

Water

the Essential Ingredient to
Life, Success and Prosperity

"From the desert to the coastline the single biggest constraint to the growth of our plant industries is the availability of reliable water, consequently the most important investment we can make in the future of Territory farming is good water planning and management."

Kate Peake
NT Farmers Director
Advocate for Industry Water Rights

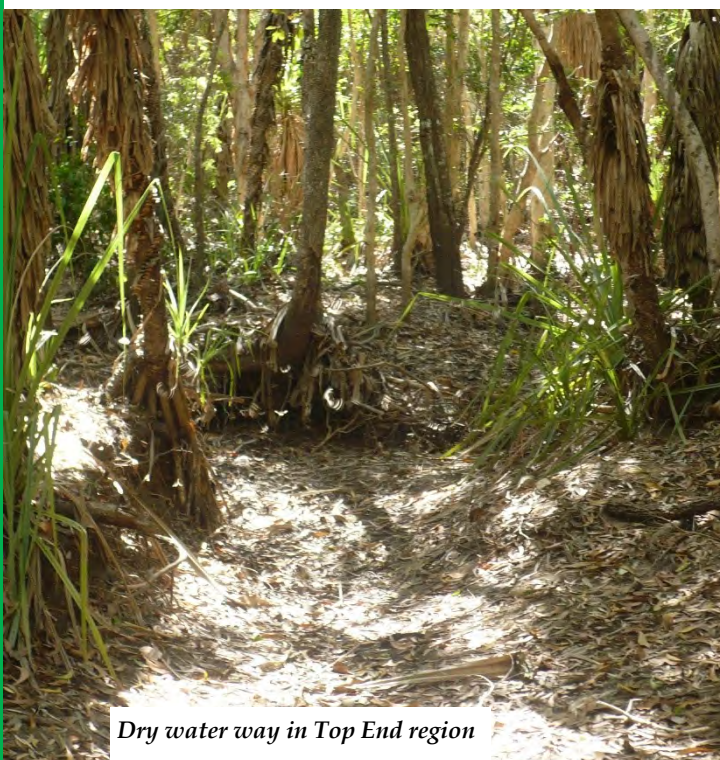
See story page 5



It has been a busy few months with new CEO Paul taking over the reins and Greg transitioning to Industry Development Manager. I am pleased to report that this change to the organisation's operational leadership has been very smooth thanks in large part to the professionalism and commitment to NT Farmers by both Greg and Paul. I also commend all staff for the way they have embraced the change and worked with Paul to bring him up to speed on their projects and areas of expertise.

There are some very challenging headwinds for new and existing farmers in the NT particularly in relation to water supply and security, land availability, increasing labour costs and skill shortages. Your Board is confident the new structure and the complimentary skills of Paul and Greg will serve us well as we confront these challenges.

Some of the issues around water are well covered elsewhere in the newsletter however I want to briefly touch on water use with respect to our social licence to operate.



Dry water way in Top End region

Whilst NT Farmers will continue to lobby politicians and DENR for better policy and regulatory water outcomes for growers through policy and regulatory frameworks we must also be proactive in relation to influencing the changing community expectations of our industry.

Broadly speaking we are talking about the level of trust within the community of our environmental stewardship and how our activities impact our neighbours. There is a whole separate discussion on chemical use but for now the impact existing and emerging farming operations have or will have on surface and ground water is rapidly becoming a hot topic. If the dire predictions of widespread bore failure in parts of Darwin's rural area play out in the coming months it is inevitable farm water use will come under much greater scrutiny.

Should we have another dry wet then what may only be murmurings this year will grow louder. Expensive water carting and drying gardens will bring scrutiny and political pressure. As licenced users we are at great risk of allocation reduction through the invocation of licence security categories. The recent education campaign by DENR to encourage voluntary consumption decreases appears to have had little effect and with no mechanism to reduce stock and domestic use our members are an easy target.

So, we need to help growers prepare for worst case scenarios, we need the public to know we are doing our share, ***but above all we need to do it because it's the right thing to do!***

Our response will be NT Farmers largest project to date: The Water Productivity, Efficiency and Sustainability Project. We are currently finalising the detail however Greg will head up the team and it will be jointly funded by NT Farmers and DENR, along with a major corporate sponsor who has committed for four years but we await the final details and will announce the full project outline in the coming months.

On the broader water front, by the time you read this, Paul and I will have attended the 'Territory Water Forum' organised by AFANT and an alliance of environmental groups. A group of selected experts will discuss threats to "Top End rivers and our fishing lifestyle".... and agriculture will be front and centre. Fish kills in the MurrayDarling (regardless of the cause) and water theft by a few greedy cotton growers have done us no favours so proposed farming expansion in the Katherine, Roper and Douglas Daly regions will no doubt be a focus.

Again, we need to be on the front foot and continue to promote the positive aspects farming brings to the development of the Territory and that we are deserving of our social licence to operate because we also want to see world's best environmental practices implemented for any new large scale developments.

Finally, I am looking forward to welcoming as many members and stakeholders as possible to my nursery for our General Meeting on September 10. Minister Kirby will also be attending so it is a great opportunity to get to know your new CEO and perhaps throw a few questions at our Minister. There will be time to look around what is the NT's only high health NIASA accredited production nursery. We grow approximately 350 different 'crops' per year, mostly for the local Bunnings stores, and have done so for many years without using insecticides, fungicides, weedicides or growth regulants on our plants.

We will have at least one of these on farm general meetings each year to enable a better understanding of the breadth of plant growing industries under the NT Farmers umbrella.

Hope to see you on the 10th.



In 2018 The Northern Territory Farmers Association unveiled its plan to see the value of plant industries in the Territory double within the next 10 years to \$600 million.

Last year, the NT produced \$251 million worth of produce with mangoes (\$112.8 million) and melons (\$42 million) the most valuable sectors. In order to achieve these ambitions, current crops will need to grow and opportunities for value adding, greater access to international markets will need to be realized.

The recent announcement in relation to the cool store at the airport and VHT plant is a welcome addition to the essential infrastructure required to grow our established sectors into the next decade and beyond. NT Farmers are committed to working closely with the NT Airports to make this development a success and to ensure growers have access to new markets.

