



The Future of Farming

Read the following text by Jock Laurie, National Farmers Federation President, and answer the questions.

The Australian Year of the Farmer, 2012, is shaping up to be a positive year for Australian farmers. With improved seasonal conditions across much of the country, favourable commodity prices and a forecast that the value of farm exports is expected to rise some six percent, this is a good time to be an Australian farmer. And the story of Australian agriculture reflects this.

The growth in the farm sector over the past 20 years has consistently outperformed other sectors, and was a key reason Australia avoided a recession during the global financial crisis. Agriculture has an enormous uptake of new technology, we have thousands of jobs available, we contribute \$32 billion in export income to the economy and we produce the clean, healthy, fresh food that families enjoy.

The prospects for agriculture are huge, with the need to feed, clothe and house a booming world population. World population growth will continue to expand to over nine billion by 2050, driving demand for both quality and quantity of food and fibre, as well as the availability of arable land and water.

In just eight years time, it is predicted that half of the world's population will be on Australia's northern doorstep. Four billion people across Asia, enjoying economic growth of around 10 percent per year, represent unparalleled opportunities for Australia's economy, especially its dynamic farm sector. Expanding Asian societies need food and fibre like never before and, due to their growing affluence, are demanding produce of the highest quality: a domain where Australian farmers, because of our clean and natural production systems, have a clear competitive advantage. We are entering the Asian century - and we are well placed to capitalise on this.

As the Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard, recently said in a video address to the NFF Members' Council: "We have the potential for a new golden era of Australian agriculture, given the rise of Asia."

The challenge for Australian agriculture and our farmers will, of course, be in meeting this booming world need for food and fibre through increasing production - at a time when we have less arable land, less water and less human resources.

Jock Laurie, NFF President

Question Time

1. What has improved to make this a good year for farmers?
2. What is the GFC?
3. What is meant by arable land?
4. What is the world population expected to be in eight years time?
5. Which market should Australian agriculture capitalise on?
6. Why will it be a challenge for Australian agriculture to meet world needs?
7. What does NFF stand for?



The Numbers Count

Our newspaper wants to publish the following statistics about the vital role agriculture plays in Australia but the numbers have been left out. Can you fill in the blanks using the numbers from the box below?

Check your answers by visiting this link: www.nff.or.au/farm-facts



- There are approximately _____ farm businesses in Australia, _____ percent of which are Australian owned.
- Each Australian farmer produces enough food to feed _____ people, _____ at home and _____ overseas.
- Australian farmers produce almost _____ per cent of Australia's daily domestic food supply.
- As of 2010-11, there were _____ people employed in agriculture. The complete agricultural supply chain, including the affiliated food and fibre industries, provide over _____ million jobs to the Australian economy.
- The gross value of Australian farm production in 2009-10 was _____ billion.
- Australian farmers export around _____ percent of what they grow and produce. Australia's farm exports earned the country _____ billion in 2010-11
- Australian farmers are environmental stewards, owning, managing and caring for _____ percent of Australia's land mass.

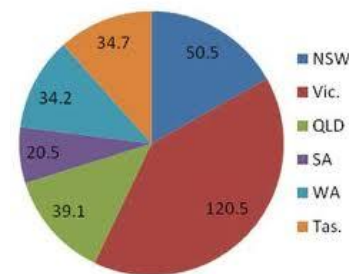
1.6	\$32.5	\$48.7	60	61	93	99
150	450	600	134,000	307,000		

Show us the Figures

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has gathered the following information. Use the figures to show the information in two different ways (eg bar graph, pie chart)

There are 134,148 farms in Australia – including those for whom farming is not their primary business.

State	No. of farms	Percentage of total
NSW	38,554	32.1
VIC	29,638	24.7
QLD	24,726	20.6
SA	12,464	10.4
WA	10,889	9.1
TAS	3,348	2.8
NT	437	0.4
ACT	56	0.04



- Australian Bureau of Statistics, Agricultural Commodities 2009-2010, Catalogue No. 7121.0

