Grazing BMP self-assessment
People and business

AGFORCE

Queensland Government

fba FITZROY BASIN ASSOCIATION

GRAZING BMP
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Self-assessment – People and business

Improving the performance of a grazing business requires investment in a range of areas such as production, natural resource management and human resources. While many producers prefer to concentrate on production, focusing on people and planning is also critical. It is people who make the plans, develop the processes and commit to action.

To strengthen, grow or develop a successful grazing business, some time and thought needs to be allocated to developing the people and business skills outlined in this module.

Key area 1 –Business knowledge and skills
- Effective business records
- Analysing business performance
- Business decision making
- Future planning

Key area 2 – Human resources
- Personal wellbeing
- Work life balance
- Internal and external communications
- Learning and networking
- Labour management

Key area 3 – Workplace health and safety (WHS)
- WHS awareness
- Risk management
- Consultation

- Training and supervision
- Employee induction
- Visitor induction
- Emergency response plans
- Remote or isolated work
- Child safety
- First aid
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Environmental hazards
- Incident reporting

Key area 4 – Chemical use and records
- Using chemicals
- Product selection
- Staff training
- Chemical records
- Storing chemicals
- Chemical and container disposal
- Fertiliser use and storage

Key area 5 – Planning and development
- Business planning
- Property planning
- Energy efficiency
- Financial risk management
- Succession planning
- Documentation

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Key area 1 – Business knowledge and skills

Effective business records

Organised, timely, accurate records allow for past production and financial performance to be analysed and provide a roadmap for future management decisions.

Business recording begins with production information (e.g. herd recording) and flows through to higher order financial reports (e.g. cash flows, gross margins, cost of production).

Consider how the data will be used when organising how your records will be kept. Ensure that the data collected will be sufficient for the intended use. Consider also how information needs or reporting requirements could change into the future and allow for this.

Analysing business performance

The business's performance should be analysed regularly – seasonally or annually – and should provide information on a range of key performance indicators over time. For some analyses, a longer time frame may be sufficient.

Performance analysis may be conducted internally or with the assistance of external professionals.

Benchmarking the business against industry (or district) averages may provide a useful perspective on the business's performance.

Business decision making

Effective business decision making is a proactive rather than a reactive process, and is characterised by reliable record keeping, consideration of past experience and historical data, and regular analysis of business performance. Alternatives and opportunity costs are weighed up, and possible scenarios are tested by creating forecast budgets before commitments are made.

Good decision makers generally tend to consult with peers and/or contemporaries.

Future planning

Business plans for future activities need to be developed and reviewed at regular intervals to account for changing circumstances both within and external to the business. Effective plans have clear objectives that are supported and understood by all partners. Effective planners generally consult with peers and professionals as part of the planning process.

Plans are generally formalised and documented. However, informal planning can be equally effective if based on a sound process. Formalised, documented plans are particularly valuable for managing succession or changes in key management personnel.

Self-assessment – Business knowledge and skills

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Effective business records				
Business records are not up to date and/or incomplete. ☐	Accurate business records that provide sufficient data for analysis and decision making are kept. The process for recording data is well organised, timely and reliable. ☐		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Analysing business performance				
No or limited understanding of how to analyse business performance using production and financial data. ☐	Business performance is analysed annually or seasonally, using a range of production and financial data. Professional assistance is sought when required. ☐	Industry standard plus: Analysis skills are actively updated and developed through training and/or regular consultation with professionals. ☐	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Business decision making				
Business decision making is reactive and ad hoc. ☐	Business decision making is a structured, proactive process involving gathering timely information, consulting with peers and professionals, weighing up alternatives, and reflecting on past experiences. ☐	Industry standard plus: Business decision making process is formally developed and decisions are 'tested' before adoption. ☐	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Future planning				
No planning of future activities is undertaken. Circumstances are reacted to as they occur.	Business plans for future activities are developed and reviewed at regular intervals. Planning is discussed with business partners and contemporary business owners. Professional advice is sought when required.	Industry standard plus: Detailed analyses of future directions and alternative ways of operating the business are undertaken; drawing on relevant professional advice regarding the underlying assumptions.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Key area 2 – Human resources

source A McArthur

Rural businesses, like any other, rely on harmonious working environments where all people involved in the business feel that they are able to contribute to the success of the business and are rewarded for their efforts.

Regardless of the size of the business, human resource areas that need to be addressed include personal health and wellbeing, communication, roles and responsibilities, working conditions, training and skills development.