In doubling our outputs new crops will need to be developed. Cotton has experienced a very successful trial in the Douglas Daly and Katherine regions and from early indications the trial areas have been very successful. Northern Territory Farmers Association are working closely with cotton growers in the north to ensure they have the industry support to become a major contributor to the Northern Territory economy. The next steps for the industry will be to create a business plan and feasibility study into the construction and operation of a cotton gin in the Northern Territory and NT Farmers are assisting in this process.

Minister Kirby this week announced the legislation to create an industrial hemp industry in the Northern Territory. I was in parliament to watch this legislation pass. NT Farmers welcomed this development and are committed to working with the Department of Primary Industries and Resources, the Hemp Industry and Growers to ensure the Northern Territory capitalizes on this opportunity.

When we look at where the markets and economics lie, cotton and hemp are the ones that are coming up regularly as future anchor crops. If we are to truly enter a broadacre cropping production system, all departments within government will need to work closely together to ensure the legislative frameworks are suitable for these industries to establish.

With cotton and hemp firmly on the horizon this then creates other opportunities for rotational crops like irrigated fodder, sorghum, maize, mung beans, possibly tropical soybean, fragrant rice, and a myriad of other potential products.

Over the last week I have had the pleasure of attending the Mango pre season meetings held in Katherine and Darwin hosted by the Australian Mango Industry Association and was excited to hear that the season is looking extremely positive. With suitable weather conditions the flowering has been prolific, and growers are getting ready for a busy season.

Speaking with growers the biggest issue facing them is the changes to the horticulture award and the impacts this will have to the bottom line of their businesses and the added administrative burden this will create. These changes will also have a detrimental effect on the picking staff whom like to work as many hours as they can during the short season to maximize their incomes. This is far less likely as growers can not afford to pay overtime to undertake these tasks.

NT Farmers will continue to advocate for changes to the award through the National Farmers Federation, Horticulture Council and by direct engagement with Fairwork and key stakeholders.

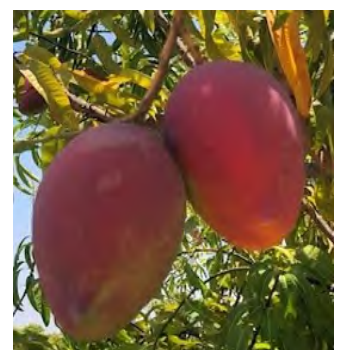
NT Farmers would like to see the National Farmers Federation Horticulture Council gain full commodity status within the NFF, thus giving horticulture a seat at the table in Canberra to directly influence decision makers. This is critical if we are to grow horticulture to its full potential in the Northern Territory.

NT Farmers as a member based organisation is only as strong as our membership. I would urge all growers, support business and invested stake holders to please consider joining the Northern Territory Farmers Association. Our mission is to advocate on behalf of the entire industry, and we are committed to engage with all our members to ensure we are achieving value for your membership fees. If you would like to discuss membership, please do not hesitate to contact any of our team to discuss these opportunities.

Work is currently underway on the Food Futures Road Show that this year will be held in the red centre in late November early December. The focus this year will be on the opportunities that exist in these areas, please come along as it will be a mix of knowledge transfer, networking and exploring the new opportunities agriculture has to offer in the centre of Australia.

Our next board meeting will be held on the 10th of September followed by a social event at our President Simon Smiths nursery in Girraween. If you would like to come along and meet the NT Farmers Board and staff, you are most welcome. Please RSVP to admin@ntfarmers.org.au the event kicks off at 5pm and should be a great opportunity to relax and unwind.

Finally, good luck to our Mango Growers in their season ahead.





From the Minister

It's been a big few months for the industry since the last edition of *GROW NT*, and it gives me great pleasure to welcome Paul Burke as CEO of the NT Farmers Association. With Paul coming into the role with a strong industry background here in the Territory and interstate, puts NT Farmers in a pole position for ongoing success, carrying on from the accomplishments of Greg Owens. Paul comes to NT Farmers as an extremely well respected community member and I look forward to working with him in this new capacity.

In the last edition I wrote about introducing a Bill into Parliament allowing for the development and operation of an industrial hemp industry here in the NT. I'm pleased to report that last week that bill was passed with tremendous support from both sides of Parliament, which sees a green light for industry development.

In 2016 the Department of Primary Industry and Resources undertook a trial with Industrial Hemp plants to ensure the industry was in fact viable. This was confirmed with the flowering of the Industrial Hemp plant. Having past this bill means we can roll full steam ahead into developing a regulatory framework for Industrial Hemp crops to be in the ground for the next Dry Season. I'm told these crops are best planted around early April and I look forward to seeing how this emerging crop fares in the Northern Territory. There is plenty to be excited about when it comes to hemp and much to learn. Being a 90 day crop there is the potential for two yields per Dry, and with many uses for the fibre and the seed there is endless potential for what is being touted a superfood by some. I know from reading some of the coverage after the bill passed through Parliament there are many farmers ready to go, and who are as excited as I am about the potential of hemp here in the NT.

Another crop which continues to take leaps and bounds forward is the ongoing research into cotton. A second successful harvest has taken place after initial crops from Edith Springs Station and Tipperary Station were successfully harvested in July.



Cotton ready to harvest

Cotton offers a variety of potential benefits including high returns for farmers, efficient production under varying conditions and integration with and for beef production, and cotton seed proving itself as an excellent by-product and feedstock for cattle and I am looking forward to seeing where this goes into the future as well.

The show circuit is always an exhilarating time here in the Territory and gives me an opportunity to get out and about across a significant part of the NT. This year I made it to all four shows, and, as always was thankful to get out and speak with people in the regions. A special thank you to those I was fortunate enough to meet with along the journey, especially people that took time out of their busy schedules to host us on their properties.

I look forward to working closely with you all into the future.



The Hon. Paul Kirby
Minister for Primary Industry
and Resources

Water the Essential Ingredient to Life, Success and Prosperity

By Paul Burke - CEO NT Farmers

Plant based industries make a substantial contribution to the economic and social well-being of communities across the Northern Territory, particularly in the regional and rural parts of the Territory.

These rural enterprises underpin and sustain a myriad of related businesses – from freight and transport to packaging, fencing, fertiliser and equipment suppliers. Agricultural businesses also engage large numbers of permanent and seasonal staff whose wages circulate through regional centres and the Territory economy.

