



21 AUG 2019

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Since the settlement of the state of Queensland, agriculture has been a way of life and a vital part of the economy. As of the 'Queensland Agricultural Snapshot 2018' there are now approximately 24 200 farm businesses across the state with agricultural industries accounting for over 3.6% of the state economy (Furner, 2018). Growth in total agricultural volumes have accelerated by 1.1% per year since 2006–07, after little change in the previous decade. Prices received by producers have also kept up with overall price movements. However, within the agricultural sector, there has been a significant shift in the composition of output. Producers have moved away from some traditional commodities such as wool, dairy, sugar and wheat, and towards poultry products, fruit, cotton and beef cattle. These trends underline the flexibility and awareness of market in Queensland's agriculture and food sector.

These new trends have been well adapted by the Glasshouse region with several small businesses pairing with farmers to produce new products and niche markets. *Hum Honey* and *Green Valley Agriculture* are a primary example of the innovation of a niche market. *Hum Honey's* Cold Fusion Australian Finger lime honey combines the pure raw honey produced by *Hum Honey* and the Fingerlime Pearls produced by *Green Valley Agriculture*. Showcasing this product along with many others at Fine Food Melbourne, *Hum Honey* received the award for "Best New Product for the Australian Made Category, 2018". Following this *Hum Honey* was named 'Regional Food Champion Other Product Category' at the Sydney Royal Fine Food Show.

Green Valley Agriculture also paired with another small Sunshine Coast business, *Chocolate Country*, showcasing their product at Fine Food Melbourne. *Green Valley's* finger limes will be showcased in the current season of MasterChef as well as being exported as a fresh fruit product across the world, including Italy, Singapore and Spain; creating a prestigious reputation for small businesses and farms of Glasshouse region amongst the state, country and world.

Maleny Black Angus Beef is another farm which has adapted to the change in the agricultural market. Not only is *Maleny Black Angus Beef* recognised for its prime Australian meat, it is also recognised for its innovation within a niche market, producing beef that is grass fed and antibiotic and growth hormone free. This innovation has not only followed market trends in terms of agriculture, but has also followed social trends; making it a highly reputable product amongst the greater agricultural and consumer society. Further enhancing the reputation of agriculture in the Glasshouse region.

This reputation is essential for the seat of Glasshouse as it creates opportunities for the region's future. Being recognised for high quality products across the globe, increases the demand for the regions produce as well as bridging the gap between small businesses and big businesses; clearly seen in the case of Green Valley Agriculture and MasterChef. Bridging the gap between small businesses and large companies can prove to be a vital strategy for business acceleration and growth. For many small organisations, mutually beneficial partnerships are an opportunity to access larger deals, accelerate market penetration and access global distribution and marketing channels; aspects which are vital for the sustainability of the Glasshouse region economy. These partnerships which are being built by small businesses and farms are not only highly valuable to the seat of Glasshouse but also the state of Queensland. The value of small businesses and farms can also be seen through the job opportunities which they provide. 96% of all Australia's businesses are small businesses, employing over 4.5 million people and producing over \$330 billion of the nation's economic output per year (The State of Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 1997-2019). Queensland small businesses contribute around \$113 billion to Australia's economy and employ around 44 per cent of the private sector workforce. The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) release of counts of Australian businesses show small business is growing in Queensland; with more than 438,000 across the state. "This latest data highlights the significant role small business plays in our State's economy," States Ms Fentiman, The Minister for Employment and Small Business. The top 5 small business sectors are as follows:

- Construction
- Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- Financial and Insurance Services

As seen in **Figure 1.0** provided by the Parliament of Australia, it can be seen that the trend of people working within the agriculture, forestry and farming sector is rapidly increasing compared to almost all other industries. The population is increasingly finding work in farming as there are a variety of jobs and careers suitable for a variety of people. According to the Australian Government's Job Outlook, future growth of crop farmers is predicted to be stable to moderate with low unemployment; providing maintainable jobs and careers for the country, state and region.

Figure 1.0

Industry/division of employment ^(a)	Employed people					Change in employed Nov-16 to Nov-17 (%)
	Nov-16 ('000)	Feb-17 ('000)	May-17 ('000)	Aug-17 ('000)	Nov-17 ('000)	
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	294.6	294.8	306.6	317.4	324.5	10.1
Mining	223.4	224.2	221.0	217.7	216.5	-3.1
Manufacturing	927.1	924.0	908.5	893.8	885.5	-4.5
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	130.1	128.0	126.1	121.1	120.7	5.0
Construction	1,075.6	1,095.1	1,131.5	1,146.9	1,167.2	8.5
Wholesale Trade	374.8	383.5	386.8	383.9	376.7	-0.5
Retail Trade	1,226.9	1,229.9	1,245.7	1,266.0	1,266.9	4.9
Accommodation and Food Services	855.7	866.2	879.9	890.6	896.1	4.7
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	656.6	611.7	623.5	636.3	646.8	6.6
Information Media and Telecommunications	210.3	213.9	215.0	218.4	218.0	2.2
Financial and Insurance Services	435.8	426.3	424.3	428.4	420.7	-3.5
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	218.2	216.3	215.0	216.2	218.7	0.2
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1,031.0	1,028.0	1,034.4	1,030.0	1,033.0	0.2
Administrative and Support Services	433.2	422.7	409.5	403.4	401.2	-7.4
Public Administration and Safety	789.0	794.9	783.7	785.1	740.5	-6.1
Education and Training	971.0	979.5	990.2	1,006.1	1,024.3	5.5
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,510.2	1,523.2	1,520.8	1,527.6	1,563.9	8.0
Arts and Recreation Services	215.2	214.0	223.7	237.1	248.3	15.4
Other Services	430.0	482.3	494.4	510.6	524.5	9.3
Total employed	12,025.5	12,096.8	12,207.4	12,321.2	12,420.6	3.3

Quarterly trend estimates. Based on a person's main job (where more than one job was held).

Data regarding businesses on the Sunshine Coast (including the Glasshouse Region) displays the percentage of employing businesses. This can be seen in **Figure 2.0**. When analyzing the data, it can be seen that the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry is again relatively high compared to other industries within the region. Highlighting the significance of the relationship between farms and employment rates; not only in Queensland, but also the Glasshouse region.

Figure 2.0

Registered businesses by industry

Sunshine Coast - Registered employing businesses

2018

Industry	Number	%	Queensland
Construction	2,776	22.8	18.7
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	1,512	12.4	12.7
Retail Trade	1,065	8.7	8.4
Accommodation and Food Services	969	8.0	7.6
Health Care and Social Assistance	876	7.2	7.3
Other Services	741	6.1	6.6
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	361	3.0	5.6
Manufacturing	350	2.9	3.3
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	659	5.4	5.0
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	401	3.3	4.7
Administrative and Support Services	525	4.3	4.7
Wholesale Trade	444	3.6	4.1
Finance and Insurance Services	474	3.9	3.5
Education and Training	197	1.6	1.7
Arts and Recreation Services	158	1.3	1.2
Information Media and Telecommunications	81	0.7	0.7
Industry not classified	82	0.7	0.5
Mining	31	0.3	0.5
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	54	0.4	0.4
Public Administration and Safety	40	0.3	0.4
Total businesses	12,174	100.0	100.0

Employing businesses of Sunshine Coast in 2018

The value of farming and small businesses is unmistakably evident in many aspects which have and will assist in the growth and sustainability of the Glasshouse region along with the state of Queensland; ensuring a positive future for the immediate and greater community.