



**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT OR**  
**AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION TRAINEE**

- Are you passionate about making a difference to the Great Barrier Reef?
- Are you passionate about Agriculture?
- Are you looking to widen your industry experience?

This is your opportunity to be mentored by experienced extension practitioners to develop the skills required to engage with primary producers and improve land management practices throughout the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) catchments.

**POSITION DESCRIPTION**

<b>Program</b>	Agricultural Extension Work Placement Program	
<b>Position Title</b>	Agricultural Extension Trainee	
<b>Salary</b>	Salary Package of \$64,600 (including salary, superannuation and leave loading)	
<b>Incumbent</b>	This position is full time commencing on 1 May, 2019, ceasing on 30 April, 2020 (12 months duration only)	
<b>Location</b>	FARMACIST PTY LTD, Ayr	
<b>Reports To</b>	The Manager - Mr Jayson Dowie	
<b>Key Relationships</b>	<b>Internal:</b>	Jayson Dowie, Manager, Director Evan Shannon, Principal Agronomist Simon Dunlop, Senior Agronomist Heidi Hatch, Agronomist Billie White, Agronomist Alice Warner, Agronomist FARMACIST Directors
	<b>External:</b>	Landholders, other Trainees, Queensland Farmers' Federation, other extension staff

**Position Summary:**

The Queensland Government engaged the Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) to facilitate the Agricultural Work Placement Program, which aims to improve the capacity of up to six early career extension officers (Trainees). The program will enhance your extension skills as you assist in delivering agricultural and Natural Resource Management (NRM) projects with landholders in GBR catchments.

The program was developed in response to the third recommendation of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce report that calls for more effective, targeted and coordinated extension to support large scale land management practice changes in the GBR Catchments.

The focus is on reducing the risk of excess nutrients, pesticides and sediments from agricultural runoff impacting reef water quality in the GBR catchments. The major agricultural activities in the Great Barrier Reef catchments include sugarcane, grazing, bananas, horticulture, grains and dairy.

The successful applicant will be hosted by FARMACIST and receive mentoring from experienced advisors, participate in relevant training, engage with sugarcane growers and expand their access to extension networks. It is anticipated that the Trainee will develop expertise in one or more of the following areas: land management, nutrition management, irrigation management, chemical management, precision agriculture, GIS systems, water quality and soil health.

### **Host Organisation and Work Location:**

Farmacist is a progressive agronomic service provider with strong links to agricultural innovation and technology. These strong links with our growers and corporate clients drive us to improve productivity, profitability and sustainability within the sugarcane industry. We achieve this through the application of effective extension, based on cutting-edge research and development.

We have the largest group of qualified agronomists in the sugar industry and our staff cover a multitude of disciplines. Our experienced team are well respected within the industry and strive to provide quality services and outcomes. We are progressive, innovative, and offer practical solutions to both growers and industry bodies.

The successful applicant will be welcomed into our close-knit and supportive team. They will be mentored by a range of our experienced professional staff. Our team will be focused on developing and upskilling the trainee by integrating them into a variety of exciting projects and client services. They will also support them in training opportunities and professional development to assist them in pursuing their intended career goals. This opportunity will ensure quality foundational skills to kick start the trainees agronomic career in this exciting industry.

The trainee position will be placed within the Burdekin region in Northern Queensland. The Burdekin is the largest, fully irrigated sugar production region in the Australian Industry. Farmacist also has an office in Mackay and the Trainee will be at times required to travel for work to Mackay. More information about Farmacist can be found at [www.farmacist.com.au](http://www.farmacist.com.au)

The trainee will predominantly work in the sugarcane industry in the Burdekin and Mackay regions; however, they will also have the opportunity to gain useful exposure to the horticultural and grazing industries in these areas. The trainee will be engaged in on-farm visits, learning about farming practices and technology and participating in management planning discussions. Through this engagement, the trainee will develop an understanding of the region's agricultural industry and empathy with the farmers. Development of these important skills will help the trainee to better plan, target and deliver appropriate extension activities, leading to improvements in water quality.

The trainee will be involved within the following projects:

#### **Project Catalyst**

Project Catalyst is a grower-collaborative project designed to reduce their environmental footprint, enhance crop production and increase farm viability within sugarcane production systems in the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) Catchment. Trainees will work with project growers to identify, validate, adopt and communicate innovative farming practices to improve water quality through targeted R&D and hands-on grower support.

The trainee will be required to assist with the design, implementation, and collection of scientific measurements of a significant number of research trials, aimed at improving water quality. Project Catalyst is an internationally recognised program funded through the Coca-Cola Foundation and WWF.

Further information can be found here - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o3Hqsg9FjRw>

### **RP 161**

RP 161 is a Burdekin region project focussed on reducing nitrogen inputs and improving farm practices. It involves whole farm nutrient planning, through one-on-one extension - more than 156 growers have participated in the project to date. The project has led to large improvements in Nitrogen use efficiency and is a successful model for other targeted extension programs. Whilst the trainee is engaged in this project, they will be learning the skills required to prepare nutrient management plans, collect and collate data, use a purpose built GIS system, understand and calibrate fertiliser boxes and assist with preparation and delivery of project extension activities.

Further information on this project can be found here - <http://www.farmacist.com.au/blog/rp161-the-story>

### **RT3 Projects Burdekin & Mackay**

The aim of the RT3 extension programme is to improve the irrigation management practices of Burdekin cane growers, through adoption of known improved practices and on-farm tools. Through extension support and on farm tools, the intention is to improve on-farm water use efficiency, thus delivering a reduction in DIN losses with 198 growers. The trainee's role in this project will be in assisting growers with irrigation scheduling, irrigation runoff management and assessing irrigation volume management, with support from our experienced agronomists.