The Territory has significant water resources but there are serious gaps in the adequacy of current water resource management arrangements and these gaps pose threats to the future of our industry.

The industry strongly supports all efforts aimed at implementing regulated water resource management arrangements that deliver sustainable, equitable and reliable access to water resources for all legitimate water users. The Horticulture Industry needs to have confidence in the integrity, transparency, equity, consistency and robustness of water resource management policy and its application.

Some water storages are as finite as petroleum. Other aquifers are renewable. But in some cases, they are being pumped faster than precipitation is recharging them, as we have seen in some of the rural areas around Darwin. We need to bring withdrawals into balance with recharge, this is no easy feat given the expanding populations living in the Darwin rural areas and more major subdivisions on the horizon.

As a water dependent industry, we need to be proactive in driving efficiencies of water use within our own operations. We all need to be engaged and informed in relation to water conservation. When water is taken from rivers, floodplains, and aquifers, those ecosystems bear the brunt of water scarcity and begin to be degraded or disappear, these affects are often unfairly blamed upon the agriculture sector. The outcomes of the degradation of these ecosystems also potentially affects our customers perceptions of our industry and its long-term sustainability.

Recently NT Farmers responded to growers in the Ti-Tree water plan area that have been left with little to no opportunity to expand their operations and create an economy for the local area through the Ti-Tree water planning process. The Ti-Tree water planning process was not backed by sufficient science and does not have an adequate monitoring process to assess underground water storages.

There is no doubt had the water planning process had more scientific data and a rigorous underground water monitoring program more water for economic development would have been available.

In order to preserve this valuable resource in the Ti-Tree area, an approach of allocating the recharge amount plus a small percentage usage of the aquifers resource over a 300-year period would deliver the balance between environmental, cultural and desperately needed economic outcomes, without compromising the integrity of the aquifer.

NT Farmers supports and has advocated for increased monitoring of aquifers to ensure no adverse outcomes occur to 'ground water dependent ecosystems.' This essential process will allow for adaptive changes to water policy into the future.

Recent experience suggests that the lost economic potential seen in the Ti-Tree water plan area could be replicated across many other water plan areas. This is something that the Territory economy, regional jobs and the agricultural sector at large can ill afford. The mantra of diversification of production on the pastoral estate by the current government will be seriously compromised if accessibility to water is not addressed as a priority.

Many opportunities exist to use the water we do have more productively. Change begins with more efficient management of water resources, too few incentives for farmers to use water more efficiently are currently available in the horticulture sector. Farmers are good businesspeople; they respond to incentives that affect their bottom line. NT Farmers are currently developing a project to assist growers with water management, planning and efficiencies.

Our pioneering Territory Farmers make planting, investment, employment and other key decisions based on water and delays in a secure water allocation add unnecessary uncertainty to the already highly unpredictable agriculture sector. NT Farmers must do everything we can to ensure the tools we do have for water allocation are used as effectively as possible.

The one competitive advantage growers in the Northern Territory have is vast amounts of water, with the current water plans, government seeks to nullify this one advantage for growers.

This month has been jam-packed with conferences and a field day on Kununurra's cotton trials.



Attending the Protected Cropping Australia Conference on the Gold Coast provided some insight into glass and shade house growing systems and future potential for vegetable producers in the Northern Territory.

The Australian Hydroponic & Greenhouse Association (now PCA), was first formed in Australia in August 1990 following two successful conferences held in Queensland.

PCA is the fastest growing association in Australia and are the peak industry body representing commercial hydroponic and greenhouse growers. Members include equipment and installation suppliers, specialist consultants, advisors, researchers and educators in Australia. PCA is also a voice to Government, technical agencies and other industry groups.

Protected Cropping Australia feels Northern Australia has a massive potential for inside growing systems predominately in the form of shade structures which can be designed to withstand up to 170km per hour winds. Empowering producers to control crop climate, extending production windows, lowering energy costs, enabling faster crop production, reducing pesticide use, lessening pest and disease pressures and therefore improving crop quality and yield.

Other presentations at the PCA conference included growing medical Cannabis in glasshouse systems.



Cannabis can be grown for medicinal purposes

Photo by Rick Proctor

Medical cannabis is nothing new and is possibly the oldest plant cultivated by humans with its use dating back to over 10,000 B.C. Humans and cannabis have a symbiotic relationship. It was brought into western medicine in 1841 by pharmaceutical companies and used for ailments, but in 1942 prohibition in America saw it removed from use.



*Emily Rigby presenting at PCA -
pic courtesy PCA Facebook page*

Emily Rigby who is a horticultural research scientist, among others discussed the benefits and issues with growing medical cannabis in inside growing systems.

Greening up cities, with a futuristic approach to enabling accountability for environmental impact, understanding growing systems and production for future sustainability, were other topics discussed including the possibility of floating cow gardens for milk production! Scientists and structural designers did however have concerns the cows may get seasick initially!



Greening up cities with a futuristic approach

Photo courtesy

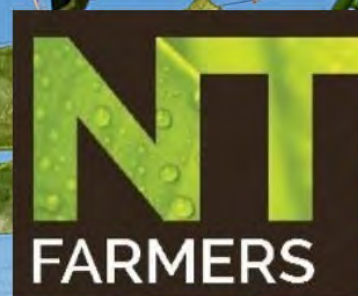
<http://theconversation.com/urban-greening-can-save-species-cool-warming-cities-and-make-us-happy-116000>



**Hort
Innovation**
Strategic levy investment



**VEGETABLE
FUND**



On behalf of

**Horticulture Innovation Australia & Northern Territory
Farmers Association**

We invite you to the

Regional Extension Review Meeting

To be held at NT Farmers Association office

Shop 15A, Coolalinga Shopping Centre, Coolalinga

8am to 10.30am

10 September, 2019

This is an important meeting which requires your attendance to discuss the continuation of the VEgNet project in the Northern Territory.

Phase Two of the project is yet to be developed and confirmed so this is your opportunity to have input into the new project outline moving forward.

This project benefits our growers so your attendance and support is critical to us continuing to service NT Vegetable Growers and wider industry.

Please advise your attendance to Laura Cunningham - ido@ntfarmers.org.au

July has been a very exciting month for myself as I am proud to announce that my project has been extended and I am now officially a full-time employee of NT Farmers Association. I would like to thank the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources for their on going support and seeing value in my role here at NT Farmers. On that note I would also like to thank the Growers and the Team here at NT farmers for their support over the past 11 months. With the new funding from the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources the scope of the project has widened and I will now be engaging with non-English speaking grower groups in Townsville and Carnarvon about Biosecurity.

