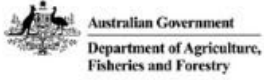


SEQ SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE NEWS – DEC 2025



Thank you for another successful year of Sustainable Agriculture



As another year comes to an end, the Sustainable Agriculture Team would like to say a big thank you to all our newsletter readers, workshop attendees and project participants. We value the time, energy, and feedback you have contributed to our projects and programs. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and we look forward to collaborating with you in the new year.

Our last day in the office is Friday, 19 December 2025, and we'll be back on Monday, 5 January 2026.

What's been happening?



New Sustainable Agriculture Team Member

Jessamy Zerner has been with the Sustainable Agriculture team as a Project Officer for over 6 months now, contributing to the Climate Smart Agriculture and Natural Resource Recovery Programs. With a background in regenerative grazing, Jessamy is passionate about supporting landholders in adopting innovative practices that enhance productivity and profitability while encouraging a healthy balance with nature.

Workshops wrap up

Sensible Supplementation – 28 and 29 October

Although our Sensible Supplementation workshops were rescheduled, producers came out in record numbers. The workshops held in Boonah and Esk, which were held in conjunction with the Queensland Government Department of Primary Industries (DPI), FutureBeef team Kate Brown, and Greg Bath, alongside Mick Sullivan, gave Producers an in-depth guide into what supplements are available on the market and how to use them economically and efficiently to get the best outcome. This was followed up by a crash course in pasture ID presented by Vanessa and Bruce, giving landholders an insight into how to identify key pasture species and what they can tell you about your land condition and pasture productivity.

For those who missed the workshop or those interested in understanding more about livestock supplementation, pasture management, or cattle nutrition, check out the FutureBeef Dry Season Management of a Beef Business booklet, the How to Cost Supplements Guide and the How to Read Supplements Labels page.

Dry Season management: https://futurebeef.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/J3776-DAF-Dry-season-management-A5_OCT2021_WEB.pdf

How to cost supplements <https://futurebeef.com.au/resources/costing-supplements-2/>

How to read Supplement labels <https://futurebeef.com.au/resources/product-labels-what-are-they-saying/>



Image 1: The delivery team, Image 2: Bruce and Vanessa's grass talk

The Boonah workshop was funded through the SQNNSW Innovation Hub, which received funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund, and the Esk workshop was funded by the Australian Government through funding from the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust.

Sown Pasture Renovation and Pasture Dieback: Building pasture resilience – 9, 10 and 11 October

In October, we teamed up with the DPI Pastures team, Ted Callanan and Vanessa MacDonald to deliver a series of workshops about Pasture Dieback and building pasture resilience.

The Boonah and Yarraman workshops focused on pasture dieback. Ted presented on how to identify dieback causing mealy bugs and the signs and symptoms of dieback. At the Boonah workshop, we met in the field to assess an affected pasture and landholders. We were tasked with locating some mealy bugs based on the information Ted had provided earlier in the day. We also talked through how producers in the area were able to regenerate their affected pastures by grass and legume species selection and tailoring grazing to support pasture establishment. In Yarraman, we joined in the field for an agricultural drone demonstration by Aerial Application Australia to see how weeds such as lantana can be efficiently and effectively controlled in hilly country.

Our Toogoolawah workshop focused on improving pasture productivity and grazing resilience by incorporating sown grass and legume species. Landholders looking to increase pasture productivity were shown the latest research from the DPI team on legume and grass species and the best way to establish them. This day also included a field walk to see how a local producer is improving their weight gains, grazing system and land condition by incorporating multi-species and legumes, including leucaena and desmanthus into sown pasture plantings.