Personal wellbeing

Many aspects of running a rural business influence the health and wellbeing of property managers, family members and employees. These include the nature of agricultural work, financial pressures, intergenerational issues, running a business with family members, and dealing with ongoing change, extreme weather conditions and limited access to health services. These pressures can lead to anxiety and depression among the agricultural workforce.

If any member of the family, management team or staff is concerned about levels of stress and their ability to cope, seek assistance from health professionals or specific support organisations.

The Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety has prepared a useful reference blueprint for maintaining the mental health and wellbeing of people on farms. The key here is to be aware of the issues and to be willing to seek assistance if needed.

Work life balance

Planning for work life balance means considering the needs of the business managers, family and employees when planning and running the grazing operation. Lack of work life balance is known to affect people's satisfaction and motivation, and can impact on productivity and safety.

Farming families have the added pressure of having the workplace and the home being the same place.

One of the most important strategies for maintaining balance is understanding the needs and goals of family members and employees. Healthy and balanced work environments can be created by factoring in time for activities such as recreation, training and family responsibilities.

In the current labour market, agricultural businesses that are mindful of work life balance are better positioned to attract and retain employees.

Internal and external communications

When management decisions are communicated effectively, they can be understood and owned by other stakeholders in the business. Effective communication promotes teamwork and co-operation, and is characterised by being frequent, open, and two-way.

In the farming situation the stakeholders in the business are often family members. Poor communication will not only damage business performance but can also put relationships under strain.

Using effective channels of communication with financiers, suppliers and market representatives is important for ensuring a quality product is delivered to the market.

Learning and networking

Through ongoing formal and informal learning and quality networking, business managers can keep informed about industry, regulatory and other developments that could impact on the business. Networks can be a source of information as well as a forum in which to share and explore ideas. Access to information and networking opportunities has been vastly enhanced by the availability of online communication tools.

source FBA

Organisations such as AgForce, NRM groups, Landcare and Best Practice groups are some of the formal networks available to livestock producers.

The skills available within the business also need to be recognised and valued. Identifying the current skills that family and employees can contribute will help when considering which skills could be developed further through training, or which could be used to produce additional income through new ventures or off-farm employment.

Labour management

On some properties the labour force will consist of one or two full-time workers who are also the managers. Other properties will have full-time and part-time employees, casual workers and contractors as well as drawing on the off-farm expertise of professionals such as accountants, solicitors and consultants. However, the principles of communication and personnel management remain the same.

These include the legal obligations tied to pay rates and working conditions, superannuation, taxation, workers compensation, and workplace health and safety. Systems need to be in place to meet the record keeping requirements for these areas under federal and state industrial laws. Workplace health and safety requirements are detailed in Key area 3.

Self-assessment – Human resources

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Personal wellbeing				
Little consideration is given to the need to allocate time and resources for maintaining mental and physical wellbeing.	Time and resources are committed toward maintaining the mental and physical wellbeing of all individuals involved in the business.		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Work life balance				
A lack of balance between work and family commitments is putting pressure on the people involved in the business.	Business commitments take work and family needs into consideration.	A plan that takes into account business schedules and personal needs of individual business members, e.g. annual leave, funded training days, has been developed and communicated.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Internal communications				
Internal communications are unplanned and ad hoc.	Business and planning meetings are held as required.	Business and planning meetings are held regularly with all family members. Specific meetings with all family and staff members are held at times of peak activity e.g. mustering. Strategies are in place to facilitate ongoing communication e.g. communication board located in public area	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
External communications				
Communication with suppliers, private and public professionals (government, financiers, legal, accountants, planners, consultants, health and education and agents) is minimal.	Contact is made with suppliers, private and public professionals (government, financiers, legal, accountants, planners, consultants, health and education and agents) as required.	Regular contact is maintained with suppliers to ensure best prices and services are obtained. Regular contact is maintained with financiers to ensure facilities meet the business's needs and to keep reporting of the business's financial position and performance up to date. Regular communication is maintained with the market, and feedback is analysed to ensure product meets market specifications. Targeted contact with other private and public professionals contributes to business innovation.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Learning and networking				
Minimal awareness of industry networks, learning opportunities, and training events.	Management, family members and/or employees are involved at some level in industry networks and attend learning and networking opportunities identified as useful for the business and individuals.	Management, family members and/or employees are actively involved with industry networks and learning opportunities, and contribute to broader industry outcomes through R&D, agri-political, Landcare or NRM groups.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Labour management				
Minimal awareness about employment requirements. No systems in place to comply with the requirements of federal and state industrial laws.	Systems are in place to manage employment requirements. Advice is sought from professional services and government sources such as Fair Work Australia and the Australian Taxation Office when required.	Industry standard plus: Legal obligations as an employer are fully understood. Business managers are fully aware of and able to perform due diligence in corporate governance responsibilities.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Key area 3 – Workplace health and safety (WHS)

Safe workplaces feature awareness and communication and are places where both employees and employers share responsibility for safety.

