

Currently farmers and pastoralists have to deal with a myriad of government departments, agencies and other organisations as well as different licensing for things like using chemicals, numerous quality assurance programs and numerous awareness campaigns and initiatives. This disjointed regulatory system creates a complex and sometimes contradictory matrix of red tape.

State governments have moved away from extension services delivering one-on-one support and farmers and pastoralists are forced to source information from the private sector.

Farmers and pastoralists need individual farm management plans that assist them to lift their standards of practice, comply with all the requirements of authorities and improve the productivity and health of their farms. Farmers and pastoralists with good farm management plans in place would also benefit from greater freedom and support rather than being confined by multiple blanket restrictions and guidelines.

With farm and pastoral lease management plans we can expect

- Better penetration of disease prevention and other biosecurity or best practice farming with messages delivered in a common format
- Increased confidence in food production and quality assurance systems
- Better surety for farmers and pastoralists through a more stable operating environment

- A mechanism to empower farmers and pastoralists to manage emissions and claim credits for inputs so they can offset emissions should there be an emissions trading scheme

- Easier implementation of new initiatives and requirements through *Timeline Initial* - an established program

Development and implementation, including significant industry and stakeholder consultation, would take approximately 3 years and an additional 5 years for all farmers and pastoralists to transition into the program.

Our Plan

- A comprehensive, national **farm and pastoral lease training and support program** developed with all industry bodies and endorsed and funded through COAG. The program would use extension officers working with farmers to develop individual, best practice management plans that include:

- the requirements of the different agencies they deal with, all quality assurance and environmental requirements and licensing relevant to their property.
- clarified, streamlined regulatory requirements
- better management of the specific conditions of each property
- environmental management plans and systems that demonstrate the level of quality which would then be marketable to consumers.
- information on the latest technological improvements for increasing productivity
- assistance in accessing grants for conservation work.

- Explore the prospect of farm and pastoral lease plans qualifying for ISO/quality assurance **accreditation**

- The program would be developed and managed by a specific agency in partnership with the Federal Department of Agriculture and other relevant Federal departments, State and Territory Governments and all industry bodies