

Section C: Guide to services

This reference guide contains information about contacts for services available to farmers, their families and the rural community in the Mary Valley and Sunshine Coast areas.

The services are divided into:

- Queensland Government
- Australian Government
- Other services (community and non-government).

11 Guide to government and other services

11.1 Queensland Government

Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries

Business Information Centre

The DPI&F Business Information Centre can answer questions related specifically to DPI&F services. Business Information Centre staff may also refer you to other government departments for further assistance. The Business Information Centre is open 8 am to 6 pm Monday to Friday. The Business Information Centre is closed on public holidays.

Phone: 13 25 23 (for the cost of a local call)

Horticulture opportunities in the Mary Valley area

At the DPI&F Maroochy Research Station, information is available on establishing and managing fruit and vegetable crops grown in the Mary Valley area, including information on climate, soil and irrigation issues.

The on-site Farmers Information Centre is open from 9 am to 5 pm. An extension officer is also available 9 am to 12.30 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Phone: DPI&F Maroochy Research Station on (07) 5441 2211 or the DPI&F Business Information Centre on 13 25 23

Mary Economic Region—agribusiness resource guide

This departmental publication is designed to give investors and/or newcomers to the Mary Economic Region an overview of the area, natural resources (land and water), existing infrastructure and current agribusinesses. This publication provides useful information that may assist you to make decisions about farming options in the region. This information tool will be available on the DPI&F website in January 2009.

Building Rural Leaders Program

This program builds the confidence and capacity of individuals to work together to improve leadership in communities, organisations and businesses. Service available to primary producers.

Phone: Building Rural Leaders Program on 1800 356 621 (freecall) or the DPI&F Business Information Centre on 13 25 23

Continuous Improvement and Innovation Team

Designs tools to help farm managers and others design and improve systems, processes and practices. Service available to primary producers.

Phone: Janice Timms on (07) 3239 6541 or the DPI&F Business Information Centre on 13 25 23

Farm Financial Counselling Service

Works with primary producers to help them address financial problems and facilitate structural adjustment. Financial counsellors can help farmers understand their financial position, identify and assess the financial impacts of options for resolving problems and develop strategies and plans for improvement. Financial counsellors also assist in negotiations with financial and other institutions.

Service available to primary producers.

Phone: Steven Smith on (07) 5480 4431 or the DPI&F Business Information Centre on 13 25 23

Plantation forestry

Forest Plantations Queensland is a commercial unit responsible for managing the state-owned forest estate. Forestry Plantation and Forest Management Services Group is seeking to expand the exotic and hardwood plantations resource through land rental arrangements with farmers. Suitable land parcels of 30 ha and above will be considered.

Phone: Plantation Development Officer, Beerburrum, on (07) 5438 6654

QRAA

For more detailed information on the services listed below, refer to QRAA website at www.qrra.qld.gov.au

Primary Industry Productivity Enhancement Scheme

Low-interest loans, with no fees and charges, to assist growers increase the productivity and long-term viability of their enterprise. Service available to primary producers.

Resource management loans or Land Care loans

Assists growers to achieve sustainable development by improving the management of their natural resources, including improving water-use efficiency, mitigating soil erosion, riparian land management, effluent management and contour banking.

Maximum loan amount: \$300 000

Repayment terms: maximum of 20 years

First Start Farm loans

Provides growers with access to financial assistance in the first years of establishing their farming business, including purchasing property on a staged basis or entering into leasing or share farming arrangements.

Maximum loan amount: \$500 000

Repayment terms: maximum of 20 years

Development loans

Allows growers to implement on-farm and off-farm projects to improve their production efficiencies and capabilities through activities such as land purchase, building infrastructure, diversifying, value adding or rationalising partnerships.

Maximum loan amount: \$500 000

Repayment terms: maximum of 20 years

Business Adjustment Scheme

Allows eligible businesses which are adversely affected by the announcement of the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam (outside the proposed inundation area) to seek financial assistance for business advice, business restructure or business exit (subject to guidelines).

Contact: Jim Mackson on 0417 778 317 or QRAA on 1800 623 946 (freecall)

Department of Education, Training and the Arts Training, Queensland

Provides information on vocational education and training.

Phone: 1300 369 935

Department of Employment and Industrial Relations

Provides information about community employment programs, mature age workshops, worker assistance programs, and apprenticeships/traineeships.

Phone: 1300 369 925

Queensland Health

Provides information about public health services (including mental health, rural health and women's health).

Phone: (07) 3234 0111

Adult Mental Health (Nambour–Maroochydore Branch)

People on the Sunshine Coast can access mental health services through the Community Assessment and Treatment (CAT) Team and individuals can call the CAT Team to speak with an intake worker.

Phone: (07) 5459 6900

Department of Communities

Mary Valley services

Provides information about community support services available in the Mary Valley.

Phone: Kandanga One Stop Shop on (07) 5488 4929 for information on what services can be supplied to families in crisis.

Phone: Department of Communities general inquiries line on 1800 811 810

Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry

Provides information on starting and building up a business including a *Your first step kit*. Can also provide information on specialised skills for expanding a business and exporting, or information on innovations and developments in the regulatory, financial, marketing and IT fields.