In June I attended the Hort Connection conference held in Melbourne this year with over 3000 attendees. There were some really interesting speakers and presentations from businesses all around Australia and overseas. Simon, Paul, Greg, Aisla and Laura from NT Farmers also attended and it was great to see some growers from the NT there as well.

Paul and I also had the opportunity to take a photo with the Minister for Agriculture Bridget McKenzie and listen to her talk about the importance of biosecurity in Australia.



Chris Pham, Minister for Agriculture Bridget McKenzie & Paul Burke at Hort Connections 2019

It was great to see Produce of Virginia have NT produce on display.

Hort Connections 2020 will be held in Brisbane from the 15th to 17th of June. Vegetable levy payers have the opportunity to have funding to cover 2 nights' accommodation and return flights paid for. Places are limited so get in early to secure your spot. It will be really good to see more growers from the NT attend this event as I found it thoroughly worthwhile.



NT Grown produce on display at Hort Connections

NT Farmers have been fortunate enough to secure some grant funding from the NT Government to facilitate a group of up to 20 Vietnamese students from Agricultural universities in Vietnam. The Vietnamese Smart Ag project will alleviate some labour pressure for the vegetable growers and give growers the opportunity to grow their business knowing they will have staff capacity to do so. The students will be here for up to 6 months with the opportunity to return the following year. If you think you farm has the capacity to host a few students and would like to know more information please don't hesitate to contact me.

The Biosecurity Champions project is in full swing and we will be out and about within the next couple of weeks to do our filming. The purpose of these videos is to raise awareness and encourage growers and the broader community about good biosecurity and best practices. It is also to educate the broader community about why biosecurity is important for Australia and the potential financial burdens an incursion can cause. So, watch this space for sneak peaks and updates.

The Tropical fruit survey has been sent out. The project is called Profiling Smaller Tropical Fruits. If you grow Rambutans, Jackfruit, Hog Plums, Dragon fruit, Star Apple, Durian, Wax/Bell Apples, Soursop/ Custard Apple or Guava and have not received a survey please contact me as it vital that we gather

as much data as possible.

For more information about the project, Plant Health Australia has written an article on the following page.



Across northern Australia there is a wide variety of tropical fruit crops being commercially grown and supplied to market. Tropical crops such as Rambutan, Durian, Jackfruit and Mangosteen, which are commonly known as exotic tropicals are some of the most widely grown fruit, yet not much is known about the growers. Consequently, the value of these industries to Australian Horticulture is largely unknown and growers seldom benefit from targeted research and development investment.

Through funding from the Department of Agriculture, a joint project, involving the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industries and Resources, NT Farmers Association, tropical fruit growers and Plant Health Australia, will profile these crops. The profile will include an analysis of each crop including grower numbers, production locations and volumes, planned expansions and key pest and disease risks.

The profile is important on two fronts. Firstly, the data can be used as a basis to combat an exotic pest incursion – an ever-increasing risk in Australia. Secondly, by profiling these industries, there is a greater potential for targeted research, development and extension funding to address key production issues.

The exotics industry has had a very rough history, having come close to a total collapse on two occasions, primarily as a result of severe Tropical Cyclones Larry (2006) and Yasi (2011). Since these events there has been a lot of work done by growers to develop new production systems that offer a greater level of resilience to severe weather events.

James Drinnan from QDAF and tropical fruit grower Josh Maunder will be leading the Queensland component of the project with Greg Owens and Chris Pham from NT Farmers Association leading the Northern Territory and Western Australia component. They believe this project could have a real impact on the ability of government and industry to better service growers.

Josh said “We don’t have an appreciation of who is growing what and where it is being grown. Once we have this information, and have developed good communication networks, we can collectively identify what the major issues are and then work collaboratively to solve them. Gathering this industry information through this project will allow us to build a profile of the industry and highlight the value of these crops to the regional economies of northern Australia. If we work together, we will have a much greater chance of building a sustainable industry which will significantly boost the value of Australian Horticulture. It will also provide a better opportunity to work with all levels of Government to secure R, D and E funding to address major production issues and the barriers to expansion”.

The project team will be working to identify growers and collect as much information as possible over the next few months. The information collected will be used to develop the industry profile.

Another reason for this project is to highlight the importance of biosecurity. If an exotic pest or disease threat arises, there will be an urgent need to communicate quickly and effectively to all growers. If there is accurate contact information available, it will ensure the right information goes to the right people. They will be in a much better position to respond effectively.

The project is anticipated to be complete by December this year. Once the industry profile report is developed, a summary will be provided to the growers who have contributed information. A survey form is available for growers to complete. Some growers have already completed the survey and they said it only takes 10 minutes to complete.

The project team is hoping that tropical fruit growers will reach out and provide data. The team is targeting tropical fruit growers who produce crops that nationally have an annual value less than \$10 million.

If you would like more information on this project, or you would like to receive a survey form, please contact Josh Maunder or Chris Pham on the details below or email tropicalcropsurvey@gmail.com.

Contact details:

Josh Maunder
P. 0431 407 050
E. zappalatropicals@gmail.com

Chris Pham
P. 0488 466 007
E. bio@ntfarmers.org.au



The importance of managing safety in agriculture

Agriculture is recognised by Safe Work Australia as being the most dangerous industry to work in due to the combination of hazards as well as the fact many farmers work alone or in remote locations. More than one in five workers who died at work, worked in Agriculture. It has the highest fatality rate of any Australian industry (14.8 fatalities per 100,000 workers).

What is being done about this?

Sadly, statistics show that a very low percentage of Australian agribusinesses have a current safety management system in place, but this is changing. By becoming more aware of the risks and penalties associated with not having a safety system, business owners are starting to change their attitudes and increase acceptance when it comes to safety.

What is a safety management system?

A safety management system is a process that is put in place by an employer to minimise the risk of injury and illness. When implemented correctly, it becomes part of the culture and impacts the way people carry out their jobs.

Why do I need a safety system?

As a business owner, there are legal requirements that you must comply with to ensure your workplace meets WHS obligations. This may include the health and safety of your customers, employees, visitors, contractors, volunteers and suppliers.