For more information on pasture dieback, refer to the FutureBeef website -

<https://futurebeef.com.au/resources/pasture-dieback/> For more information on sown pastures, contact us for a copy of the booklet Pasture Management for South East Queensland Catchments or visit the FutureBeef website -

<https://futurebeef.com.au/resources/sown-pastures-their-place-their-role-and-the-things-to-watch/>



Image 1: Yarraman Field Visit, Image 2: In the field at Boonah, Image 3: Mealy Bug found at Boonah, Image 4: Toogoolawah Field visit

This event was delivered through the Queensland Pasture Resilience Program, which is a partnership between the Queensland Government Department of Primary Industries, Meat & Livestock Australia and the Australian Government through the MLA Donor Company and by Healthy Land & Water through the Queensland Government's Natural Resources Recovery Program, the SQNSW Innovation Hub received funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and the Australian Government through funding from the Natural Heritage Trust under the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program.

Healthy Soils for the Bremer Catchment – 25 November



In November, we held a Healthy Soils workshop at Rosewood, focusing on farmers in and around the Bremer region. Presented by soil expert David Hall, producers got a look at all things soil biology and chemistry and how it applies to how crops are doing in the ground. This formed the first part of our Healthy Soils Program, where participating landholders will have access to on-farm soil sampling, soil test analysis and advice to help improve crops and pasture production and soil health.

This workshop is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Natural Heritage Trust under the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program.



Industry News

Updates to agricultural action exemptions under the EPBC Act

The Australian Government has announced important changes to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act), effective immediately. Under the updated rules, exemptions for land-clearing on agricultural land have been significantly narrowed. Land that has not been cleared in the past 15 years and is not a forestry operation, land within 50 metres of a watercourse, wetland or drainage line in the Great Barrier Reef catchment area and thinning or clearing that may impact on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) - will now generally require environmental approval before clearing.

While longstanding uses continuing since before 16 July 2000 remain exempt under the Act's "continuation-of-use" clause (section 43B), any expansion, intensification or change of land use, especially involving clearing of long-standing vegetation, will no longer automatically qualify. **Landholders now need to self-assess whether their actions could significantly impact protected matters and submit a referral for approval under the EPBC Act where required.**

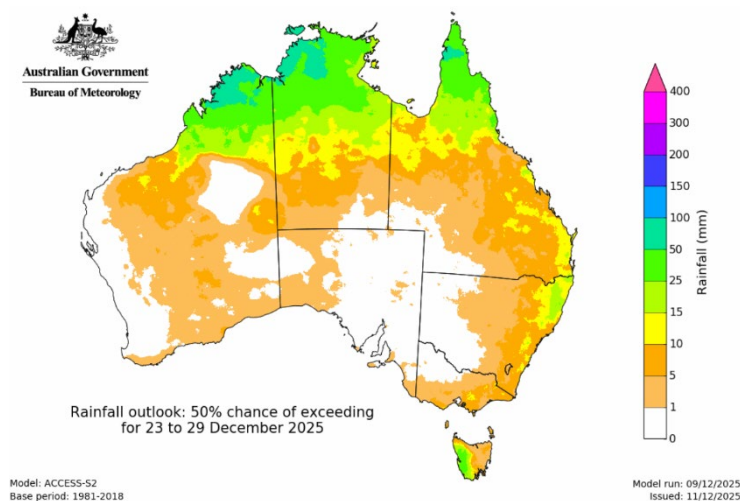
These new Federal legislative reforms apply regardless of approvals and/or exemptions under State or Territory legislation and Local Government laws.

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has sought to clarify this for operators in the following agricultural action exemptions under the EPBC Act update. Link below.

<https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/epbc/epbc-act-reform/updates-agricultural-action-exemptions-epbc-act>

An EPBC Assessment Hotline has been established for landholders to have property-specific conversations about any ongoing or proposed clearing, thinning activities.

Contact the EPBC Assessment Hotline for a property-specific conversation - 1800 920 528, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm (AEST) Monday to Friday, except public holidays.



