

GRASS

Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions



Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions (GRASS) program factsheet

What is the GRASS program?

The Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions (GRASS) program has been designed to support graziers in the Burdekin, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary regions.

The GRASS program supports graziers with areas of poor (C) or degraded (D) land condition to develop and implement a tailor-made action plan for land management. The action plan will provide graziers with the latest tools and information to identify, improve and maintain their land condition with a specific focus to improve ground cover and reduce soil loss from their farm.

Graziers who have areas of C and D land condition can apply to participate in GRASS and may be eligible to apply for incentive funding for works identified in their action plan for land management. Examples of work that may be eligible include small-to-medium scale gully remediation and riparian and hillslope fencing.

Support will be provided for graziers to understand their obligations and access support to meet the Reef regulations and have the opportunity to be acknowledged as low priority for compliance. Producers who provide consent to be acknowledged under the GRASS program will be considered a lower priority for compliance inspections up to June 2022.

This program aims to support graziers to improve their productivity while helping protect the Reef by reducing soil loss from properties and supporting jobs and services in the cattle grazing sector.

Who can access the program?

The GRASS program is accessible to all graziers in the Burdekin, Fitzroy and Burnett-Mary regions who have areas of land in poor (C) or degraded (D) condition.

How long will the program run for?

The program will run until June 2022.

Who is delivering the program and what stakeholders are involved?

The GRASS program is funded through the Queensland Government's Reef Water Quality Program and delivered by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Burnett Mary Regional Group, Fitzroy Basin Association and NQ Dry Tropics.

Extension officers from these groups provide support and information to participants in each region.

How much funding will go to participants?

The DAF and regional Natural Resource Management (NRM) groups will work with landholders to develop tailor-made action plans for land management. The cost of developing each plan will depend on the size and condition of participating properties and this will be covered through the GRASS program. This allocation covers the time, mapping information, and tools and extension services required to develop each property specific plan.

In addition, \$1.78 million of financial incentives for on-farm improvements will be offered to eligible participating graziers through the program. The amount of funding that is available to graziers is dependent on the scale of the project and is assessed based on private/public benefit.

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Examples of work that may be eligible for incentives funding include small-to-medium scale gully remediation and riparian and hillslope fencing.

Is GRASS an acknowledged practice change project under the Reef protection regulations?

The GRASS program is an acknowledged practice change project.

Graziers who provided consent to be acknowledged under the GRASS program will be considered a lower priority for compliance inspections up to June 2022.

This is to acknowledge that participating GRASS landholders are proactively undertaking efforts to reduce nutrient or sediment runoff from their properties and contribute to improved water quality for the Great Barrier Reef.

As part of the acknowledgement process, participating graziers will be asked to provide consent for their name, property address, a description of the land on which the activity occurs, Australian Business Number (ABN)/Australian Company Number (ACN), contact information and term of involvement in the project to be shared with the Department of Environment and Science. Provision of this information is optional and is not a requirement to participate in the GRASS program.

What information about graziers will the GRASS program collect and manage?

The program will collect and report information about land management practice change to the Paddock to Reef Integrated Monitoring, Modelling and Reporting Program (P2R). The information includes GIS polygons of where practice change has occurred and responses to the P2R practice adoption questions.

Spatial data is aggregated and de-identified (no names, address, or contact details) and is reported across the program. This allows the Department of Environment and Science to report on the outcomes of the GRASS program and for the grazing community to be acknowledged for their improvements to land managed within catchments of the Great Barrier Reef.

This anonymous aggregated information assists the program and broader industry to continually improve services delivered to graziers and better tailor funding programs to producer needs.

How can graziers apply to participate in the GRASS program?

Graziers in the Burdekin, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary regions can apply to participate in the GRASS program by calling DAF on 13 25 23 or by contacting their local participating Natural Resource Management (NRM) group or extension officer.

Graziers are also encouraged to contact these groups to explore other opportunities for improving their land condition and pasture cover to enhance production, provide economic benefits and environmental outcomes.

Where can I find more information about the regulations?

The Reef protection regulations started on 1 December 2019 and are being rolled out over three years in different regions based on improved water quality management priorities.

More information, including a Grazing Guide that explains the practice standards and how to comply with them is available at www.qld.gov.au/ReefRegulations. You can also request an information pack that includes the guidelines and relevant information.