WHS legislation recognises that actions taken to protect people from risk need to be 'reasonably practicable'.

WHS awareness

Rural property owners and managers need to be aware of their legal responsibilities for the health and safety of workers and visitors (including contractors) to their workplace. These responsibilities are described in the *Work Health and Safety (WHS) Act (2011)*, the *Work Health and Safety Regulation (2011)* and the associated Codes of Practice.

The Codes of Practice provide practical guidance to duty holders on how to achieve the required standards under the WHS Act. They include written examples and forms that employers can use to meet their obligations.

Risk management

The WHS Act requires that hazards be identified and risks be eliminated or minimised, so far as is reasonably practicable. Following the SAFER principal; managing risk involves these steps:

1. **See and identify hazards** – determine which locations or activities could cause harm.
2. **Assess risks if necessary** – consider the nature of the harm that could be caused by the hazard, how serious the harm could be, and the likelihood of it happening.
3. **Fix and control risks** – implement the most effective control measure that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances, following this hierarchy:
   - Level 1: eliminate the hazard
   - Level 2: substitute or isolate, or reduce the risk through engineering controls
   - Level 3: reduce exposure to the hazard using administrative controls; use personal protective equipment (PPE).
4. **Evaluate and review control measures** – to ensure they are working as planned.
5. **Recording** – document the assessment and any action or work procedure established to minimise risk in the workplace.

Guides and factsheets are available to help employers successfully manage risk within their enterprise.

Consultation

Consultation in the workplace is a necessary part of complying with WHS legislation. Consultation means owners/managers regularly sharing information and exchanging views with workers. When workers are involved in the WHS risk assessment and safety planning process, many problems can be resolved or even pre-empted. Workers who feel involved in the decision-making process will usually have an increased sense of ownership for and responsibility toward safety in the workplace.

Training and supervision

As part of their primary duty of care, employers must provide adequate safety training, information and instruction to staff.

It is important to keep a record of what training has been provided (e.g. a diary entry). Having a structured and documented training program, which can be as simple as a checklist of competency for identified work procedures, will help with ensuring the required training is being provided.

Some degree of supervision is necessary to ensure that safe work practices are being followed.

Employee induction and critical records

Employee inductions, delivered before the employee commences work, set the framework for safety in the workplace. Expectations can be clearly established while expected work practices and procedures are outlined and emergency procedures detailed. Creating and using an induction checklist will help with ensuring all necessary topics are discussed.

Inductions are an ideal opportunity for collecting critical employee information (contact details, next of kin, payroll details, health issues). It is important that inductions are recorded in some way, ideally on an induction document that lists the topics covered and is signed and dated by both employer and employee. A simpler option is to note the induction in a diary entry.

Visitor induction

Visitor inductions are related to farm safety but can also help with biosecurity control. Running through a simple checklist of safety and biosecurity issues with visitors and recording this as a diary entry is an easy way to cover this area. Defining which spaces are considered living only and which constitute the 'workplace' can help when determining which visitors need to be inducted.

More formally, a visitor register can be compiled and signed by visitors after they have listened to or read about potential safety or biosecurity issues before they enter the workplace. Regular visitors may only require an initial induction.

Emergency response plans

Emergency contacts should be listed where this information can be easily accessed by all staff and family members in an emergency situation.

General emergency procedures should be discussed with all staff and family members: who to contact in specific situations, how to use communication equipment, where fire fighting equipment is located, where first aid supplies are located, and who on the property has first aid training.

Documenting emergency procedures into a checklist will help with ensuring all aspects are covered.

Remote or isolated work

Workers who are remote from base or isolated from assistance must be equipped with appropriate equipment and a procedure that facilitates effective and regular communication between them and base. This could be in the form of a UHF radio to be used according to an agreed call-in schedule.

Child safety on farms

In rural workplaces, children are commonly exposed to workplace hazards that are not present in urban homes. Some of these hazards can have severe or fatal consequences for children. The safety of children is always an adult responsibility – primarily of the parent or carer but also shared by other adults present.