The principal WHS law in the Northern Territory consists of the Work Health and Safety (National Uniform

Legislation) Act, supported by the Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations.

Do I need a safety system if I don't employ anyone?

WHS legislation does not differentiate between an employee, contractor or a family member working on your farm. If you have any worker coming onto your farm, you hold the same legal obligations to provide them with a safe work environment and safe systems of work as you would an employee.

What happens in an investigation?

Record keeping is the key to protecting your business against any unfair claims or disputes. If a regulator was to come onto your property, they will request to see your safety management system. They are likely to:

- conduct interviews with any person who was present or who may know about the incident/workplace
- take photographs
- ask to see appropriate documentation such as inductions, maintenance records, training records, safe work procedures and policies as well as any other evidence that demonstrates the business has an active attitude to safety in the workplace
- any associated Contractor and Partners will be contacted related to the investigation.

What can I do?

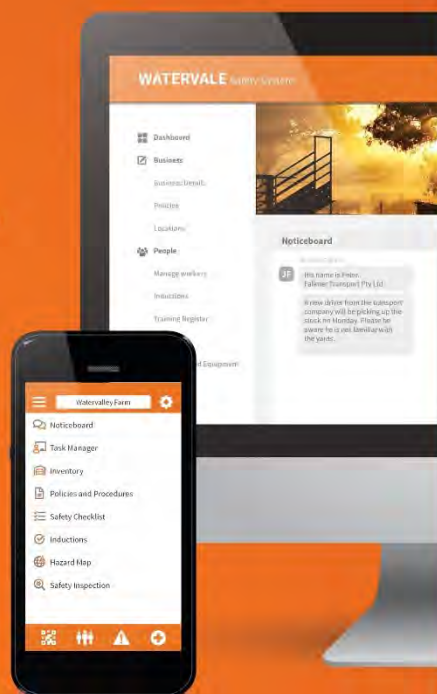
Agribusiness owners are urged to improve their processes to help make their workplaces safer and their businesses prosper. We understand this task can seem unattainable when faced with a hefty workload and an insurmountable amount of paperwork.

Being prepared without compromising productivity can be achieved by using a system that meets your obligations and is tailored to your specific needs.

Forget the paperwork – go digital.

A digital safety system for your agribusiness.

For businesses that want to get rid of the paperwork, improve efficiencies and keep their workers safe.



T: (08) 8490 0939 | safeagsystems.com

The momentum on the development of sustainable broadacre cropping systems in the Northern Territory is continuing with more farmers getting ready for crop planting this wet season. On the back of successful cotton crops in the Katherine and Douglas Daly region, there is at least another 10 farmers planning to trial cotton on a commercial scale to further develop the local cropping knowledge and to develop a cropping system that will be robust and sustainable in the wide range of environmental conditions.

It is great to see both local farmers and new investors in the NT driving the development of the cropping industry. This development has a few major processors looking at setting up processing operations in the NT. Hemp processing, cotton gins, peanut shelling plants are just some of the projects in the pipeline, for these to become a reality there needs to be increased plantings across the NT.

The further development of the pastoral estate is essential for these industries to establish and now with the options to sublease pastoral leases, there is a mechanism to allow high quality farming land to be developed. Non pastoral lease permits still need to be applied for, so contact the Pastoral Lands Board for the information.

NT Farmers, with the support of the wider service industry is keen to assist new farmers with the information they need to have confidence to trial new crops. NT Farmers is working with the Department of Primary Industries and Resources in the roll out of the CRCNA Northern Territory cropping program, working with crops including cotton, peanuts, rainfed rice, hemp, grains and pulses. NT Farmers has also secured some funding to assist in the transport of precision planters to farmers looking to plant commercial demonstration plantings.

Farmers interested in trialling any new crops or wanting to understand the opportunities, please feel free to contact myself.

0428798014 or kido@ntfarmers.org.au

Cotton harvest at Edith Springs Station



Australian Dates Growers Association Formed

Greg Owens, NT Farmers and Stuart Smith, DPIR, attended the inaugural Annual General meeting of the Australian date growers Association in Lyrup, near Renmark, in the South Australian Riverland. The meeting was attended by 22 growers from across Australia from as far away as Winton and Charleville in Qld and Swan River in WA.

Dates have been grown in Australia for over 100 years with a long history in Central Australia. The NT Department of Primary Industry and Resources has carried out extensive research on dates in the Centre at AZRI (Arid Zone Research Institute) at Alice Springs and has the one of the best collections of date varieties and mature trees in Australia.



Barhee Dates AZRI NT DPIR



Date palms Riverland SA

The meeting elected Steve Bruer as Chair and Peter Middleton as Secretary for the Association and a small committee to steer the Association for the next 12 months.

The priorities for the new Association are to guide research into technical questions relating to improved pollination and yield and pest control of scale insects. This follows the date workshop in Alice Springs in June this year that also looked at the issues and opportunities for producing dates in the NT and nationally and the market opportunities with counter seasonal production to the traditional growing areas in the northern Hemisphere and quality advantages from production in an arid environment.



Date Farmers Inaugural AGM



Steve Bruer with SA Minister of Primary Production

There is a lot of information that has been generated in the NT and by International research

NT Farmers will add a Date Industry page to our website so that this material is easily available for our NT growers and those growers interstate. NT Farmers will continue to support our Centralian growers and look for opportunities to assist with expanding production into the Deep Well area when those blocks become available for horticultural development. The NT Farmers Food Futures Roadshow in November will highlight some of the existing businesses and opportunities in the centre.



Date palms at Gurra Downs with the Reilly family

The day after the meeting Stuart and I visited Dave, Anita and Shaun Reilly at Gurra Downs in the Riverland. They have a large certified organic date planting along with grapes, pomegranates and nursery production. Dave's experience in Alice Springs and knowledge of dates lead him to trial the crop in the Riverland to deal with increasingly saline water from the irrigation scheme. It has taken many years of on farms trials and research by the family and accessing information from all over the world to get to where the business is today.

It was wonderful to have the opportunity to see the Riverland in more detail. There is huge plantings of almonds in full flower and citrus at the peak of harvest.



