



Sustainable farming

reef beat
river to reef

Agriculture is a major industry in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment with about 80 per cent of the land adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park supporting agricultural production.

Agriculture in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment contributes more than \$2.4 billion to the Australian economy each year and provides thousands of jobs and supports many regional communities.

However, some agricultural activities may contribute to declining water quality in the Great Barrier Reef.

Therefore, farmers, land owners and the agricultural industry are working together with governments and the community to implement practices, such as the Farm Management Systems program, on their land to help care for the environment.

DOING YOUR BIT TO LOOK AFTER IT!

Some of the actions people are taking to care for their land, nearby waterways and the Great Barrier Reef include:

- Revegetating and rehabilitating wetlands to help filter out excess nutrients and sediments before they enter local waterways and the Great Barrier Reef.

- Planting vegetation and conserving native plants to help minimise the potential for run-off.

- Preserving areas for wildlife habitat to avoid displacing native animals.

- Using farming techniques such as minimum till to minimise soil erosion and improve soil fertility

- Implementing stock management to prevent overgrazing, particularly in areas adjacent to waterways.

- Rotating crops by growing different types of crops in a field each year to help the control of pests and soil diseases and to help minimise the need for chemicals.

- Building contour banks to help prevent soil erosion and conserve water. The contour banks are built along a slope and they help to catch water thus minimising erosion.

- Green cane trash blanketing where the leaves and tops of cane stalks are left as a blanket on top of the soil after harvesting and so minimise soil erosion.

- Building natural drain systems such as shallow swale drains and grassed retention basins. These systems slow water flows to allow for sediment or nutrients in the water to settle out and also prevent erosion of drain beds and banks.

For more information on sustainable farming and the agricultural industry Farm Management Systems program, visit the Queensland Farmers Federation website: www.qff.org.au



Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority



Caution: Farming activities must be carefully monitored so they don't endanger the reef.