Under the WHS Act, persons who conduct a business or undertaking at a rural workplace have responsibilities to all visitors, including children. These responsibilities extend to children living on the rural property.

To ensure these responsibilities are met, a process of 'Risk Management' (identify hazards, assess risks, control risks, keep records and review control measures) needs to be completed. WHS Qld provides an excellent checklist for this process (please see Tools and Links).

Clear rules need to be developed about the entry of children to work areas and the responsibility for their supervision. These rules need to be known by all family members and employees.

It is recommended that children wear seatbelts/restraints when in vehicles on the property, are not allowed to travel in the back of utilities, and are only allowed to operate machinery and equipment if they are

physically capable and have the experience, training and maturity to do so.

Providing a safe and secure play area for children is an important part of child safety on farms.

First aid

Rural workplaces must ensure that:

- suitable and adequate first aid equipment is provided at the workplace
- each worker has access to the first aid equipment, and to facilities where first aid can be administered
- an adequate number of workers are trained to administer first aid.

Personal protective equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is clothing, equipment or substances designed to be worn by someone to protect them from risks of injury or illness.

PPE is the least effective method of controlling a risk. PPE should only be considered as a control measure when exposure to a risk cannot be minimised in another way, or used with other control measures as a final barrier between the worker and the hazard. PPE must be appropriate to the risk, kept in good working order, and be available.

The worker must use the PPE in accordance with information, training and instruction provided in relation to its use.

Environmental hazards

Environmental factors to be considered from a WHS perspective include dust, high or low temperatures, and sun exposure. Procedures need to be implemented

to reduce the risk of injury or illness resulting from environmental hazards.

Some people could be at higher risk of harm, such as people new to the industry or the climatic conditions (e.g. backpackers from cold climate areas working in hot weather).

Zoonotic diseases (such as Q fever) are also considered an environmental hazard for people working with animals. Workers need to be made aware of the risks and the preventative practices in place for possible zoonotic diseases.

Incident reporting

Under the WHS Act, any incident that results in the death, serious injury or serious illness of a person OR that involves a dangerous incident must be reported to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ), *if that incident resulted from the conduct of the business or undertaking*. Definitions of 'serious' injuries or illnesses and 'dangerous' incidents, can be found on the Tools and Links page.

Records of notifiable incidents need to be kept for five years from the date WHSQ was notified of the incident.

Self-assessment – Workplace health and safety

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
WHS awareness				
Legal responsibilities for workplace health and safety have not been investigated and/or are not known.	Legal responsibilities for Workplace health and safety have been investigated and copies of *WHS Act (2011)*, the *WHS Regulation (2011)* and the associated Codes of Practice relevant to the enterprise have been accessed.		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	**1.** **2.** **3.**

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Risk management				
No process of risk management has been undertaken for the workplace. No safe work procedures have been developed. ☐	A process of risk management is undertaken for all activities in the workplace that pose a risk. Safe work procedures are developed (in consultation with workers) and implemented for those activities. These processes and safe work procedures are documented. ☐		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Consultation				
Safety issues are not discussed between owners/managers and workers. ☐	Regular discussion occurs between owners/managers and workers and contractors, to ensure a safe work environment is maintained. Consultation is documented when required by regulation. ☐		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Training and supervision				
Safety training is not provided and/or workers are not made aware of safety issues. Limited supervision of safe work practices. ☐	Workers are trained in safe work practices before commencing tasks. The workplace is supervised to verify procedures are being followed. Training content meets the requirement of the Regulations and relevant codes of practice. Provision of training is recorded. Training is reviewed when different tasks are undertaken. ☐		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Employee induction and record keeping				
Workers are trained on the job (no induction is completed or recorded). Critical employee details are not known. ☐	Inductions for employees and contractors are performed before work is commenced and are recorded. Critical employee details are known and recorded. ☐	Industry standard plus: A formalised induction procedure incorporates an induction booklet and a sign off sheet. ☐	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Visitor induction				
No procedure for inducting visitors to the workplace exists. ☐	A procedure for inducting visitors to the workplace is used, details are recorded. ☐	Industry standard plus: A formalised induction procedure incorporates an induction booklet and a sign off sheet. ☐	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Emergency response plans				
No emergency procedures have been developed. ☐	General emergency procedures have been discussed with staff and family members, and are included in the induction procedure for new staff. Emergency procedures and plans are documented and updated annually. Procedures have been tested by conducting mock emergencies to check the procedures' effectiveness. ☐		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Remote or isolated work				
No effective system of communication with remote or isolated workers is used. ☐	An effective system of communication is implemented for remote or isolated workers. ☐		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Child safety on farms				
Limited awareness of the issues for child safety and/or limited effort to provide for child safety. ☐	A process of risk management for the safety of children has been conducted and hazards have been identified and controlled. All staff, family members and visitors are made aware of the risks. Clear rules regarding child safety have been developed and implemented. ☐		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
First aid				
No first aid kit or kit not stocked to meet the need of possible risk. Suitably trained first aid people are not available. Accidents or incidents in the workplace are not recorded. ☐	First aid equipment appropriate for the types of injury possible at the workplace is accessible for all staff. A first aid trained and experienced person is available. The level of training matches the level of risk identified through a risk management process as being associated with the workplace. Accidents and injuries in the workplace and associated treatments are recorded. ☐		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Personal protective equipment				
Personal protective equipment (PPE) is not available or is not well maintained. Staff are not trained in the use or maintenance of PPE and/or do not understand their duty of care to wear it.	PPE matched to the work conditions and task-specific requirements is clean, well-maintained and available for all staff as required. Staff are trained in the use and maintenance of the PPE and understand their duty of care to wear it.		Industry standard Above industry standard	1. 2. 3.
Environmental hazards				
Environmental hazards are not managed in the work place.	Environmental hazards are considered and processes are in place to manage the risk, e.g. work rotation or limiting the duration of exposure.		Industry standard Above industry standard	1. 2. 3.
Incident reporting				
The requirements for reporting incidents to WHSQ are not known and/ or not met.	The requirements for reporting incidents to WHSQ are understood and a procedure is in place for complying with reporting requirements.		Industry standard Above industry standard	1. 2. 3.

