

Summary of Submissions to Competitiveness of Tasmanian Agriculture for 2050 White Paper

Note that the following is a high-level, brief summary of public submissions and does not cover every topic raised. Where relevant, it also includes feedback provided through verbal consultations.

This list does not include submissions from Tasmanian Government agencies.

A complete list of public submissions is provided below, along with a list of abbreviations. If you wish to view a submission, please contact agrigrowth@dpiw.tas.gov.au.

Focus Areas

Research and Innovation 	
Extension and adoption	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TFGA, DairyTas, TAPG, PGT, TASSIC, Cradle Coast NRM, NRM South, NRM North and others noted the need for better private and public extension services to encourage rapid, early adoption of existing best-practice farming approaches and technology.• In particular, extension in the pasture area was cited by some submissions (e.g. TAPG - pasture establishment and management; Cradle Coast NRM - nutrient testing).• NRM South and North both mentioned extension programs that link industry and community.• Tony McCall advocated the use of demonstration sites to demonstrate benefits of training and new technology.
New crops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TIA noted past successes with adoption of new crops - future potential in Chinese Herbs and Kunzea Oil.
Pollination research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TIA and the AFPA both noted the potential for pollination research in Tasmania, including the use of bumblebees.
Government funding of R&D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• AFPA called for the R&D tax incentive to be continued.• TIA discussed the role of government in research funding, also noting the need for more research in the North of the state.

Smarter Regulation



Spray regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania called for improvements to existing regulations to provide greater protection for wine producers exposed to and impacted by nearby spray practices. • PGT mentioned creeping regulation on buffer zones and spraying. • Cradle Coast NRM noted that alternatives are needed in case certain pesticides are taken off shelves. • [Confidential] said that Victoria has smart regulations on ag-vet chemicals. • TAPG suggests that mutual recognition of agrochemical regulation between Australia and NZ is needed.
Electricity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TFGA identified National Meter Identifiers as an opportunity for farmers to reduce energy costs; noted issues with energy efficiency and electricity costs. • FGT noted that there are opportunities for increasing uptake of on-farm renewable energy generation through aggregated production and consumption models. • FGT asks why the feed-in tariff is so low. "Electricity cost is the number one issue" - need to consider incentives for investment or an energy subsidy. • RBT noted concern about cost of power poles on land and the cost of replacement. They also queried the efficient use of electricity subsidies, package energy requirements to reduce costs, and competitive tendering for energy requirements.
Licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania calls for harmonised liquor licensing, noting that the Liquor Licensing Act duplicates collection of wholesales sales data.
TFES/Freight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania seeks improvements to criteria and claiming of TFES (noting significant winemaking import costs such as empty bottles). • FGT called for exemption for empty apple crates, stating that the TFES should be indexed; also that it would be good to have an international service from Hobart Airport and another boat on Hobart to Devonport run. Industry needs more capacity. • TFGA queried the National Heavy Vehicle Registration - was reg impact assessment done? It is a high risk area because farmers become part of the chain of responsibility, with knock on impacts to small freight companies and farmers to purchase scales.
Permit processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DairyTas noted improvements in timeliness of processing applications relating to farm infrastructure. • TFGA noted the need to streamline things like audits and applications to dig.
Award rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania noted that 'from a national perspective, key regulation impacting on competitiveness includes industrial relations and the Wine Industry Award 2010 and wine taxation.'
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania noted that consistency is needed across councils' analysis to ensure vineyards are not considered discretionary development. • FGT, PGT, AFPA, Victoria Wilkinson and others raised concerns about Right to Farm issues e.g. construction of accommodation and crop protection structures. • RBT discussed Land Titles process - is there a simplified land title process for amalgamation of different titles?
Definitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TFGA called for the definition of primary producer to be harmonised.
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Anonymous submission noted the need to enforce regulations around water and game management.
Streamlining and simplification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many submissions identified, in general terms, scope for greater harmonisation of regulation, noting impacts on small businesses. An Anonymous submission asked that as much regulatory interaction as possible be available online using pre-populated forms requiring minimal typing. • [Confidential] suggests that state may be run more effectively under three regional councils.