Almonds in full flower in the Riverland

The trip back from the Riverland was absolutely scary with high winds, thick dust, blocked roads from fallen trees and flooding in the Adelaide Hills, all at freezing temperatures. Great to be back in Darwin!

Did you know that you can take advantage of the Trade Support Scheme (TSS) for your next export marketing activity?

NT Farmers encourage any producers who would like to develop an existing export market, have an interest in starting the process of becoming export ready or attend international trade shows or conferences to consider options for assistance from Northern Territory Government and NT Farmers Association. The development of the export hub in Darwin which will be in operation in October 2020, will bring perfect opportunity to exporting directly out of the Northern Territory. It is worthwhile to consider updating your marketing strategy and plan and start the process of building customer relationships in preparation for the 2020 season. You may be eligible for receiving financial assistance through Northern Territory Government TSS scheme for developing your strategy and your export marketing activities.

Trade Support Scheme (TSS) is one of the Department of Trade, Business and Innovation's grant programs. TSS is a targeted program designed to support export ready small to medium enterprises including indigenous and regional businesses. The objective of the program is to assist Territory businesses to realise their export potential and grow Territory's trade.

The program helps offset the costs of export marketing activities including the development of an export marketing strategy, marketing capability development, web design, development of collateral for international markets, as well as in-market activities such as attending seminars and trade exhibitions, meeting potential buyers or agents overseas.

For further information please feel free to contact Camilla Philip at NT Farmers

mbido@ntfarmers.org.au or 0428 798 090 or:

visit [Trade Support Scheme site](https://www.trade.gov.au) or call TradeNT on 08 8946 9553 email tradent@nt.gov.au



HUMPTY DOO HOSTEL

9 Waters Street, Humpty Doo, NT, 0836

Located in the Humpty Doo commercial precinct overlooking natural bushland, the Humpty Doo Hostel is worker friendly accommodation and perfect for short or long stays.



- Air-conditioned rooms**
- Modern communal kitchen**
- Communal gym area**
- Washing facilities**
- Secure off-street parking**

Free Wi-Fi

There is an on site manager and with reasonable room rates.
We welcome you to come and stay with us.

Call us to get a quote on

08 8988 2095 or 0488 002 839

Email- admin@gfhmail.com



AGROFARM SERIES

AGROFARM 100DT



96HP

AGROFARM 115GS



NEW MODEL

110HP

AGROFARM 100GS



96HP

4E SERIES

4090.4E ROPS



85HP

4100.4E CAB



95HP

6G SERIES

6135G POWERVISION



141HP

40 KM/H & 50 KM/H VERSIONS AVAILABLE

4065E CAB



62HP

4080.4E CAB



80HP

6155G POWERVISION



163HP

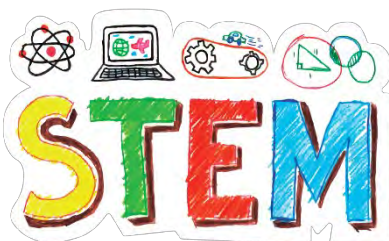


www.rgmdarwin.com.au

TeacherFX (Teacher Farm Experience) is an **excursion** from Darwin to Katherine return overnight on 9 September 2019. This opportunity, including all meals and accommodation, is provided to teachers free of charge thanks to the Rabobank Client Council and CQU. For more information visit <http://teacherfx.com.au/>

The NT Food & Fibre Education Network, on behalf of the Primary Industry Education Foundation Australia is coordinating a **Teacher's Workshop** on Wednesday 30 October at Taminmin College. For more information or to express interest in speaking at the Workshop please contact me.

Both projects aim to increase the knowledge and confidence of STEM, digital technology and agriculture educators to allow them to incorporate food and fibre production into their teaching programs.



NT Farmers were successful with funding for the following **international projects**;

- Thai Young Smart Farmers
- Vietnamese Smart Ag Student Placement

Chris Pham will be coordinating both projects.



Previous Thai Young Smart Farmers participants inspect mango trees with support from NT Farmers Greg Owens

The 2018 NT Harvest Labour Report has been published and provided to various Government agencies to advocate for resolutions to the labour issues the industry faces. For a copy please contact me.

Through the Territory Legends program we have received applications from qualified candidates looking for employment in the industry. If you are seeking applicants with the following qualifications to fill a position within your business contact me before these candidates are engaged by other employers.

Candidate 1

- ♦ Batchelor of Science (Ecology)
- ♦ Drivers Licence

Candidate 2

- ♦ Certificate II in Horticulture
- ♦ Diploma Interactive Digital Media
- ♦ Drivers Licence

Candidate 3

- ♦ Certificate II in Conservation & Land Management
- ♦ Drivers Licence

Candidate 4

- ♦ Certificate III in Horticulture & Conservation & Land Management
- ♦ Drivers Licence
- ♦ First Aid Certificate
- ♦ Machinery & Chainsaw Tickets

In June my colleagues and I attended the [Hort Connections](#) industry event in Melbourne. The three-day conference was amazing. If you have not been before save the dates for next years conference which will be held in Brisbane on 15 to 17 June. There were a variety of presentations, a trade show, networking opportunities, farm tours finishing with a gala dinner including awards. Highlights include learning about the variety of scholarships available such as the PMA NZ Scholarship <https://www.pma.com/global-pma/anz/topics/industry-talent/career-pathways-scholarship>

Learning that there are many people in the industry who you can call up for advice (there were over 3,300 attendees!)

Motivational speaker - Sam Bailey

<https://www.sambailey.com.au/> check out his book 'Head over heels A story of tragedy, triumph and romance in the Australian bush' and keep an eye out for the new book coming soon 'You don't need wings to fly'.

The **Women in horticulture** session showcased two inspiring women's stories;

Tammie Matson, Australian Zoologist

<https://hortconnections.com.au/speakers/#tammie-matson> and

Josie Thomson, Wise Advocate Enterprises

<https://hortconnections.com.au/speakers/#josie-thomson>

Working together to eradicate citrus canker

Citrus canker disease was found in the Northern Territory (NT) in April 2018. Since then, the NT Government has been working with NT Farmers Association, Citrus Australia, citrus growers, the Nursery and Garden Industry Association, NT residents, the Commonwealth Government and the other State and Territories to eradicate the disease and ensure Australia is once again free from the disease.

The eradication program is progressing very well, with no evidence of natural spread of the disease and no evidence of the disease found on any commercial citrus-growing properties in the NT.

