%
Irrigation operation skills	1%	4%	0%
Fencing	1%	0%	1%
Adequate English and math skills	1%	0%	1%
Drivers incl: truck/ forklift / tractors	1%	0%	0%
Marketing / sales	1%	0%	1%
Shearers	1%	2%	0%
Farm hands / farm skills	1%	2%	0%
Other	1%	0%	1%
No skills missing	80%	86%	81%

Q9a. Are there particular skills missing in your workforce? DO NOT READ OUT. MR. (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Table 12: Skills shortages amongst owners and managers (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=169	n=49	n=63
Skills shortages amongst owners and managers (Q9b)*			
IT / Computer skills	12%	4%	16%
Business management	8%	8%	11%
Accounting / book keeping	8%	6%	10%
Machinery skills	5%	6%	5%
Marketing / sales skills	4%	0%	2%
Technical skills / Technology	4%	0%	5%
Financial management	3%	4%	2%
Managerial skills	3%	2%	3%
Office admin skills	2%	4%	3%
Animal health	2%	0%	3%
Drivers licences	1%	0%	3%
Agronomy	1%	2%	0%
Better understanding of horticulture	1%	0%	2%
BMP Accredited	1%	2%	2%
Chemical accreditation	1%	0%	2%
Other	2%	2%	3%
No / nothing	57%	69%	52%

Q9b. As an owner or manager of the business, are there any particular skills you would like to improve on or have? RECORD VERBATIM (Base: Business owners and managers in Central Queensland n=169)

* This question was open-ended capturing full verbatims. Verbatims have been coded into themes as shown above.

1.1.8. Qualifications and training.

Table 13: Qualifications and training (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
Preference for staff with Certificate 2 and above qualifications (Q10a)			
Yes	13%	16%	10%
No	84%	80%	85%
Don't know	3%	4%	4%
Preferred delivery method for workforce training (Q10b)			
Field days	29%	32%	27%
Participating in workshops or classes	27%	32%	18%
Hands on / on-site training	17%	24%	19%
Face to face training / face to face	9%	4%	6%
By any means	3%	0%	6%
Participating in online courses	2%	4%	3%
By telephone / Skype	1%	2%	0%
Reading materials at own pace	1%	0%	1%
College / TAFE	1%	0%	0%
Don't know	9%	2%	15%
Other	1%	0%	1%
Nothing / no training necessary	1%	0%	3%

Q10a. Is there a preference to employ staff with certificate 2 and above qualifications? DO NOT READ OUT. SR (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Q10b. What is your preferred delivery method for workforce training – e.g. face to face classes, online courses etc? DO NOT READ OUT. SR. (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

Table 14: Impediments to training (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
Impediments to training (Q10c)			
Cost	21%	12%	30%
Time commitment	19%	18%	22%
Accessibility – distance to facilities	17%	2%	22%
Staff motivation	9%	12%	10%
Government rules and legislations incl: WH&S / employment red tape	5%	6%	1%
Decline in the industry / lack of jobs	4%	4%	3%
Don't need more staff / don't need training	3%	4%	1%
Limited information on course content / options	3%	4%	3%
Attitude incl: finding the right people who willing to learn	3%	2%	3%
Availability of courses	3%	0%	1%
Lack of interest from young people	3%	4%	3%
Lack of practical skills / experience on farm	2%	4%	3%
Lost productivity / covering staff for training	2%	6%	0%
Availability of skilled trainers	2%	0%	3%
Continuity of staff commitment	2%	6%	0%
Hard work – low wages	2%	2%	3%
Competition from the mining industry	1%	2%	1%
Language barriers	1%	0%	1%
Insurance risk	1%	0%	1%
Don't know	20%	28%	18%
Other	1%	2%	1%
Nothing	3%	6%	3%

Q10c. What, if anything, inhibits the training of staff in your industry? DO NOT READ OUT. MR (Base: Total Central Queensland n=175)

1.1.9. Looking forward – employment numbers.

Table 15: Staff numbers in the next 2 years (Central Queensland)

	Nett 1 or more (% businesses likely to have ANY of these staff)	Number of staff						TOTAL	Mean
		0	1	2	3	More than 3			
Central Queensland		Minimum n=167							
Full time	33%	67%	11%	9%	5%	8%	100%	0.9	
Part time	17%	83%	13%	2%	1%	1%	100%	0.2	
Casual	29%	71%	10%	10%	3%	6%	100%	0.9	
Contract	40%	60%	13%	10%	7%	10%	100%	1.5	
Sugar Cane		Minimum n=48							
Full time	40%	60%	8%	16%	6%	10%	100%	1.1	
Part time	19%	81%	15%	2%	0%	2%	100%	0.3	
Casual	24%	76%	6%	10%	2%	6%	100%	0.8	
Contract	45%	55%	8%	10%	18%	8%	100%	1.2	
Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)		Minimum n=63							
Full time	23%	77%	8%	6%	2%	8%	100%	0.8	
Part time	11%	89%	8%	2%	0%	2%	100%	0.2	
Casual	30%	70%	9%	9%	5%	6%	100%	0.9	
Contract	37%	63%	13%	11%	3%	10%	100%	1.0	

Q11. How many people do you envisage employing full time, part time, casual or contract in the next 2 years? (Base: Total Central Queensland, excluding those who indicated don't know, minimum n=167)

* NOTE: A small proportion of respondents indicated don't know to this question (3% or less). These responses are excluded from the charts above.

Table 16: Sample profile (Central Queensland)

	Total Central Queensland	Sugar Cane	Beef Combined (Intensive & Pastoral)
Sample size (unweighted) n=	n=175	n=50	n=67
Primary industry (SC4a)			
Beef – Intensive & Pastoral combined	38%	0%	100%
Sugar Cane	29%	100%	0%
Sheep	14%	0%	0%
Grain and Feed	7%	0%	0%
Cotton	4%	0%	0%
Intensive Livestock	3%	0%	0%
Production Horticulture	3%	0%	0%
Nursery and Garden	1%	0%	0%
Length of operation (Q15)			
Less than 5 years	2%	0%	1%
Between 5 - 10 years	5%	2%	6%
Between 10 - 20 years	13%	6%	15%
Between 20 - 50 years	51%	44%	51%
More than 50 years	30%	48%	27%
Employment status (SC5)			
I am the sole or joint owner	89%	96%	82%
I am a manager	7%	2%	12%
I am an employee	3%	2%	6%
Business role (SC3a)			
A primary producer	97%	98%	97%
A supplier to primary producers	3%	2%	3%
Business type (Q13)			
Family owned business	98%	98%	99%
Corporate business	2%	2%	1%
Annual turnover (Q14)			
Less than \$1 million	72%	84%	61%
\$1 million to \$4.9 million	21%	12%	24%
\$5 million to \$19.9 million	1%	0%	3%
\$20 million and over	1%	0%	1%
Refused / don't know	6%	4%	10%

SC3a. *And is the business...? READ OUT. SR*

SC4a. *Which industry sector does the business generate its primary stream of income from? DO NOT READ OUT. SR*

SC5. *Which of the following best describes your employment status within the business? READ OUT. SR*

Q13. *Is your business a...? READ OUT. SR*

Q14. *What is the annual turnover of the business? READ OUT. SR*

Q15. *How long has the business been in operation? DO NOT READ OUT. SR*

Base: Total Central Queensland (n=175)