Investing in People



Attracting workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania notes that they have been successful in attracting a young, highly educated and skilled workforce. • Wine Tasmania notes opportunities to improve wine service/cellar door/restaurant/wine bar staff training through existing hospitality and tourism training programs. • FGT, Optimum Standard, TWIA and [Confidential] noted the need for services in regional areas and accommodation for seasonal workers. AFPA and PET have noted that securing labour is a risk.
Business capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania notes the need for training to improve business profitability. • TFGA, TAPG, TWIA and PGT noted the need to encourage business training, financial literacy and/or succession planning. • RBT discussed their role in this area.
Promoting agricultural careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGT expressed a view that elements of the TAEF need improvement and that there needs to be agricultural training throughout the school system that is aligned with industry needs. • TFGA, AFPA, Cradle Coast NRM and TAPG said there need to be clear pathways to a career in agriculture/greater promotion. TFGA suggested basic business principles, sustainable farming, renewable energy and climate change be taught in classrooms. • AFPA suggested funding for school farm visits. • RBT discussed alternative pathways to agricultural careers outside of the traditional inheritance of capital-heavy land ownership models. • TIA discussed need for work integrated learning for course offerings at TIA and greater links with DoE/TasTAFE/high schools.
Ongoing training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAPG, TIA AFPA, Arbre and TFGA said there needs to be greater promotion and incentivisation of training opportunities available, with options for flexible delivery. • TFGA, TAPG and TWIA commented on emerging skill gaps, especially in digital areas - how are these being addressed? What skill forecasting is being carried out? • TIA particularly noted a shortfall in skills in centre pivot technologies. • [Confidential] commented that the SERDA trade training centre and SEE-hub need to be more widely known.
Workplace safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TFGA called for mandatory reporting of previous injuries for prospective employees, RBT and PET noted high cost and risk of workers' compensation.
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFPA, TWIA, RANT and Eat Well Tasmania noted the health and economic benefits of greater local consumption of fruit and veg and local food procurement roadblocks and opportunities to promote health of Tasmanians.

Managing Risk and Biosecurity



Water security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania notes opportunities to explore smarter irrigation initiatives - decoupling from domestic restrictions to ensure surety of supply. • TFGA also noted that water is lacking at key times.
Biosecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania notes that <i>Phylloxera</i> is the greatest threat facing Tasmanian vineyards. • FGT suggest that Authorised Officers could be permitted to conduct biosecurity operations. • TFGA raised possibility of cruise ship/tourist entry fee to fund biosecurity measures. • TIA and many others mentioned general importance of maintaining biosecurity in general terms.
Bushfires and smoke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine Tasmania has proposed the establishment of an emergency fund to subsidise scientific grape testing by vineyards for smoke taint. • Wine Tasmania has proposed an extension to the EPA's BLANKET air monitoring network in wine growing areas to monitor smoke. • Wine Tasmania noted agreement between Wine Tas and fire agencies (TFS/STT, PWS) regarding fuel reduction burns.
Supply chain risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DairyTas noted risk presented by freight costs and reliability, and industrial action. • FGT noted cool chain risks. • AFPA, RBT, TIA and the NRMs noted benefits of blockchain and other traceability technology for food safety, traceability, logistics, biosecurity and brand damage reasons.
Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGT noted APAL Discretionary Mutual Fund feasibility study.
Pests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TFGA says government must play its role in controlling pests, wildlife and fire on public land. • NRM North noted problems with feral cats and containment of cats to reduce spread of disease to livestock/impacts on wildlife.
Activists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TFGA want to work with government to protect farmers from activists entering their properties without permission.
Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TFGA, TAPG, Cradle Coast NRM, NRM South, NRM North, Tony McCall and [Confidential] called for increased focus on whole-farm planning for drought preparedness, sustainability, adaptation, productivity rather than reactive responses to extreme weather events etc. • TFGA suggested government could encourage on-farm diversification on farms to minimise risk.
Market diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFPA, TIA and Tony McCall noted a need for greater market diversity.
Pollination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFPA noted that securing pollination is a major risk to fruit growers.