Key area 4 – Chemical use and records

Chemicals used in grazing enterprises need to be stored and used in a manner that is safe for staff, stock and the environment, and which complies with relevant legislation and regulations. Chemicals include pesticides, herbicides, animal health/veterinary products and fertilisers.

Chemical use

Chemicals must be used as per label directions. The product label will list the purposes for which the product is approved for use and the appropriate dilutions for each use. Products must only be used for their intended purposes, in accordance with the instructions on the label. Using products at lower or higher dilutions than the recommended rate can be ineffective, wasteful, and potentially contribute to decreased effectiveness over time.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) must be readily available for staff using the chemicals. These sheets list personal protective equipment (PPE) required and important information regarding use and storage of the chemical. Withholding periods (WHP) and export slaughter intervals (ESI) are generally noted on the label, but can also be found on the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) website. The WHP and ESI must be noted and adhered to for all agricultural and veterinary chemicals

Product selection

Best practice product selection means identifying the product that is most effective while having the least impact on people and the environment. In some cases, external experts may need to be consulted, e.g. to choose chemicals to minimise the possibility of resistance developing in local parasites.

Alternative pest management strategies, such as rotational grazing and genetic selection, should be investigated and implemented whenever possible.

Staff training

Anyone involved in the storage and use of chemicals in the workplace must be properly trained. Training can be carried out by producers or by outside training providers. The training should be applicable to the workplace and the work being done and must take into account the needs of the workers, including literacy levels, work experience, and skills required for the job.

Training should be practical and include a hands-on component. All training should involve consultation between owners/managers and workers to identify and assess risks and develop and implement the control measures (risk management). In smaller workplaces, consultation can consist of informal discussions, while more formal processes need to be in place for larger workplaces.

Records of chemical use

Records of chemical use are particularly important for protecting the reputation of Australia's livestock industries as a source of safe and traceable red meat. Good records allow claims made on the Livestock

Production Assurance (LPA) National Vendor Declaration and Waybill (LPA NVD/Waybill) to be substantiated.

It is particularly important to keep records of the use of all veterinary drugs and chemicals. These records are essential for ensuring treated animals are not sold before the ESIs and WHPs expire. ESIs are the period following treatment when animals are unsuitable for export processing. WHPs are the period following treatment when animals are unsuitable for domestic processing.

These requirements also apply to the use of herbicides, recording where and when these chemicals have been used.

An inventory of all chemical products, quantities on hand, batch numbers and expiry dates needs to be kept up to date and available at all times.

Chemical storage

Chemicals must be stored in a locked, secure area, in accordance with label directions, and in their original containers to prevent accidental misuse. MSDS should be kept with the chemicals.

