



New Reef protection regulations start today

[New Reef protection regulations](#) take effect from today, 1 December 2019.

The new regulations address land-based sources of water pollution to the Great Barrier Reef. This includes industrial and agricultural sources of nutrient and sediment pollution from all six Reef regions – [Cape York](#), [Wet Tropics](#), [Burdekin](#), [Mackay Whitsunday](#), [Fitzroy](#) and [Burnett Mary](#).

What does this mean for the agricultural sector?

The new requirements for the agricultural sector are:

[Record keeping](#) - all graziers, sugarcane and banana producers in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin, Mackay Whitsunday, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary regions must keep records from **today (1 December 2019)** and all grains and horticulture producers must keep records from **1 December 2022**. From **today (1 December 2019)**, agricultural advisers must also keep records.

Minimum practice agricultural standards - all producers in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin, Mackay Whitsunday, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary regions must comply with industry specific minimum practice agricultural standards ([grazing](#), [sugarcane](#) and [bananas](#)) as these are applied to each region over the next three years.

Farm nitrogen and phosphorus budget ([sugarcane only](#)) - all sugarcane producers must implement a farm nitrogen and phosphorus budget in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin and Mackay Whitsunday regions from **2021** and then in the Fitzroy and Burnett Mary regions from **2022**.

[New or expanded cropping and horticulture activities](#) - all new or expanded cropping and horticulture activities in any Reef region on more than five hectares without a cropping history will require an environmental authority (permit), subject to farm design standards, from **1 June 2020**.

What does this mean for the industrial sector?

The regulations will also apply to operators of new or changed [industrial land use activities](#) such as new sewage and water treatment plants, aquaculture facilities, intensive animal industries or mines that plan to release nutrients and sediments.

New, expanded or intensified point source [environmentally relevant activities \(ERAs\)](#) must not increase nutrient or sediment pollutant loads. If this cannot be achieved through design or operation conditions, the [Point Source Water Quality Offsets Policy](#) will guide what offsets can be used to avoid a net residual impact. This allows for new development while reducing the risk of pollutant run-off to the Reef.

Drop-in sessions in 2019 and 2020

Producers are invited to attend drop-in sessions which are being held in the coming months across the Reef regions. These informal sessions are an opportunity for producers to talk with Queensland Government staff about the new requirements.

You can drop in at any point during the sessions, from 2–7pm. Information on the sessions can be found below:

- 3 December – Jacana Room TYTO Conference and Event Centre, 73-75 McIlwraith Street, Ingham
- 5 December - Capricorn Motel and Conference Centre, 703-751 Yaamba Road, Parkhurst, Rockhampton
- 10 December - Burdekin Theatre Music Loft, 161 Queen St, Ayr
- 12 December - Stan Lohse Function Room, Fairymead House (located in Bundaberg Botanic Gardens), Thornhill St, Bundaberg North

The dates and locations of the drop-in sessions for 2020 will be available online at www.qld.gov.au/ReefRegulations when confirmed.

Order an industry-specific info kit

You can [order](#) an industry-specific information kit which includes everything you need to know about how to comply with the new regulations.

What support is available for agricultural producers?

The [Farming in Reef Catchments Rebate Scheme](#) provides a one-off rebate of up to \$1,000 to eligible commercial agricultural producers in Reef regions. The rebate is to help offset the costs of obtaining professional and agronomic advice for nutrient and sediment management to meet the new Reef protection regulations.

There are also a number of industry-specific support programs for graziers, sugarcane and banana growers as well as horticulture and grains producers. You can find out more by reading the [Support programs and assistance for producers factsheet](#).

Contact us

For more information about any of these projects, email officeoftheGBR@des.qld.gov.au

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