



6 June 2025

Hon Anthony (Tony) Perrett
Minister for Primary Industries

Electronically: <https://dpi.engagementhub.com.au/primary-industries-blueprint>

Re: Submission regarding the Primary Industries Prosper 2050 Consultation Draft

Bundaberg Ag-Food & Fibre Alliance (BAFFA) aims to identify, research, consult and solve challenges facing the Bundaberg primary production sector.

We recognise the need for a united primary production industry across food, renewable fuel, fish, forestry, foliage and fibre sectors in the Bundaberg region to secure the long-term interests of our members and our industry.

The Bundaberg Regional Council area is predominantly rural, land is used largely for intensive irrigated agriculture and horticulture, notably macadamias, sugar cane, fruit and vegetable growing, and some cattle grazing.

This reliance on agribusiness means that any negative impact on our farmers' ability to generate and market the crops and products they produce has a much greater impact on our community than in other areas.

BAFFA welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the Primary Industries Prosper 2050 Consultation Draft with a focus on strengthening protections for Queensland's farmers and ensuring the blueprint's continued impact over its planned 25-year timeframe. We commend the Queensland Government's initiative in developing this long-term strategy and offer the following comments.

To ensure the blueprint provides genuine security for Queensland's farmers, it is essential that regulatory frameworks are designed to protect primary producers. There needs to be a greater emphasis on regulations that protect farmers from unfair market practices and protect land use security. This could include provisions that prevent anti-competitive behaviour and provide guidelines for land access and resource management. Regulations based upon science require a review of the integrity of the scientific evidence that those regulations are based upon and a commitment to continued 'fact checking'.

Given the challenges of climate variability, the blueprint must support farmers in building resilience. This support should include increased investment in the research and development of climate-resilient crops, varieties and farming practices, ensuring farmers have access to financial support for on-farm adaptation and the development of strategies to reduce the impacts of extreme weather events. Increased support for current and emerging biosecurity risks is a priority of all growers, no matter what food, fibre or foliage is produced. Increased support including strengthened preventative measures, improved early detection and response, and regional plans that engage stakeholders in biosecurity efforts.

It is recommended that the blueprint include support for the exploration of alternative markets that reduce reliance on intermediaries, enabling farmers to capture a greater share of the supply chain. In addition, value adding provides an avenue for growers to increase their market share and diversify their products although this requires support that includes funding to access technology, resources, training and explore new market access.

The blueprint acknowledges the significance of infrastructure and highlights the need for a long-term investment strategy that ensures continuous upgrades and the ongoing maintenance of critical infrastructure. This should include transport and logistics networks, digital connectivity in rural areas, water security infrastructure, and energy solutions designed to reduce on-farm input costs.

To secure the future of farming, the blueprint must prioritise initiatives focused on attracting and retaining the next generation of farmers. This involves the continued support of succession planning programs and continued development of financial incentives for young farmers. Training colleges also play an important role in developing a future workforce and the return of agricultural training colleges in Queensland will develop a skilled workforce which is crucial for economic growth and food security.

A collaborative approach to promoting Queensland's Primary Industries is required to establish a stronger connection with the community. This will help showcase the industry's role in food security, the economy, sustainability and showcase the environmental stewardship of our farmers. Greater public awareness and appreciation will lead to increased support for local produce, attract skilled workers and improve the understanding of the challenges farmers face.

The economic viability of farming is increasingly threatened by the rise in input costs including fuel, fertiliser, water, electricity and labour. Consequently, many family farms find it increasingly difficult to remain profitable, leading to a trend of farmers being forced to sell. Often, the only viable buyers are large corporate entities potentially altering the structure of Queensland's primary industries.

To maintain the blueprint's relevance and effectiveness throughout its 25-year lifespan, it is essential to establish a governance framework that includes farmer representation at all levels. This framework should incorporate regular monitoring and evaluation processes, transparent reporting on key performance indicators, and the ability to adjust the blueprint in response to unforeseen challenges and emerging opportunities.

Should you require further explanation or clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Tanya Howard
Company Secretary