BOM's December – March outlook

The BoM's December-to-March forecast (issued 4 December 2025) suggests a varied summer ahead across Australia. Rainfall is expected to be below average over much of the country, especially in large parts of Western Australia, northern regions, South Australia, Victoria, inland Queensland and New South Wales, and north-west Tasmania. However, parts of eastern and far northern Queensland carry

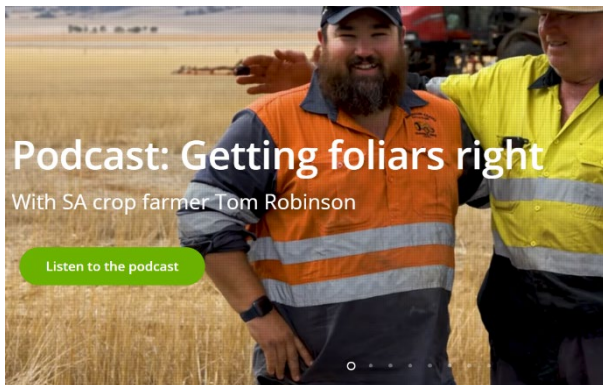
a slightly increased chance of above-average rainfall, with the wettest odds along the Cape York Peninsula and eastern Queensland.

Temperature-wise, the outlook leans strongly toward warmer-than-average conditions. Daytime maximums are likely above normal for most of Australia (60-80 % chance), with certain central and western regions tipped for unusually high heat. Overnight (minimum) temperatures are also very likely to stay above average across much of the country.

With warmer oceans and ongoing tropical influences such as La Niña still active, summer may bring elevated humidity and occasionally volatile weather, especially in northern and eastern Australia.

Find out in more detail <https://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/>

Calling farmers to share their soil and landscape insights



Soils for Life is seeking farmers from across Australia to help shape a new set of resources designed to support better soil, plant and landscape monitoring. The organisation is looking for producers who actively track changes in soil health and landscape function, whether through in-paddock observations, soil and plant assessments, or long-term monitoring records. Perfect data isn't required; what matters most is real, practical experience.

Participants should be open to sharing both successes and challenges, along with non-confidential records that show how monitoring has informed decisions on their farm. The aim is to help other farmers build confidence and skills by learning from genuine, on-the-ground stories.

Selected farmers will take part in a short phone call followed by a 90-minute Zoom conversation, which will form the basis of a published case study. Additional opportunities may include videos, podcasts or webinars. Soils for Life, a non-profit dedicated to regenerating Australia's soils, invites expressions of interest from anyone passionate about landscape health. Get in contact with Soils for Life for more info

<https://soilsforlife.org.au/contact/>

Helping producers cut on-farm emissions with practical, proven tools

The Zero Net Emissions Agriculture Cooperative Research Centre (ZNE-Ag CRC) has released



a new booklet designed to help Australian producers find practical, science-based ways to reduce on-farm emissions https://zneagcrc.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/ZNE_Brochure_2025_WEB-single-pages-002.pdf. The guide outlines clear actions farmers can take right now, along with emerging tools and technologies that will make low-emission farming even easier in the years ahead.

The booklet explains where most farm emissions come from, including methane from livestock digestion, nitrous oxide from fertilisers, and carbon dioxide from burning diesel for transport and electricity. Understanding these sources is the first step toward making meaningful change.

Producers will also find real examples of farms already seeing benefits such as improved productivity, reduced input costs and better access to premium markets. The resource includes checklists, strategies and simple monitoring tips to help farmers take the next step on their own operation. It's a practical roadmap for any producer looking to build a more resilient, lower-emissions future.

Celebrating World Soil Day with Soil Science Australia

The Queensland Branch of Soil Science Australia proudly celebrated World Soil Day with a special event highlighting the vital role healthy soils play in productive agriculture, resilient landscapes and thriving communities. This year's theme focused on raising awareness of soil health and encouraging practical action to protect this essential resource.