Ideally chemical storage areas are only used for storing chemicals, and are ventilated to reduce inhalation exposure and protect chemicals from heat damage. Signage declaring the area as a chemical storage area should be displayed. Emergency procedures must be established and communicated to all staff. Appropriate PPE needs to be available where chemicals are stored and used.

When large amounts of chemicals are stored on the property, a dedicated storage facility should be built which should be bunded to contain accidental leaks and spillages.

Disposal of chemicals

Containers and unwanted chemicals must be disposed of according to manufacturer and/or label directions. Containers should be triple rinsed or thoroughly pressure rinsed. Unwanted or out of date chemicals should be disposed of via approved disposal sites or collection points. Detailed information on chemical disposal, preparation of empty containers for disposal, and disposal points is available from the DrumMUSTER and ChemClear websites.

Fertiliser use and storage

In higher rainfall intensive pasture systems and where forage cropping is undertaken, fertiliser application is often a critical part of management. Soil testing provides the information needed for deciding whether fertiliser is needed, and if so, which fertilisers to use and how much to apply. Test strips can be used to assess the response of pastures and forage crops to fertiliser application.

Application method, timing of application and proximity to waterways need to be carefully considered to minimize the risk of fertiliser loss and the movement of nutrients off-site. Fertiliser application is regulated in certain catchments

Fertilisers should be stored so they cannot leach into waterways, blow across fodder or feedstuffs, or absorb moisture and become caked.

Up-to-date records need to be kept of the fertilisers stored on a property and of fertiliser use – where, when and how much.

Self-assessment – Chemical use and records

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Chemical use				
Label instructions for chemicals are not adhered to. MSDS are not read and followed, and required PPE is not used. Relevant legislation and regulations are not known and/or adhered to. ☐	Chemicals are used as per label directions, with reference to MSDS, and with required PPE. WHPs and ESIs for all agricultural and veterinary chemicals are noted and adhered to. MSDS sheets are kept where the chemicals are stored. Relevant legislation and regulations are known and adhered to. ☐		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Product selection				
Alternative products or management practices receive no or minimal investigation. Chemical resistance is not considered. ☐	Product choice is made after consideration of alternative products/management practices and possible resistance issues. Wherever practical, the product with the lowest impact on people and the environment is used. ☐	Industry standard plus: Management strategies for reducing the amount of chemicals used to control disease, weed and pest threats are considered and implemented where appropriate. ☐	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Staff training				
Limited or no training program in place. Limited or no knowledge of required PPE, MSDS or label directions for chemicals used. ☐	Appropriate training is conducted for all staff, covering the required PPE, MSDS information and label directions for chemicals used. Training is developed following consultation and risk assessment. Staff training is recorded. ☐	Industry standard plus: Training program is documented and/or staff have current certification from accredited training provider in agricultural and veterinary chemical use. ☐	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Chemical records				
No or limited chemical records are kept.	Accurate and up-to-date records are kept in accordance with the relevant state legislation covering the use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals. Records of all products and quantities on hand are updated and available at all times.		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	**1.** **2.** **3.**
☐	☐			
Storing chemicals				
Chemicals do not have a special storage area and are kept at a variety of locations. Chemicals are sometimes stored in containers other than the original containers with original labels.	Chemicals are stored in a dedicated, locked, secure, ventilated area, in original containers and in accordance with label directions. MSDS are available for chemicals kept on farm. Emergency procedures are established, and all appropriate PPE is available.	Industry standard plus: Chemical storage area is separate from other buildings, workplaces, and stored foodstuffs. Signage is in place.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	**1.** **2.** **3.**
☐	☐	☐		
Chemical and container disposal				
Empty containers or unwanted chemicals are not disposed of in accordance with label instructions.	Empty chemical containers are disposed of in accordance with manufacturer or label directions. Unwanted or out of date chemicals are disposed of via approved disposal sites or collection points.		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	**1.** **2.** **3.**
☐	☐			

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Fertiliser application				
Fertiliser use is not applicable to this property				
☐				
Fertiliser is applied without reference to objective soil test data or plant requirements. Relevant legislation and regulations are unknown.	Fertiliser program is based on soil test data and plant requirements, and complies with relevant legislation and regulations.	Industry standard plus: Comprehensive soil and/or plant tissue tests or known responses are used to determine fertiliser requirements. Fertiliser is applied following economic and nutrient budget assessments.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
☐	☐	☐		
Controlling run-off				
No management actions are taken to minimize run-off.	Application method and timing of application are chosen to minimize run-off. Particular consideration is given to sensitive areas, such as waterways, riparian zones and high biodiversity areas.		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
☐	☐			

