

Jim and Rita Carey, Mutchilba

Growcom's Farm Business Resilience Program (FBRP) is assisting horticultural growers to identify gaps in their current farm management systems and develop plans that support growth and aid in mitigating the impacts of future droughts.

Using Growcom's best management practice platform, Hort360 growers can easily undertake a gap-analysis and develop their Resilient Plan using the inbuilt template. Financial assistance is also available through QRIDA.



Rita and Jim Carey have recently completed a Farm Business Resilience Plan with the assistance of Growcom's Resilience Manager Karen George. Rita and Jim grow lychees on 15 ha of land near Mutchilba, North Queensland.

"As a small family run business, we are mindful of the need to identify every opportunity to find efficiencies and productivity in the growing process, and savings in our input costs," Rita said.

Rita and Jim first met Karen at a NQ Gulf Savannah-hosted drought resilience workshop. Rita spoke with Karen about on-farm challenges that were affecting their farm business including persistent pig incursions which were disturbing irrigation infrastructure, mulch and ripping out young trees. These incursions were having a ripple effect across the entire farm business.

As part of a follow up appointment Rita completed a Farm Business Resilience Plan to help her effectively review these issues and identify planning considerations.

Rita found the resources in Hort360 user friendly and the support and advice she was provided by Growcom excellent and invaluable.

"Karen helped me get on the right wavelength to understand what the plan was all about and what information I needed to include. Once I was on that wavelength developing the plan was easy," she said.

With a completed Farm Business Resilience Plan Rita has been able to effectively review the farm business and identify the projects that will provide the greatest benefit. While these projects are dependent on finances, seeing how different parts of the business effect each other will help Rita prioritise which projects will generate the best outcomes for the farm as finances become available.

Farm Business Resilience Program

“As growers we had all of this information in our heads but having it on paper in front of us is so helpful when making decisions and prioritising actions,” she said.

“A good business plan is just as important to the success of your farm as knowing what is needed to grow your best crop.”

The ongoing pig incursions had the effect of ‘watering with a leaky bucket’. The Careys were continually repairing damage caused by the pigs and were not improving their situation. By prioritising the fence, the Careys are now able to make further developments to their farm and remain profitable and resilient in the face of drought.

Rita explained, “I will review the plan annually to help with planning ahead and budgeting.”



“Going ahead and completing projects will always be dependent on finances and how this lines up with each season’s outcomes but having the plan will let me be smart with my decision what will be best for our farm business.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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