MC Evan Thomas (DETSI) commenced the program with an introduction to the National Soil Action Plan, setting the scene for the panel discussion, 'What does the future soil scientist look like?' Panel members Vanessa Smolders (our very own Sustainable Agriculture Team Lead) and Dr Stirling Roberton (research scientist with CSIRO) both highlighted the importance of a revival of soil conservation specialists and the need to focus on erosion and the impacts of flooding events, which were becoming more and more frequent in

Queensland. Presentations from the Soil Graduates on the highlights of their year in the Soil Graduate Program with their host organisations concluded the event.

Image: Vanessa with facilitator & host Evan Thomas (DETSI) & other speaker/ panellist Stirling Roberton (CSIRO) in front of National Soils Day cake baked by Griffith Uni



Events

We cannot wait to share the events we have in store for 2026! Keep an eye out for the next newsletter, our social media channels (<https://www.facebook.com/HealthyLandandWater>), and our events page to be the first ones to know when they are happening!

Some of the topics include:

- Vegetation Management
- Horse Management
- Dung beetles
- Grazing Management
- Soil Health Forum
- Property management planning (including fire).

<https://hlw.org.au/news/events>

<p>Yarn on a Farm – We Bought A Farm</p> <p>Location: Limestone Ridges 4305</p> <p>Day, Date 18 January 2026 2:30 pm-5:30 pm</p>	<p>Boonah & District Landcare have announced their first workshop of the new year in conjunction with the Knowledge for Practice team! Join Fiona and Allen, who bought their property in 2018, as they discuss their learnings as regenerative land managers. Alongside regenerative land managers themselves and Andrew Zerner of Knowledge For Practice, they will introduce their workshop and consulting services to help people connect the dots between goals, landscape and livestock for those who have bought a property or those looking to refresh their management goals</p> <p>Key event details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an on-farm event. • Wear clean shoes - please don't bring your farm to their farm. • Follow the signs and park where directed. • The exact location will be emailed to guests a couple of days before the event. • Free event but bookings required. • BYO own chair. <p>Register here: https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/yarn-on-a-we-bought-a-farm-tickets-1976674594924</p>
<p>Weed ID & Control Workshop</p> <p>Location: Cedar Grove Environmental Centre</p> <p>Day, Date 14 February 2026 9:30 am-11:30 am</p>	<p>Join weed management experts from Cedar Grove Landcare and learn various weed control techniques for common weeds found in Logan. You will be shown how to use chemicals safely and effectively and how to determine whether they are necessary. This workshop will provide you with skills that you can take home to your own gardens and properties.</p> <p>Register here: https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/weed-id-and-control-workshop-registration-1637163342629</p>

<p>Carbon EDGE</p> <p>Location: Toowoomba</p> <p>Day, Date: 18-19 February 2026 8:30 am</p>	<p>The Carbon EDGE program is for red meat producers who are looking to build on their understanding of carbon.</p> <p>Attending this workshop will help you learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key terminology and concepts relating to greenhouse gases (GHG) within the red meat industry • in-depth information on the practices to reduce and sequester GHG within a livestock grazing business • weighing up opportunities and risks associated with generating carbon credits and how they can be used to benefit livestock businesses • understanding carbon neutrality and how it aligns to your business goals • developing a carbon action plan that incorporates practical, achievable strategies to meet your objectives. <p>You will learn through group-based activities and tools, applying new information to your own context with snapshot the support of an expert deliverer. Every workshop will include case studies and examples for participants to learn from.</p> <p>Purchase tickets here: https://www.mla.com.au/news-and-events/events-and-workshops/carbon-edge--toowoomba-qld2</p>
<p>Backing Onto Bush Greenbank</p> <p>Location: 133 Teviot Rd, Greenbank, QLD 4124, Australia</p> <p>Day, Date: 21 February 2026 9:00 am – 1:00 pm</p>	<p>rhonda@connectag.com.au Backing Onto Bush workshops are a half-day session for peri-urban and rural residential landholders to learn about fire ecology and what keeps the bush healthy.</p> <p>This half-day session includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An in-classroom general bushfire safety and preparedness discussion. • An interactive bushwalk and talk. <p>Walk away from the workshop with the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe the health of your local environment. • Identify vegetation types and key habitat. • Understand fuel loads. • Recognise fire history. • Monitor vegetation and wildlife. • Follow regulations for your area. <p>Please come prepared for the bushwalk and talk! Catering and supporting material will be provided for all participants.</p> <p>https://events.humanitix.com/backing-onto-bush-greenbank</p>