Harnessing Natural Capital



Sustainable farming

- **Wine Tasmania** is currently implementing the Vinø program, supported through SIPP.
- **Dairy Tas** noted need for irrigation support programs to ensure that farmers get return on investment.
- **DairyTas** also noted need for greater farmer awareness of environmental issues around irrigation and waterway management.
- **RANT** noted need for greater promotion of regenerative agriculture practices, land health, reduced inputs, restoration of land, long-term planning. They expressed views to the effect that government could provide greater recognition of the importance of this movement.
- **Cradle Coast NRM and NRM South** noted need to keep livestock out of waterways.
- **TIA** discussed greater use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

Irrigation

- **FGT** raised the need for investigation into development of a scheme in the Mountain/Huon River system.
- **TFGA, TIA, RANT, DairyTas Cradle Coast NRM, NRM South and NRM North** noted the need for education, monitoring and mapping around salinity and other irrigation issues that come with intensification.
- **PGT** asked whether a cheaper tariff could apply to daytime irrigation due to downy mildew risk?
- **Cradle Coast NRM** noted a need for social license around irrigation expansion while **NRM South** noted low uptake of irrigation schemes.
- **[Confidential]** suggested provision for farm irrigation in Glamorgan dam/pipeline near Orford and **Tony McCall** noted a need for pumped hydro/Battery of Nation projects to incorporate a water security/irrigation element as well as electricity generation.
- **TIA** noted that there is a trend where irrigation has shifted from climate risks to financial risks - there has been a trade-off.

Farm forestry

- **TAPG** suggested the need for a greater focus on farm forestry.
- **Arbre, NRM South and North** suggested the need for better articulation of the positive outcomes of private forest production on farms.

Capitalising on our Brand



Protecting the Tasmanian Brand

- **DairyTas, TIA and FGT** both noted need for anti-counterfeiting measures/technology. **Brand Tasmania** advocated its Smart Trademark initiative to help protect the Tasmanian Brand.
- **[Confidential]** noted the need to sell the diversity of Tasmania's brand so that damage to one industry doesn't undermine the entire brand.
- **TIA** noted that the GMO moratorium limits the use of some crops that would provide production benefits.
- **TIA** also noted potential for sustainability certification and trust mark for the Tasmanian Brand.

Promoting the Tasmanian Brand

- **Wine Tasmania** commended the work of Brand Tasmania, noted need to increase demand for Tasmanian wine.
- **DairyTas, TIA, RBT, PET and PGT** both commented on the need to improve social license and meet society's expectations. **TWIA** noted the need to raise awareness of the public value of farming.
- **TIA** commented on importance of social license in areas such as water use, irrigation, animal welfare, chemicals etc.
- **RBT** discussed the need to equip industry to take advantage of the brand.
- **DairyTas** would like to be able to track what value is being obtained from the GMO moratorium.
- **TFGA** notes need to tell the "Tasmanian Story" better.
- **FGT** works with **Brand Tasmania** to develop provenance stories.
- **TWIA, TIA and FermentTasmania** commented on connection between agri-tourism and promotion of the Tasmanian Brand.
- **Tony McCall, TASSIC** and an **Anonymous** submission suggested the use of successful 'champions' to promote the Tasmanian Brand and best practice, including early adopters of technology.
- **Tony McCall** also suggested the use of Tasmanian appellations (i.e. Geographical Indicators) to capitalise on brand.
- **TIA** noted the role of SeedLab in this area.

Climate-Ready Agriculture



Climate change

- **[Confidential]** called for incentives to adopt energy/resource-saving practices rather than penalties or regulation.
- **NRM north** commented that climate change can be exacerbated by poor land management, weeds, pests and diseases, so there is the need to take an integrated planning approach.
- **Cradle Coast** noted problems with erosion caused by increasingly intense rainfall patterns.

Emerging Priorities

Circular Economy and Value-Adding



Adding value to waste

- **FGT, [Confidential], TIA, Tony McCall and Ferment Tasmania** provided examples of lower-grade fruit/veg being used as value-added products.
- **NRM North** noted need to move towards zero waste.
- **TAPG** also highlighted as important areas: the need to support bioenergy projects to dispose of waste; forestry residues and farm waste; how can inputs (such as fertiliser) be applied and used more efficiently.
- **AFPA** noted the need for utilising waste products to be economical before it will be widely taken up.
- **Arbre** said there needs to be a whole-of-community strategy to understand the concept of circular economy.
- **The Tasmanian Way** provided a substantial list of aspirations and targets (e.g. reducing waste, reusable packaging, local food consumption).
- **The Tasmanian Way** also raised the possibility of a waste levy, the need for research on waste quantification, a food strategy with a whole of food systems approach, market research etc.
- **Optimum Standard and Tony McCall** mentioned the need to develop Circular Economy State Policy and to Build Circular Economy Action Agenda for Tas.