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Records of fertilizer use				
Records of fertiliser applications are not maintained.	Records of the fertiliser type, application rate and weather conditions at application are maintained. Where applicable fertiliser records meet legislative requirements. Weather forecasts are used to maximise efficiency of fertiliser application and reduce runoff.	Industry standard plus: Response to fertiliser application is monitored and used in conjunction with application records and soil tests to regularly review fertiliser use and application rates.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
☐	☐	☐		
Fertiliser storage				
Fertiliser is stored without consideration of potential run-off.	Fertiliser is stored to avoid moisture pick up, dust contamination, and the possibility of runoff into waterways.		Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
☐	☐			

Key area 5 – Planning and development

source **AgForce**

Successful businesses are built on successful plans and the ability to anticipate and prepare for the future.

In recent years, managing agricultural businesses has become more difficult and challenging as a result of rapidly changing production, economic, environmental and social conditions. Businesses today must deal with increasing risk and uncertainty.

One of the most helpful practices that businesses can adopt is to plan for current and future development.

Goals, objectives and plans (personal and business)

The starting point in any planning process is to identify and specify goals. Goals direct and guide management decisions toward the future you envision for your business.

Shared goals, objectives and plans for your business that are reviewed and updated regularly assist with effective decision making, managing human relations, and dealing with change.

The planning process generates information and helps you to feel more in control. The process puts the business on the path of doing as well as possible with the resources available.

Property planning

Property planning starts with a clear understanding of the property's current resources and management practices, and sets a course for how these will be developed to move the property sustainably and profitably toward the business's goals.

Property planning is an ongoing process. Property plans include a schedule for regular evaluation and review as the business moves forward.

Property plans generally include elements such as:

- a statement of the property's business and natural resource goals
- plans for developing and maintaining built features, which include fence lines and paddock sizes, buildings, water supply points (dams, troughs, pipes, tanks, pumps), services, and access roads
- plans for managing resources of the natural environment, such as eroded areas, waterways and wetlands, native vegetation and biodiversity
- plans for developing and adapting land use and farming practices into the future.

Numerous training courses, templates and information sessions are available to assist primary producers in putting property plans together.

Energy efficiency

Improving energy efficiency is a common target and an area receiving increasing attention worldwide as fuel costs continue to rise and environmental issues persist.

Fuels such as petrol and diesel used for operating

vehicles, generating power and pumping water produce carbon dioxide which disperses into the atmosphere. Using efficient equipment and machinery or changing to solar, gas or wind generated power can reduce on-farm greenhouse gas production. Changing the farm layout, modifying buildings and using remote control equipment can increase labour efficiency at the same time as reducing carbon emissions.

Financial risk management

Financial risk management includes protecting the assets of the business, both the physical resources as well as the people who are responsible for keeping the business operational. This can be done through appropriate insurance policies.

Other financial risk management strategies include Farm Management Deposits, off-farm income and off-farm investments.

source FBA

Succession planning

Succession planning is important where more than one generation is involved in the family business. Professional and legal input is generally recommended. Succession planning includes transition strategies for transferring management responsibility on to the next generation with the support of the current management.

Even if there is not a second generation in the business, it is still useful to have a plan for transitioning on from the current business structure when the time is appropriate.

Documentation

Throughout the Grazing BMP modules, many practices that rate as Above Industry Standard require some form of documentation: either evidence of practice or plans for practice to be implemented. While documentation does not ensure economic and environmental sustainability, it does provide the framework for achieving these goals.

For the purposes of self-assessment, the business of grazing has been divided into individual module areas, but in reality these areas are intertwined and inter-dependant. Therefore, a holistic view of a business requires that planning and documentation of all areas be incorporated into one key document that provides the guiding framework for current and future practice.