<p>Property Fire Management Planning Workshop Kooralbyn</p> <p>Location: Cooroy</p> <p>Day, Date: 28 February 2026 9:00 am – 2:00 pm</p>	<p>Learn how to create a fire management plan for your property at this free Property Fire Management Planning Workshop in the Cooroy and Toowoomba areas.</p> <p>The workshop will provide information to landholders and guidance on creating individual fire management plans with the use of a map specific to each property. These plans aim to mitigate the risks associated with bushfires, with a focus on helping communities safeguard individual and collective properties. As maps will be provided, registration for this event is necessary.</p> <p>Representatives from the Healthy Land & Water's Queensland Fire & Biodiversity Consortium, Noosa Council (Kooralbyn), Toowoomba Regional Council (Mount Binga), and Rural Fire Service Queensland will share information about their roles and offer advice about planning for the approaching fire season.</p>
<p>Property Fire Management Planning Workshop Mount Binga</p> <p>Location: Toowoomba</p> <p>Day, Date: 7 March 2026 9:00 am – 2:00 pm</p>	<p>What to expect from the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delve into fire management planning. • Tap into local support and resources. • Take home a BIG MAP of your property. • Connect with neighbours and community members. • An opportunity to discuss bushfire matters in your community. <p>Morning tea and lunch will be provided.</p> <p><i>For more information, contact Jaime from Healthy Land & Water's Queensland Fire & Biodiversity Consortium on jaime.k@hlw.org.au.</i></p> <p>Cooroy, Kooralbyn: https://events.humanitix.com/pmfp-kooralbyn</p> <p>Toowoomba, Mount Binga: https://events.humanitix.com/pfmp-mount-binga</p>
<p>Northern Beef Research Update Conference</p> <p>Location: Brisbane</p> <p>Day, Date 10-13 March 2026</p>	<p>Whether you're on the ground managing cattle or in the lab analysing data, this conference is for you. Producers will have the opportunity to hear directly from researchers, challenge ideas, and shape future priorities. Researchers can share results and seek feedback. It's an opportunity to build networks and relationships to help tackle the next wave of industry challenges. In addition to keynote addresses, the concurrent presentations will deliver bite-sized insights on key topics. And of course, there will be plenty of opportunities to connect over a top-quality social program.</p> <p>Register here: https://www.nbruc.com.au/register/</p>

<p>Herbicide Behaviour Workshop</p> <p>Location: Toowoomba</p> <p>Day, date 17-18 March 2026</p>	<p>This workshop by the Grains Development Research Council will focus on the biological pathways and environmental factors that influence herbicide performance, along with interactions that may occur when products are mixed and will be delivered by Independent Consultants Australia Network (ICAN) Senior Consultant Mark Congreve. Herbicide resistance is also changing product use. In many situations, products and mixtures that previously worked are now less effective.</p> <p>Participants will leave with a better understanding of the key factors dictating herbicide performance and what can be done in the paddock to ensure weed control is maximised. Knowing what weeds will be controlled from herbicide application is the easy bit – it's on the label.</p> <p>Register here: https://grdc.com.au/events/list/2026/03/grdc-herbicide-behaviour-workshop-toowoomba</p>
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Grants & Awards

RRR Women's Future Queensland: Closing 7 January 2026

Applications are now open for the RRR Women's Future Queensland: Rural Women's Leadership Program. The program entails a 12-week course supporting rural, regional and remote Queensland women to build capacity in leadership and assist in playing an active role in shaping the future of the state's energy mix. Applications close on 7 January 2026.