"No evidence of natural spread of the disease"

As at 31 July 2019, 99 per cent of residential properties in the 13 declared Restricted Areas in the NT had been surveyed for citrus canker host plants, and a total of 4,540 citrus canker host plants have been removed.

Where citrus canker host plants have been removed, the property must be re-surveyed twice to confirm there is no regrowth or host plant material available for citrus canker to exist on. 87 per cent of first round property re-surveillance has been completed with no evidence of citrus canker found and the next round of re-surveillance is expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

The removal of citrus canker host plants from Restricted Areas and re-surveying of properties helps the NT demonstrate freedom from citrus canker disease. The requirements to demonstrate eradication are being finalised in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government, the other States and Territories and industry partners. Declaring eradication from the disease will enable the lifting of movement, propagation and quarantine restrictions for citrus plants, leaves and fruit currently in place in the NT.



Claire Morton, NT Program Manager, National Citrus Canker Eradication Program, said "Thanks to community support for the eradication program, including reporting disease symptoms, and not growing citrus plants in Restricted Areas, we're working towards declaring the NT free of the disease. Having citrus plants checked for the disease is a key part of the eradication plan. We continue to encourage residents to report any citrus plants purchased since January 2017 so they can get a free plant health check."

NT residents can call or text the Citrus Canker Eradication Program team on **0436 643 470** with any questions regarding the eradication program, or to book a time for plant health inspectors to check their citrus plants. Citrus plants purchased or received after 1 January 2017 are of particular interest, as they may have been in direct contact with an infected plant.

Community awareness is vital for eradicating citrus canker disease. Information and activities at our booth at this year's Royal Darwin Show provided a great opportunity for staff to answer residents' questions and promote good biosecurity practices.

Upcoming event: Citrus canker eradication program industry information day, 19 September 2019.

Further information is available on the NT Government website at www.nt.gov.au/citruscanker.

Pacific Labour Scheme

Seasonal Worker Programme

DO YOU EXPERIENCE LABOUR SHORTAGES?

CONTACT
RONAN MACKEY
NOW!

TEL- 0487 777 433
 Rmackey@chamberntf.com.au

Chamber of Commerce
NORTHERN TERRITORY

Follow us on Social Media



Courtesy Rural Weekly

Looking for Farm Workers?



The Job Shop is the Top End provider of the Australian Government's Harvest Labour Service. It is a **free** service to growers in the NT where we provide workers who have been screened to ensure they are eligible to work in Australia.

Get ready this mango season and contact Carol in Darwin on 0448 101 477 or Mel in Katherine on 0437 041 606 so that we can have workers ready for you.



Seasonal Worker Programme



Pacific Labour Scheme



ISO 9001 QUALITY
Certified System

Providing trusted property solutions to the N.T. and Kimberley region.



Australia's largest independent property valuation and advisory group can provide you with the information and advice you need to make informed property decisions.

- ▶ Cattle stations, medium & small scale grazing properties
- ▶ Horticultural properties
- ▶ Mortgage Security
- ▶ Pre-purchase & pre-sale valuations
- ▶ Stamp Duty & Financial Reporting (Capital Gains Tax)
- ▶ Tax Depreciation Schedules
- ▶ Portfolios
- ▶ Asset apportionment
- ▶ Rental Assessment & determinations
- ▶ Compulsory acquisitions & compensation
- ▶ Expert witness
- ▶ Market research
- ▶ Plant & Equipment valuations



CONTACT YOUR LOCAL PROPERTY VALUATION AND ADVISORY SPECIALISTS TODAY.

Terry Roth 0428 723 606 / Frank Peacocke 0439 950 997 / Will Johnson 0422 896 480
Herron Todd White Northern Territory p. 08 8941 4833 e. darwin@htw.com.au w. htw.com.au

MMS CALCI FLOUR

High Quality fine ground Calcium Carbonate with NV>99%

MMS GYP FLOUR

High-quality fine ground Gypsum with superior levels of soluble Calcium and Sulphur

MMS HYDRO GYP-B

High Quality Gypsum liquid suspension with Boron, Nitrogen and Phosphorus. Can be applied as Foliar and Fertigation

MMS HYDRO CAL-B

High Quality Calcium liquid suspension with Boron, Nitrogen and Phosphorus. Can be applied as Foliar and Fertigation



Micronised Minerals - Local NT company with Twin Vertical Roller Mills for extracting product sizes down to 2.3 to 18 microns with annual Capacity of 100,000 tonnes production. Product packaging - Bulker Bags 500 to 1200 kgs and Bulk tankers. Purpose-built tipping containers for large scale delivery requirements.



10, Campion Road, East Arm NT 0828
+618 8947 1872 / 8947 3264
www.micronisedminerals.com.au



I arrived in Darwin over 57 years ago as a radio announcer with 8DN and I never left! I ran several local businesses and then, forty three years ago, my family and I commenced looking at the potential of Tropical Fruit in the Top End.

We collected seeds of many varieties from the tropics, initially from our Asian neighbours and later from many other areas around the world. Selection planting had begun and soon we found ourselves in research, selecting, grafting and cross breeding for improved varieties.

At Tropiculture we also included Citrus in our research, selecting cultivars that were best suited to the dry tropics. This included attending world conferences and study tours to many countries resulting in a great deal of accumulated Citrus knowledge.

A group of likeminded enthusiasts then got together and formed the NT Rare Fruit Council which in the early stages had between 90 and 100 members. We were able to share a great deal of information and plants. The results are evident today with the many available fruit and vegetables on sale locally and supplied to the southern markets.

Tropiculture Australia is proud to have been part of this exciting time in the development of the Northern Territory horticultural industry.

Today we continue our Research and Development, a Consulting Service, Production Nursery of over 400 different varieties of Food Plants, an Orchard of over 4,000 Fruit trees and Locally manufactured Tropifert Fertilisers. As from the beginning we continue to promote local produce on National TV shows, Radio, Newspaper, Gardening programs, Talks, and with most schools in the top end.

One of the most enjoyable programs is hosting many Trainees for practical experience and helping our clients both commercial and home growers with their gardening challenges.

We continue to promote tropical horticulture through TV, Radio, Magazines, Newspapers and guest speaker appearances at various functions and conferences and at every other opportunity that may arise.