Phone: Department of Tourism, Regional Development and Industry (Sunshine Coast) on 13 26 50

Legal Aid—Farm Finance Service

Provides advice and assistance to Queensland primary producers who have severe debt-related problems, are in dispute with their lenders, or are otherwise facing financial hardship that relates to their business of primary production. Service available to primary producers.

Phone: Legal Aid on 1300 651 188

Department of Local Government—Regional Councils (Land Use, Planning and Zoning)

Sunshine Coast Regional Council

Land Use Planning and Development Section, Nambour

Phone: (07) 5475 8501

Gympie Regional Council

Planning and Development Department, Gympie

Phone: (07) 5481 0644

Fraser Coast Regional Council

Town Planning Section, Maryborough

Phone: (07) 4197 4514

11.2 Australian Government

Centrelink

An Australian Government agency that delivers a range of services to the Australian community. Administers payments such as age pension, Newstart allowance, youth allowance, disability support pension, Farm Help, as well as family payments through the family assistance office.

Phone: Centrelink appointments line on 13 10 21. Calls from payphones or mobile phones to 13 numbers or 1800 numbers may be charged at a higher rate. Check the Centrelink website for updates at www.centrelink.gov.au

Centrelink Financial Information Service

Provides independent and expert information to help individuals address their financial commitments and options.

Phone: Centrelink on 13 23 00 or Janine Quinn, Gympie, on (07) 5481 0181.

Farmers Assistance Line

Provides information to all Australian primary producers about all Australian Government services.

Phone: Centrelink on 1800 050 585 (freecall)

Farm Management Deposit Scheme

Provides risk management tools to help farmers deal with the uneven income streams common in agriculture. Farm Management Deposits are available through financial institutions to provide farmers with a tax-linked saving mechanism that allows them to set aside pre-tax income from years of good cash flow to use in years of low cash flow.

Phone: Your local financial institution or the Australian Taxation Office's Small Business Information Line on 13 28 66

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

New Regional Food Program due to be released. No further information available at the time of publication of this document.

Phone: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on 1300 884 588

Department of Families and Community Services

Runs Australia-wide projects to help parents and families care for younger children, such as Men and Family Relationships, Men's Line Australia, Commonwealth Financial Counselling Program and Children's Contact Services.

Phone: Department of Family and Community Services on 1300 653 227

Website: www.families.gov.au

11.3 Other services

SEQ Catchments

SEQ Catchments welcomes project proposals from groups for funding. This regional natural resource management body has developed an Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan and Regional Investment Strategy for South East Queensland. The strategy is used to allocate government, industry and community funds into priority natural resource management issues.

Phone: Susie Chapman, Community Partnerships Manager on (07) 5449 4799

Email: schapman@seqcatchments.com.au

Queensland Farm Finance Strategy and Queensland Farm Debt Mediation Scheme

The Queensland Farm Finance Strategy helps financiers, farmers, and their respective financial advisors or counsellors and representative bodies to work together to:

- promote objective assessment of financial viability of farming operations
- resolve financial problems as they arise
- promote a mechanism to achieve a timely and dignified conclusion to matters where a financial support relationship is brought to an end so as to avoid the potential for conflict between the farmer and financier.

Phone: Queensland Farmers' Federation on (07) 3837 4747

Website: www.qff.org.au (follow the links from the *Hot issues* page)

Email: qfarmers@qff.org.au

Maroochydore Centacare Catholic Family and Community Services

A counselling service that aims to assist any individual or family, irrespective of social, religious or financial background:

- to help prevent problems occurring within families which could eventually result in crisis
- to assist families who are undergoing conflict, crisis or at risk of breakdown
- to provide educational programs and counselling to address the above.

No referral is necessary.

Phone: Centacare on (07) 5430 9300 and ask for the appointments secretary

Lifeline—Sunshine Coast

Provides 24-hour telephone counselling that offers immediate, anonymous help to callers. Lifeline aims to assist children, young people and adults throughout the Sunshine Coast and Cooloola Region in the following services:

- individuals, couples and families with relationship difficulties
- people who are suffering trauma, victims of disasters
- families in conflict or suffering abuse
- people with emotional or mental health problems
- children suffering trauma, neglect or abuse.

Phone: Kandanga office on (07) 5484 3299 for appointments or Lifeline 24-hour counselling service on 13 11 14

dvconnect—women’s domestic violence hotline

Provides a 24-hour referrals service to a range of local support services, including, but not limited to, regional domestic violence services and family support services.

Phone: 1800 811 811 (freecall)

Mensline Queensland

Provides advice on relationships, health, family and domestic violence. The service is available 9 am to 12 midnight, seven days a week.

Phone: 1800 600 636 (freecall)

Look in your local *White pages* for contact details for other services listed below:

- Bush Connection supports rural families facing financial difficulties including planning, counselling, referrals to other services. Find out more at www.ozcare.org.au/bush_connection.asp
- medical doctors
- clergy
- the local community health and hospital social worker
- your local community or neighborhood centre
- Relationships Australia
- Women’s Infolink
- Parentline
- Kids Help Line.

While every care has been taken in preparing this guide on services, the State of Queensland accepts no responsibility for decisions or actions taken as a result of any data, information, statement or advice, expressed or implied, contained in this information handout. Should a program or contact number no longer exist or remain relevant, please contact the main call centre of the organisation that provides this service for alternative advice.