Find out more here: <https://qrrwn.org.au/womensleadership/>

Community Bee Innovation Fund: Opening soon

Applications for round 3 of the Community Bee Innovation Fund grants program will open on Monday the 19 January 2026. Grants of between \$5,000 and \$50,000 (ex GST) will be available to assist projects that deliver innovative varroa mite education, training and engagement or innovative varroa mite management tools. **For enquiries about the upcoming program, contact** varroamitegrants@dpi.qld.gov.au.

Irrigation Pricing Rebate Scheme: Closing 31 December 2027

The Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) has launched the Irrigation Pricing Rebate Scheme to help ease costs for irrigating businesses in Queensland. Under the Scheme, eligible owner-operated primary production businesses can receive a 15% rebate on their water bills from Seqwater or Sunwater (including Burnett Water) for the 2025–26 and 2026–27 financial years.

To qualify, businesses must: be owner-operated, declare primary production income, use irrigation water for crop or livestock production, and supply evidence of bill payment and irrigation activities. Applications are open via QRIDA's online portal, or by paper form, with the final deadline being 31 December 2027 or until funds are exhausted. This initiative aims to support farm businesses by reducing water costs, helping to safeguard agricultural viability across Queensland as water and input costs rise.

Check the guidelines to see if you're eligible here:

<https://www.qrida.qld.gov.au/program/irrigation-pricing-rebate-scheme>

Rural Landholder Recovery Grant Scheme: Closing 1 April 2026

Applications for the Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) Rural Landholder Recovery Grant Scheme are still open, providing vital financial support to rural landholders impacted by Tropical Cyclone Alfred and associated severe weather between 1–16 March 2025. The scheme offers grants of up to \$10,000 to assist with clean-up and recovery efforts following the widespread damage caused by the event.

To be eligible, applicants must own or long-term lease of at least 10 hectares within the officially declared disaster area, hold an active ABN at the time of the event, and operate a primary production enterprise on the affected land. The assistance is designed to support those who experienced direct damage but may not meet eligibility requirements for other producer-focused disaster programs.

Grant funding can be used for a wide range of recovery activities, including debris removal, disposal of damaged goods or deceased livestock, reinstatement of boundary or internal fencing, repairs to non-residential buildings, and restoration of essential water infrastructure such as troughs, tanks and irrigation systems. These activities aim to help landholders restore normal operations as quickly as possible.

Applications for the Rural Landholder Recovery Grant Scheme close on 1 April 2026, and QRIDA encourages affected landholders to apply promptly to ensure timely support during the recovery process.

Check your eligibility here: <https://www.qrida.qld.gov.au/program/rural-landholder-recovery-grant-scheme-tropical-cyclone-alfred-and-associated-severe>

\$1 Billion regional investment boost delivers vital support for Qld farmers: Closing June 2026

In a key win for Australian agriculture, the government has injected an additional \$1 billion into the Regional Investment Corporation (RIC), bringing total concessional loan funding available to over \$5 billion. This expansion promises to bolster the financial resilience of Queensland producers, especially those managing drought, cost pressures, or planning productivity upgrades.

The broadened RIC scope now includes support for climate resilience investments and aligns with the nation's net-zero transition goals. Over 3,400 loans have already provided more than \$3.6 billion in on-farm benefits, giving producers the breathing space needed to plan, adapt, and grow.

Queensland producers are encouraged to explore RIC's concessional loan options as a strategic tool to enhance farm resilience, sustainability, and future-readiness.

How to apply: <https://www.ric.gov.au/>

Queensland producers can explore loan options and check eligibility by visiting the Regional Investment Corporation website. The site offers application guides, loan calculators, and direct access to the online application portal. For personalised support, producers can also contact RIC's customer service team on 1800 875 675.

Please contact us if you would like help promoting an upcoming event or sustainable agriculture initiative you are involved in.

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The Sustainable Agriculture Newsletter is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Natural Heritage Trust under the Climate-Smart Agriculture program and through funding from the Future Drought Fund for the SQNSW Innovation Hub.