



How service providers  
can improve farmers'

# Work Health and Safety?



Centre for Work  
Health and Safety



**UTS**

Institute for  
Sustainable  
Futures

# 01 The challenge: change

Farmers are facing rapid, often unexpected, need for change from many sources.



**Climate change:** droughts, floods, bushfires.



**International trade and relations:** supply chain disruptions, input costs.



**Biosecurity and health threats:** labour shortages, trade restrictions.



**Social changes:** consumer expectations around animal well-being, sustainable farming etc.



**New technology:** incorporating new ways of working on farms.





## 02 Anticipate or react

Some events are unexpected, but others can be anticipated. Service providers can provide support for farmers to anticipate and adapt.



**ANTICIPATE events:** climate change may lead to more intense and frequent floods and fires.



**REACT to unexpected events:** impacts on supply chains due to international events and disruptions.

# 03 Smarter stronger farms

To supply Australia's food and fibre needs, farmers are becoming increasingly entrepreneurial and have to anticipate and respond to climate change and other types of changes.



**Farmers benefit from the support of the agri-service sector,** including financial and legal advisors, agronomists, technology providers etc.





# 04 How are farmers adapting to change?



**Adopting new technology:** automation, remote monitoring, software support, protected cropping.



**Business integration:** direct marketing, on-farm value added processing.



**Renewable energy:** biogas, solar.



**Changing production systems:** regenerative or organic agriculture.



**Nature conservation:** revegetation, conservation.

# 05 Farmers' health and safety



Farming is one of the most dangerous occupation in Australia. The agriculture, forestry and fishing sector recorded the highest number of fatalities in 2022 when 23 individuals lost their lives.



Farmers are more likely than the general population to experience depression due to isolation and financial hardship.

**How are on-farm changes affecting farmers' work health and safety?**



# 06 Why is change good?

Farmers who embrace change report mental health and well-being benefits including:



**Feeling empowered** and in control of their future.



**Enhanced well-being** and connection to the land.



**More financially sustainable** and lower levels of stress.



**Less isolated** through strengthened connections with their family and community.





# 07 Proactive but considered

All farm practices involve risks to the work health and safety of farmers, farming families and workers, and changes can impact these risks.



**Some risks decline:** exposure to chemicals in regenerative farming.



**Some risks increase:** hazards associated with installation and maintenance of green energy technologies.



**Some are new to agriculture:** human interactions with autonomous vehicles.



**When providing professional advice and services, encourage farmers to think about the work health and safety implications of on-farm change**





# 08 More information

You can obtain more information about agricultural WHS from:



Centre for Work  
Health and Safety

[www.centreforwhs.nsw.gov.au](http://www.centreforwhs.nsw.gov.au)



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