Further information on this project can be found here- <http://www.farmacist.com.au/burdekin-cane-extension-project>.

### **NESP – Improved Water Quality from On Farm Nitrogen Management**

The Trainee will work with project teams, in both Mackay and the Burdekin, evaluating enhanced efficiency fertilisers and evaluation of Nitrogen application to crop yield potential in sugarcane. This project will develop the trainee's links with leading researchers from the sugar industry, Qld Department of Science Information Technology and Innovation, Qld Department of Agriculture and universities.

## **Trainee Role & Responsibilities:**

The successful applicant will work with FARMACIST to support landholders with land management practices that improve the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef.

The Trainee will:

- Increase their capacity to deliver Agriculture extension by working with landholders to facilitate change on their property that has social, productivity and environmental outcomes. This is achieved by helping people gain the knowledge and confidence required for practice change and providing support to ensure it is implemented effectively.
- Work with FARMACIST employees and their mentor to develop and implement a 12 month work program that supports landholders to adopt practices that improve water quality. This work program will need to be approved by both FARMACIST and QFF.
- Actively contribute to the design and delivery of their program, as well as to the design and delivery of extension activities under the guidance of their mentor.
- Complete a skills needs assessment. This will allow for activities specified in the work program to be tailored to the Trainee's needs.

- Attend designated training programs
- Demonstrate skill development to the satisfaction of their mentor and meet agreed performance standards.
- Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan to proactively engage with internal and external stakeholders and create their own networks throughout the year.
- Undertake evaluation activities and participate in a public forum to report on outcomes of the program.
- Actively participate and potentially present at events and other forums as requested.

Trainees will be required to attend all training activities as per agreed work program, including:

- The induction workshop (to take place within the first two weeks of commencement).
- The Australasia Pacific Extension Network (APEN) to be held in 2019.
- A bus trip to expose the trainee to different extension practices.
- The mid-year review workshop.
- The final evaluation event.
- Complete selected University of Melbourne training modules for advisors or similar formal training activities.

## **Eligibility Criteria:**

### ***Essential***

To be eligible as a Trainee, candidates must:

1. Be a citizen or permanent resident of Australia
2. Hold a 'Class C' Queensland driver's license
3. Have completed studies in Agriculture, Science or Environment (minimum Certificate IV)
4. Be at the beginning of your career or a new entrant to the extension field with no more than two years of experience in extension or advisory services
5. Have a passion for supporting growers and strive to develop strong interpersonal skills with clients
6. Be willing to work for Farmacist in the Burdekin. It will be the Trainee's responsibility to organise relocation to the host organisation's office at their own cost.
7. Be able to commence work no later than 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2019
8. Be able and willing to travel throughout a region and the GBR catchments as part of their work. This may include multiple days away at a time.
9. Actively participate in specified training and demonstrate competency in agreed key performance indicators
10. Demonstrate capacity to work independently within a team environment
11. High-level verbal communication skills and demonstrated networking skills

### ***Desirable***

1. Demonstrated training in fields valuable to deliver Reef health outcomes is desired, such as land management, water quality, soil health, and nutrient and pest management.

**QFF and Farmacist support equal opportunity employment, Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders are encouraged to apply.**

## **Selection Criteria:**

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Level of skills and training and personal attributes that could be used to perform the role and improve land management practices. This includes demonstrated successful completion of studies in Agriculture, Science or Environment (minimum Certificate IV), as demonstrated by academic transcripts.
2. Demonstrated high-level communication skills and a strong ability to engage and build networks effectively.
3. Good understanding of the agricultural industry being applied for.
4. Thorough understanding of the importance of agricultural extension officers and the key attributes required to facilitate the improvement of land management practices and achieve improved water quality outcomes in a GBR catchment.

## **Submitting an Application:**

Candidates are asked to submit the following information:

1. Current Curriculum Vitae (CV).
2. A Cover Letter (maximum two pages), or a 3-minute video clip that responds to the selection criteria and summarises why you should be considered for this role.
3. Proof of nationality or a permanent residence visa.
4. Certified copies of your academic record and academic transcript.
5. Two referee reports/letters that support your claims for the position. The references should address the selection criteria used by QFF to evaluate your application.

Please submit the above information to [milena@gff.org.au](mailto:milena@gff.org.au) by 5pm, 21 January 2019.

If you are submitting a video, please send a Dropbox link.

No additional information or attachments (such as images, diagrams, flow tables, etc.) should be included unless a prior arrangement has been made with QFF.

## Application and Assessment Cycle:

The following sequence outlines the work placement cycle.

Event	Proposed Date
Call for Trainee applications opens	December 2018-January 2019
Call for applications closes	21 January 2019
Shortlist applicants notified	February 2019
Interviews of shortlisted applicants	March 2019
Applicants advised of selection outcomes	End of March 2019
Proposed starting date	April/May 2019
Induction workshop completed, and work program developed	15 days after commencement

*These are tentative dates. You will be advised of any changes.*

If you are successful FARMACIST will contact you to discuss the details of your employment and contract. The details will be aligned to the grant agreement between FARMACIST and QFF, according to the provisions of the Deed of Funding Agreement from the Department of Environment and Science (DES).

## Further Information:

For any queries related to the Pilot Agricultural Extension Work Placement Program contact Milena Gongora at [milena@qff.org.au](mailto:milena@qff.org.au) or phone (07) 3837 4733.

Below you will find some useful links about the project partners and relevant organisations.

[QFF](#)

[DES](#)

[Office of the Great Barrier Reef](#)

[Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance](#)

[Reef Alliance](#)

[FARMACIST](#)