The farm is open for sales and fruit tasting on Saturday's between 8am and 12 noon.



Chris and some of his amazing produce



Some of the produce grown by Tropiculture Australia



HANSEN CUSTOM

For Guns call: Greg Hansen: 0409 693 475 Email: gregory.hansen@internode.on.net
Photography call: Jed Hansen: 0421 556 168 Email: info@hcphotography.biz
Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/hansencustomcoatings>

"FULL GUNSMITHING & CERAKOTE COATING SERVICES"

Hansen Custom is a local family business and is NT proud!

With over 30 years experience we can help you with specialist Gunsmithing Services and a range of protective coatings, such as; Bluing, Parkerizing and Cerakote Ceramic Coatings by our industry qualified applicator.

Our services extend all over the NT and interstate. Full care is taken with your pride and joy, as we understand the value you place on your guns, whether for sporting use or as a work tool.

Our services include:

- **Gun Repairs and Servicing, ALL categories** - Including rebuilds, new builds, custom guns, restorations & modifications.
- **Ceramic Coatings & more** - Protective coatings to preserve not only your gun, but for any surface that requires rust resistance and protection against undue wear & tear. Keeping your gun, your motorbike and vehicle/machinery/engine parts, looking and working at their best. We can even do your golf clubs! See link: <https://www.nicindustries.com>
- **Feral Pest Deterrent & Eradication** - Agents for Noy Industries. Protecting your crops from unwanted visitors. See link: <https://www.noyindustries.com>
- **Ammunition Sales** – Complete range available.
- **Storage and Decommissioning** - Long and short term storage as per the NT Firearms Act. We can arrange the decommissioning and destruction of unwanted guns.
- **Photography Services** - We offer complete photography services for your event as well as photographic restoration services, bringing you old and yellowed or damaged photographs back to life in digital format. Historical family photos a speciality.

Our business is to help you with your business. Discounts apply for NT Farmers members. We are more than happy to have a chat to answer any of your questions, and to discuss practical and viable solutions to your needs. So give us a call!



0400 953 313



whittosnursery@gmail.com



<https://goo.gl/RL7hTY>

GRAFTED MANGO TREES

- Highly reliable wholesale supplier 20 years experience
- Small and large quantities available.
- Specialising in R2E2 and Kensington Pride
- DAF certified for interstate delivery.



THE PERFECT IRRIGATION DELIVERY SYSTEMS FOR EVERY TYPE OF CROP



NETAFIM AUSTRALIA

Tel: 1 800 307 407
Fax: 03 9309 3866
Email: au.net.info@netafim.com
Web: netafim.com.au



 **NETAFIM**
GROW MORE WITH LESS

July Weather Wrap Up

thanks to <http://www.bom.gov.au>

Very warm days, cool nights in the north. Dry in the south

A very warm month in the Northern Territory, amongst the warmest on record for July for mean maximum temperature. Parts of the Top End had cooler than average nights, but elsewhere the mean minimum temperature was average to above average. Generally no rainfall anywhere in the NT apart from some coastal parts of the northeast and the western Tiwi Islands

Lowest July rainfall since 2007

Parts of the southern Northern Territory which typically receive between 10 and 20 mm during July, recorded no rainfall during the month: only a small number of sites in the far northeast, the Carpentaria coast and the western Tiwi Islands received more than 1 mm of rain during July

Territory-wide, rainfall during the month was 99% below the long-term July average and the lowest since 2007

For the year to date, rainfall across the Northern Territory is 43% below the long-term average; the lowest since 1970 and the sixth-lowest on record

Very warm daytime temperatures, with cool nights over the Top End

The mean maximum temperature across the Territory was 2.35 °C above the long-term average and fourth-highest on record. Nearly all of the southern half of the Territory was very much above average, with the highest daytime temperatures in the south-west: Yulara had its [highest July mean daily maximum temperature on record](#) while Yulara and Curtin Springs both had their [highest July mean temperature on record](#)

Across the Territory, the mean minimum temperature was 1.01 °C above the long-term average, with significant variability across the NT. Parts of the Top End had very much below average minimum temperatures while it was generally average to above average further south

Territory-wide, the year-to-date mean maximum temperature is the highest on record, while the mean minimum is tracking at fifth-highest on record

Darwin Airport

Total rainfall for [Darwin Airport](#) was 0 mm, which is 0% of the long-term average of 1.1 mm

The mean daily maximum temperature for [Darwin Airport](#) was 31.3 °C, which is 0.7 °C above the long-term average of 30.6 °C. The warmest day was 33.3 °C on the 23rd, and the coolest day was on the 5th when the temperature reached 29.2 °C

The mean daily minimum temperature for [Darwin Airport](#) was 18.5 °C, which is 0.8 °C below the long-term average of 19.3 °C. The coldest morning was 14.4 °C on the 5th, and the warmest morning was on the 1st when the minimum temperature was 21.9 °C. Darwin Airport had 26 nights where the temperature fell below 20 °C; since 1941, the average for July is 18 nights

Alice Springs Airport

Total rainfall for [Alice Springs Airport](#) was 0.0 mm, compared to the long-term average of 15.1 mm

The mean daily maximum temperature for [Alice Springs Airport](#) was 22.9 °C, which is 3.1 °C above the long-term average of 19.8 °C. The warmest day was 28.3 °C on the 29th, and the coolest day was on the 14th when the temperature reached 15.6 °C

The mean daily minimum temperature for [Alice Springs Airport](#) was 4.0 °C, which is equal to the long-term average. The coldest morning was -1.1 °C on the 15th, and the warmest morning was on the 21st when the minimum temperature was 12.4 °C

Alice Springs had 1 sub-zero daily minimum temperature during July: the long-term average is 6.1

Thank you



drumMUSTER

rinse them out, round them up and run them in.

Thank you to all the farmers, organisations and community groups that support **drumMUSTER**.

Thanks to you the drumMUSTER program has now recycled over 33 million drums. That's over 37,000 tonnes of waste saved from being buried or burnt, and diverted from landfill.

Visit the **drumMUSTER** website to find the nearest collection site to you. Remember, every container counts.



drummuster.org.au
1800 008 707

NT FARMERS



drumMUSTER



Contact NT Farmers Laura Cunningham on 0405287344 or
ido@ntfarmers.org.au
for collection or further information

NT FARMERS