Self-assessment – Planning and development

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Goals, objectives and plans				
No goals, objectives or plans are developed for the business or shared between individuals involved in the business. Personal goals for members of the business are not considered or incorporated into planning.	Some goals, objectives and plans are recorded and updated from time to time. Goals, objectives and plans are developed by all involved in the business. Personal goals of business members are discussed and incorporated into the business plan.	Business goals, objectives and plans are recorded as a set. Goals, objectives and plans are discussed openly, and developed with contributions from all involved in the business. Goals, objectives and plans are reviewed by everyone and updated every 12 months. Personal goals of business members are discussed and incorporated into plans, and documented.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Natural resource planning				
No property management goals are defined. Plans to manage natural resources are non-existent, incomplete, or out-dated.	The property has defined management goals. Plans to manage natural resources have been discussed and documented and are being implemented.	Property management goals are documented and are understood by all members of the business. Plans to manage natural resources have been discussed, documented, and are being implemented. Plans and goals are reviewed annually or when significant changes occur in the business. Planning reviews include all people involved in the business.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Infrastructure planning				
Location of infrastructure has been ad hoc and plans for future development do not consider land degradation.	Infrastructure is planned and maintained to minimise land degradation.	Industry standard plus: Planning considers how infrastructure changes can improve the efficiency of farm operations. Infrastructure planning is reviewed annually or when significant changes occur in the business. Infrastructure is designed using current safety standards.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Future land use planning				
Plans for future land use and farming practices are incomplete, out-dated or non-existent.	Plans for future land use and farming practices have been discussed and documented and are being implemented.	Industry standard plus: Plans for future land use and farming practices are reviewed annually or when significant changes occur in the business. Discussions include all people involved in the business.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Energy efficiency				
No consideration has been given to investigating and installing alternative energy systems, improving energy efficiency, or purchasing energy-efficient plant and equipment.	Energy efficiency is considered when purchasing new plant and equipment, redeveloping the farm layout, or upgrading/replacing farm buildings.	Inefficient plant, equipment, and buildings have been identified and will be replaced with energy-efficient alternatives when possible. Ways to reduce energy use through the use of new technologies (remote control systems, solar and wind power) and farm layout (lanes, water points) are actively investigated.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

Below industry standard	Industry standard	Above industry standard	Desired standard	Steps required to improve
Financial risk management				
No financial risk management strategies are in place.	Basic financial risk management strategies are in place, e.g. insurance policies.	Insurance policies are in place for farm and all equipment (where practical). Income protection and disability insurances are in place. Off-farm investments are part of overall business plan. Where possible, off-farm work is examined as an income option. Farm Management Deposits are utilised (when practical) to smooth cash flow.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Succession planning				
No succession plan, wills or enduring power of attorney have been drawn up.	Succession plan is in place and some professional input has been obtained. Wills and enduring power of attorney are in place for every member of the business.	Detailed succession plan including a timeline is in place and all relevant people are aware of it. Plan has been developed with professional legal and financial advice. Transition strategies are being implemented, if appropriate. Wills and enduring power of attorney are in place and all individuals involved in the business are aware of this.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.
Documentation				
Property planning documentation is either minimal, inconsistent and/or not kept up to date.	Property planning documentation is kept up to date and is actively used to manage the business.	Industry standard plus: Property planning and management documentation is collated into a comprehensive Property Management Plan to protect business continuity.	Industry standard ☐ Above industry standard ☐	1. 2. 3.

References and further reading

Websites

Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry: www.daff.qld.gov.au

Futurebeef: www.futurebeef.com.au

Meat and Livestock Australia: www.mla.com.au

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland: www.worksafe.qld.gov.au

Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety: www.aghealth.org.au

Australian Taxation Office: www.ato.gov.au

Agforce: www.agforceqld.org.au

Landcare: www.landcare.org.au

Chemclear: www.chemclear.com.au

Drummuster: www.drummuster.com.au

Key area 1 – Business knowledge and skills

Collected references on business management: http://futurebeef.com.au/topics/business-management/

Key area 2 – Human resources

Blueprint for maintaining mental health and wellbeing of people in rural industry: http://www.aghealth.org.au/blueprint/blueprint.html

Australian Taxation Office information page for paying staff: http://www.ato.gov.au/businesses/entry.aspx?menuid=42684

Key area 3 – Workplace health and safety

Work health and safety laws – a guide for Queensland's rural industry: http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/resources/pdfs/rural-guide-whslaws.pdf

Legislation and Codes of Practice that apply to rural industry: http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/rural/law/index.htm

Guide to using rural plant and equipment: http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/rural/plant/index.htm

Guide to animal handling and hazards: http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/rural/animal/index.htm

Workplace obligations: http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/rural/obligations/index.htm

Compliance at a glance checklist – how do you rate?: http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/resources/pdfs/zeroharm-compliance.pdf

Key area 4 – Chemical use and records

Guide to using rural chemicals: http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/rural/chemicals/index.htm

Estimated slaughter intervals and chemical withholding periods: http://www.apvma.gov.au/residues/esi_whp/

Livestock Production Assurance Program (LPA)
Risk assessment requirements and process: www.mla.com.au/Meat-safety-and-traceability/Livestock-Production-Assurance/Requirements/Property-risk-assessments