

Woolworths Fresh Food Future Program

Grants for farming groups and organisations to undertake projects to improve water and nutrient management



Grant summary

Grants of up to \$15,000 (excluding GST) are now available to Australian farmers in the Woolworths Fresh Food Future Open Grants. A total of \$150,000 (excluding GST) is available to support projects that will improve water use, nutrient management and the carbon footprint of farming.

The Woolworths Fresh Food Future Open Grants Program is a collaboration between Landcare Australia and Woolworths to develop, improve and encourage sustainable farming practices. We are seeking applications from farming groups and organisations, as well as landcare groups who wish to undertake sustainable farming projects in any primary production industry.

Who can apply?

All farming groups or organisations are invited to apply.

Please note: There is no requirement for applicants to be Landcare groups to receive Woolworths Fresh Food Future Open Grants. Non Landcare farming groups are encouraged to apply and there is no expectation that they will become a Landcare group as a result of a successfully funded application. If you would like support from your local Landcare group, please check www.landcareonline.com.au for contact details.

We request that all groups and organisations ensure that they have registered the details of their group on the National Landcare Directory ([National Landcare Directory Registration](#))

Available funding

A total of \$150,000 (excluding GST) is available for projects. Individual projects can receive a grant of up to \$15,000 (excluding GST).

What can the funding support?

Woolworths and Landcare Australia formally consulted a wide range of stakeholders in 2010 to prioritise investments within the Fresh Food Future program, including the areas on which to focus support related to on-farm practices and the supply chain for fresh produce. The recommendations endorsed projects that validate and support adoption of technology or practices that will improve:

- > Water use efficiency; and/or
- > Nutrient management; and/or
- > Greenhouse gas emissions and the carbon footprint.

The open grants will support farming groups and organisations to develop or implement innovations to improve their irrigation water use efficiency and nutrient management, and overall farming productivity. It is anticipated that the projects may also result in a reduction in Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improved carbon footprints.

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Greater water use efficiency has been a significant driver of productivity growth, which has become increasingly important during recent years with variable rainfall and fluctuating availability of irrigation water. In dryland areas, increases in water use efficiency emerge from better understanding of interactions between fallow management, soil characteristics, crop water demand, crop protection, nutrition and product quality. In irrigated production systems, closely matching irrigation capacity and applications to variation in soil water status and crop water use can improve the overall efficiency of irrigation and the crop water use index.

A carefully targeted and balanced nutrient management program has also become increasingly important for sustainable farming systems. Volatility in fertiliser prices, increasing interest in recycled waste and composted materials, soil acidification, concerns about off-site impacts of nutrients, and the implications for greenhouse gas emissions from nitrogenous fertilisers have focussed interest on improved nutrient budgeting and nutrient use efficiency. Implicit in improved nutrient management is understanding nutrient interactions with crop water use and the impacts on produce yield and quality.

The aim of the program is to assist farmers develop, evaluate, and implement farming practices or technology that improve the sustainability of farming systems, with the key emphasis on water use efficiency and nutrient management. Ideally, the projects will generate valuable outcomes for the farm businesses undertaking the projects. Hopefully, the projects will also provide results of interest and benefit to other farmers. Innovative projects that will share information about successful strategies for improved water use efficiency and nutrient management are strongly recommended.

Where can you have a project?

Anywhere in Australia.

How do you apply

Applicants must submit an application to Landcare Australia. The application form is available for download from the Landcare Australia website (www.landcareonline.com.au). Each application will be assessed objectively.

For further information please go to the Landcare Australia website (www.landcareonline.com.au)

Please direct any queries regarding the grants or proposed projects to Dr. Shane Norrish on 02 9412 3083.

When do applications close?

Monday, 2 July 2012 is the closing date for applications.

When can you expect to start?

Landcare Australia generally advises applicants of the outcome of their application approximately four weeks after the closing date of a funding round. Funding generally occurs approximately 2 weeks after notification.

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If successful, you must:

- > Conduct the project according to the plan and budget for which the funding was approved and received,
- > Provide a final report within one month of project completion that clearly describes the outcomes of the project and how they have assisted to increase productivity, and result in a reduction in the carbon footprint.
- > Permit Landcare Australia and/or Woolworths to use your project final report and photos for promotional purposes, including, but not limited to publications and media relations activities.
- > If requested, agree to participate in a presentation to Woolworths staff describing the project, its progress and results. Any travel expenses and related costs will be covered by additional funds to those requested in the project application.

Project Eligibility and Assessment Criteria

Australian farmers are continuing to develop and adopt innovative techniques, which contribute to more sustainable production and competitiveness of our primary industries.

The Woolworths Fresh Food Future Open Grants provide up to \$15,000 (excluding GST) for farming groups and organisations to develop and validate innovations to improve the sustainability of farming systems and more sustainable food supply. The funding is available on a general competitive basis, with projects funded on merit.

The projects should develop or support the adoption of improved farming practices, production techniques, technology or products that will:

- > Improve the water use efficiency of farming, AND/OR
- > Improve the nutrient management and nutrient use efficiency of farming systems

It is anticipated that successful projects will also reduce the agricultural carbon footprint.

The projects should also provide results of interest and benefit to other farmers. Innovative ideas that will share information about successful strategies to improve farming practices are most welcome.

Essential Criteria

- > The project must contribute to developing or validating farming practices or technology to improve:
 - o water use efficiency in dryland or irrigated farming systems and/or
 - o nutrient management in dryland or irrigated farming systems,
- > The application should also describe how a successful project will result in a reduced carbon footprint,
- > The farming practices or technology must have a sound technical basis,

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- > There must be adequate technical expertise to support the project and the project must be feasible, with a strong probability of success,
- > The activities being undertaken in the project must be directly related to improving water use efficiency and/or nutrient management,
- > The budgeted items must be directly related to the activities undertaken in the project,
- > Strong engagement with farming landholders.

Projects should:

- > Be completed within 12-18 months,
- > Demonstrate some in-kind or cash contribution from the applicant or collaborating organisation,
- > Produce a publication or factsheet(s) to promote the outcomes of the project for other farmers,
- > Promote the project funding on their website and in local media, and forward copies of the coverage to Landcare Australia.
- > Invite representatives from Woolworths and/or Landcare Australia to relevant field days and other events that share information related to the project.

All projects may:

- > Develop decision tools for farmers to determine best management options in regard to irrigation or nutrient management,
- > Help farmers measure water use or nutrient requirements and calculate water or nutrient use efficiency,
- > Improve soil fertility and productive capacity,
- > Have multiple stakeholder and community involvement.