

## **Planning for agriculture's workforce of the future**

The agriculture sector directly employed over 90,000 Queenslanders in February 2021, and it is anticipated to continue growing. Increasing by 44.3 per cent since 2016, the agriculture sector is the 11th largest employer in Queensland and is responsible for 25 per cent of regional employment and 8.8 per cent of the state's registered businesses. With increasing agricultural exports and strong farm gate and first stage processing figures, further high growth is anticipated in some agricultural regions and industries. However, these future opportunities are dependent on a highly skilled workforce.

As the sector continues to modernise, an appropriately trained workforce, prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century, is critical for the sector to remain competitive and innovative. To address workforce issues, the Queensland Farmers' Federation (QFF) is partnering with Jobs Queensland (JQ), to prepare a five-year Workforce Plan for the state's agriculture sector. The Queensland Agriculture Workforce Plan will strategically respond to the major issues experienced by the agriculture sector including attraction, retention, skilling and business capability, while anticipating future workforce demand. To achieve this, it is vital that farmers and agribusinesses' insight, knowledge and experience is captured and reflected in the priorities and actions in the Workforce Plan.

Supported by the Rural Jobs and Skills Alliance, QFF and JQ will commence consultation with industry from August 2021 across Queensland in Nambour, Dalby, Emerald, Tablelands, Ayr and another location to be confirmed. We invite and encourage agricultural employers register to attend a workshop to help shape the priorities of Plan, while online consultations, focus groups and an online survey will also be available to enable participation.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations has predicted the world must increase agricultural output by 70 per cent by the year 2050 to sufficiently feed the growing global population. This presents new opportunities for Australian agriculture to expand and meet this increasing demand, but we must first have the right people, in the right place, with the right capabilities at the right time.

The Queensland Agriculture Workforce Plan will drive action for building the capability of agriculture businesses and their workforce to enable a contemporary, competitive and adaptable sector and we encourage you to get involved and share your views.

To register for the regional consultations and/or register for a Jobs Queensland Workforce Connect workshop, please visit [QFF's events webpage](#).

For more information and to register for the regional consultations and/or a Jobs Queensland Workforce Planning Connect workshop: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/o/queensland-farmers-federation-9455416823>.