Digital Transformation



Building digital skill capabilities

- **FGT** noted limited uptake of robotics in industry, but commented on great potential; called for Government support to develop an Industry Extension Centre of Excellence to improve digital technology adoption.
- **TASSIC** noted the potential use of spatial information technologies in precision farming, yield monitoring, controlled traffic farming etc.
- **TASSIC and DairyTas** both noted the need for farmers to be convinced of business case and return on investment when adopting new technology.
- **TIA** noted potential for sensors for monitoring in many areas.
- **TIA** also discussed examples of new technologies such as the Climate Cop app (Bayer), the Venture Catalyst Program (UC Davis), Start-up Factory (Iowa State Uni) etc. Suggested that TIA-managed research farms would be good place to develop products and services in the 'scale-up' phase.

Responsive to Change



Collaboration

- **AFPA, Tony McCall and TIA** spoke in general terms about need for greater collaboration across industry and government and between producers and processors.
- An **Anonymous** submission noted the need for an industry-driven body to drive implementation of the 2050 vision while **TIA** noted the need for longer-term thinking to achieve these goals.

Projects and Policies Act

- **Tony McCall** suggested use of State Projects and Policies Act 1993 to underpin competitiveness measures.

Other Areas

Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wine Tasmania commented on a need for increased government investment in wine and cellar door infrastructure.• TWIA commented on lack of high speed broadband.• FGT noted the potential benefits of a radiation facility.• TFGA supports Burnie to Hobart Freight Corridor Strategy. Others commented on the need for efficient transport systems within the state to interstate and international markets.• TIA noted the challenge of attracting capital for intensification and automation (particularly in dairy and horticulture).
Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FGT noted that payroll tax is an issue for larger producers and that stamp duty needs to be reviewed.• TFGA noted need to streamline the process for Primary Production Land Tax exemptions and any changes made to the parcel of land. If any changes occur now, then the exemption is taken off the parcel of land and the Primary Producer must complete the paperwork again to prove they are a Primary Producer. Not all farms make a profit each year. If the farm does not make a profit the Primary Production exemption is taken off the parcel of land. Policies need to be revised and streamlined to be reasonable.• TFGA also commented on the Aboriginal Heritage Act: The Act states that a survey must be undertaken when a landowner wants to construct or dig on their land. If a negative survey result is returned, then that result does not get recorded. If another application is made to construct or dig on the same piece of land, the farmer must pay again to have a survey conducted.• TFGA called to streamline on-farm audits so the same questions are not asked multiple times and the audits can be completed all at once to save time and money.
Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• TAPG commented on government's role in attracting investment in the state from larger businesses (c.f. berry industry). Suggested analysis of reasons for rapid growth/success of the berry industry to apply this to other industries.

Public Submissions

Anonymous
Arbre
Australian Fresh Produce Alliance
Confidential
Cradle Coast NRM
DairyTas
Eat Well Tasmania
FermenTasmania
Fruit Growers Tasmania
NRM North
NRM South
Optimum Standard
Poppy Growers Tasmania
Primary Employers Tasmania
Regenerative Agriculture Network Tasmania
Rural Business Tasmania
Tasmanian Agricultural Productivity Group
Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association
Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture
Tasmanian Spatial Information Council
Tasmanian Women In Agriculture
The Tasmanian Way
Tony McCall
Victoria Wilkinson
Wine Tasmania

Abbreviations

AFPA: Australian Fresh Produce Alliance
FGT: Fruit Growers Tasmania
NRM: Natural Resource Management
PET: Primary Employers Tasmania
PGT: Poppy Growers Tasmania
RANT: Regenerative Agriculture Network Tasmania
RBT: Rural Business Tasmania
TAPG: Tasmanian Agricultural Productivity Group
TASSIC: Tasmanian Spatial Information Council
TFGA: Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association
TIA: Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture
TWIA: Tasmanian Women in Agriculture