

# FARM OFFICE PLUS *workbook*



# A NOTE FROM THE WORKSHOP CREATOR

Hello

Agriculture is a great industry. Farmers are always willing to share their experiences, wins and failures in the paddock. Because of this we all keep improving.

There are also excellent support services available; government and private experts, who are constantly researching and extending new information to producers.

In the farm office sphere, there is a bit of a gap. Why?

A couple of reasons:

- It's not really sexy to talk bank reconciliations in the pub or at parties
- Some things are a bit private and hard to discuss or show someone what is being done without giving the game away.
- All businesses are different, what suits yours may not suit mine

**You're not alone.** Thousands of us are struggling with the office side of our farm businesses, or just want it to be easier and quicker. If you wanted to do admin, you probably would've chosen a different career. We all want to be somewhere else. More efficiency in the office means more time in the paddock, in the garden and with our friends and family.

We are fortunate to have industry specialists contribute to this workbook, sharing their expertise and knowledge. I encourage you to make contact with them if you wish to expand your understanding of any particular area.

Completing this course and using this workbook will give you some great information and ideas to improve your own practices and give you more time doing what you love. If you have your own tips or tricks I would love to hear them!

Carmen Quade



# MODULE ONE

*workbook*

**What we must do, what we should do and  
what we need to stop doing**



# MUST DO, SHOULD DO, STOP DOING

To begin, we must begin!

In this Module I really want everyone to do an audit of your current office tasks. Why? there are a few reasons.

Before we make a start on improving our systems we need to assess what has to be done. Any change is going to require some time, effort and perhaps expense. We need to identify what does need to be done, or what we could do a little differently or not at all. For those starting out, having a clear picture of what is essential is also important.

We also address the issue of the value of our time in our own farm business.

In our Farm Office Survey, over half the participants identified that they would rather be in the paddock, spending time with friends family or having fun than doing office work. I can relate to this!

However, great office management is one of those things that can make a huge difference to your farm business success. It is important to identifying how valuable it is as this will help you as we work through the future components of this course.

It will be especially important when you are called to put in some time and effort, and perhaps some cash into making some productive changes.

So let's get started!



# THE VALUE OF **YOUR** WORK

LOVE IT OR LOATH IT - FARM ADMIN IS IMPORTANT

TASK	HOURS	VALUE	SUBTOTAL



# FARM ADMIN SCHEDULE

WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO AND WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR DOING IT

- Using the Farm Admin Schedule take a black texta, a couple of highlighters and a pen.
- Black out all the things you don't need to do eg. no staff, take out payroll, no cropping, take this out.
- Highlight what you are currently doing.
- Highlight the responsibilities of others in the business or those outside of the business, perhaps in another colour.
- Highlight things that need to be done that are not being done.
- Cross check any dates against the requirements of your business.
- Write in any other tasks unique to you or your farm business.

*We will use this audit again later in the course to establish our systems and set tasks. Set it aside and as you think of anything to add or take away, do it.*

*Just document  
how things are  
at the moment,  
not how you  
want them be*





# AS REQUIRED TASKS

NO SET SCHEDULE - TRIGGERED BY AN ACTIVITY

## As Required Tasks

## Person Responsible

### Invoices - Money to be paid

Chase up errors in invoices	
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### Cash and Finance

Government loan applications	
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Review grants on offer	
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Apply or arrange applications	
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### Payroll and employees

Advertise for casual staff	
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Employee inductions	
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Workers comp claims	
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Employment declarations	
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### Insurance

General insurance - requote every 3 years	
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Make insurance claims as needed	
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### Livestock

National Vendor Declaration on Stock Movements	
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Wool paperwork following shearing	
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### Cropping

Record grain contracts	
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### Machinery

Obtain quotes	
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Arrange finance if required	
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Enter on A & L spreadsheet	
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Arrange insurance	
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Send tax invoice to accountant	
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### Vehicles

Obtain quotes	
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Arrange finance if required	
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Enter on A & L spreadsheet	
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Arrange insurance	
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Send tax invoice to accountant	
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# THINGS TO **STOP** DOING

**QUESTION #1:** Identify one thing you are doing too well

**QUESTION #2:** Identify any repetitive task that could be streamlined

**QUESTION #3:** Identify one thing more easily done by someone else





# STARTING AND CONTINUING

**QUESTION #1:** What are we doing well? What is running smoothly?

**QUESTION #1:** What do we need to start doing and why?

