

COVID-19 update

From 1am AEST Monday 13 December 2021, Queensland will [open its borders](#) to road and air travel. Anyone entering Queensland must apply for a [Queensland entry pass](#). More details can be found in the [Border Restrictions Direction \(No. 56\)](#).

Businesses should prepare now for how they would continue to operate after a COVID-19 incident. Safe Food Queensland has a number of [resources](#) to help you develop your business continuity plan and there's more info on our [Agribusiness continuity planning eHub](#).

If your business has been impacted by COVID-19, you may be eligible for financial assistance or other types of relief. Use [this tool](#) to discover what support is available.

From 17 December 2021, [COVID-19 restrictions will ease](#) for many businesses, including agribusinesses offering agritourism and hospitality. Signage for businesses indicating vaccination requirements is [available](#) to ensure your patrons are aware of the requirements. [More information](#).



Impacts of floods to agriculture

We are aware of significant flood impacts to agriculture in some areas of Queensland including horticulture crops and some impacts to broadacre crops.

Impacted primary producers can report damage to their industry group or through the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Customer Service Centre on 13 25 23.

As the flood waters recede and where it is safe to do so, our staff will continue on-ground impact assessments of flood damage across southern Queensland to support consideration for activations under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).



Smart Farm to drive AgTech and innovation in Queensland agriculture

We're transforming our Gatton Research Facility into a world-leading Smart Farm to accelerate the adoption of AgTech across Queensland's horticulture supply chain and allow growers to experience the latest AgTech first-hand.

The [Gatton Smart Farm](#) will be a centre of innovation for industry, partners and government to collaborate, test, adapt and co-develop AgTech and farming system innovations.

It will include climate-controlled glasshouses, a retractable-roof, protected-cropping structure, and cold rooms with the latest controlled-atmosphere technology.

The new infrastructure will also equip our staff with the latest tools and technology to manage pests and fruit and vegetable diseases.

[Read more here.](#)



Funding to grow Queensland agritourism

New grants are now available to assist farmers diversify their operations into agritourism.

Queensland Farmers' Federation has partnered with the Queensland Government to deliver the [Queensland Agritourism Grants program](#), offering a 50 per cent co-contribution up to a maximum of \$25,000 to eligible farmers to develop, implement and expand agritourism activities.

Grant funding applications close 10 January 2022.

Picture: Courtesy of Tourism and Events Queensland



Drought assistance available

New [drought assistance programs](#) are available for eligible primary producers across all industries focussing on greater preparedness and business resilience.

Producers don't need to be in a drought-declared region to access the new programs. Support includes assistance to undertake Farm Business Resilience Planning and Drought Preparedness Grants up to \$50,000. A suite of new loans up to \$250,000 are available from early 2022.

Drought Relief Assistance Scheme (DRAS) will continue for this current drought. Watch for regional forums on the new drought assistance in early 2022. For more information visit daf.qld.gov.au/drought or phone 13 25 23.



Letting nature look after the riverbanks

How can you get rid of weeds in riparian zones and protect native trees at the same time?

A new [video](#) produced by our Coastal Farming Systems team shows that by using the right herbicide, native trees will flourish and do the job for you—something that's good for our creeks and waterways and our sugarcane.



Queensland agriculture has done it again!

Queensland's agricultural sector is benefiting from the state's strong health response with a strong surge in growth in 2021.

For 2021-22, the total value of Queensland's primary industry commodities is forecast to be \$20.66 billion, which exceeds the previous high of \$20.11 billion in 2016-17.

Record yields, strong prices and favourable conditions have provided for a positive outlook for the sector with the value of wheat and barley crops set to double.

The latest data can be viewed using the new [Data Farm](#) portal.



New drone camera brings students a fresh perspective

Monto State High School secured one of DAF's \$10,000 Small Grants. The school's project will give the next generation an insight into how technology can assist producers in making decisions relating to pasture and pest management, improving profitability, sustainability and working collegiately to decrease environmental impacts.

The school will use their funding to purchase a Normal Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) camera for use in conjunction with their existing drone to produce NDVI images.

The school will also use their funding to purchase weight recording software to assess cattle and determine when they have reached marketable weight.



Picture: Year 11 agricultural science students conducting an analysis of forage sorghum crop health on site at Monto SHS.

Flinders River water allocation

Irrigated agriculture development in north-western Queensland has received a huge boost with the announcement of a competitive tender for 110,000ML of unallocated water from the Flinders River.

Entitlements in the Flinders River catchment are also tradeable, providing further opportunities for prospective water users. Further information about the [tender process and how to apply](#) is now available.



Paving the way for protected cropping

Horticulture growers, businesses and industry will benefit from the recently launched [Australian Protected Cropping Strategy 2021-2030](#), aimed at supporting research, development and extension for crops grown under shelter.

DAF researchers Elio Jovicich and Vicki Lane developed the strategy with Dr Gary Saliba from Strategic Journeys. It will be implemented by Protected Cropping Australia and Hort Innovation.

The strategy will increase knowledge and adoption of protected cropping systems.



Sweet success for sugarcane industry

Sugarcane farming businesses are performing better financially now than they were seven years ago, [a recent survey has revealed](#).

The Financial performance of sugarcane farms 2020–21 to 2021–22 survey found that average financial performance of sugarcane farms was better in real terms in 2020–21 compared to 2013–14.

174 farms were interviewed as part of the survey with questions exploring farm management practices, constraints to productivity, nutrient management, use of technology and harvesting practices.



COVID-19 has disrupted the way
we go about our day-to-day lives
and run our businesses.

Sometimes
we need to
talk about it.

Call us

Lifeline 13 11 14

Beyond Blue 1300 224 636

Headspace 1800 650 890
(Youth mental health and wellbeing)

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For more information visit daf.qld.gov.au or call 13 25 23



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