



Young Farmer Mentoring

Program Guidelines 2020-2021

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

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Young Farmer Mentoring Program

Program overview

The Young Farmer Mentoring Program provides young farmers and new entrants the opportunity to be paired with an experienced farmer or 'mentor' to assist them in;

- developing skills to better manage their farm businesses,
- identifying risks, and
- developing strategies to build resilience and achieve their business goals.

The mentorship will be facilitated by a farm business consultant who will pair the young farmer or 'mentee' with a mentor whose experience aligns with the mentee's enterprise and personal development goals. The program will run for a period of 12 months. During this period the mentor and mentee will work together overseen by their facilitator. All parties will work together to arrange regular catch ups to track the progress of the mentee.

The purpose of the mentorship is to assist the mentee in building professional networks, utilising trusted sources of advice and information, and developing competency in setting business goals and assessing risks.

There is one mentorship round per year and up to a total of 10 mentorships are awarded per round. The application period opens Thursday 8 October 2020 until 5 pm Thursday 5 November 2020.

The Program is managed by Agriculture Victoria.

Requirements of mentorship participants

On successful application for a 2021 mentorship, participants are required to fulfil the following over the 12-month mentorship;

- Maintain regular contact with both their mentor and farm business consultant facilitator, and keep both parties informed of any changes in circumstance relevant to the program
- To meet formally with both their mentor and facilitator present approximately 6 to 10 times. This may be in person or virtually. Any meetings without the facilitator present will fall outside of the program
- Demonstrate evidence of goal setting and actions taken as a result of mentoring sessions

In addition, mentorship participants are expected to fulfil the following during and after the completion of the program:

- share learnings and experiences with other young farmers as part of the mentorship program (i.e. share with local community or farming groups, write articles, present at events, mentor future scholarship recipients)
- provide feedback as part of the program evaluation process

Eligibility

Applicants must:

- be aged between 18 and 35 years at the time of the application close date
- be working in a food and fibre farm business in Victoria at least three days per week for the past three months
- have at least two years of total experience on-farm
- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident currently residing in Victoria.

Selection criteria

Applicants must address the following selection criteria through the application process:

- demonstrated interest in building skills and boosting your food and fibre agricultural career prospects
- desire to commit to working with the mentor and facilitator to build the relationship and achieve desired program outcomes
- demonstrated willingness to develop and maintain professional networks
- An outline of how being paired with a mentor will help you to manage your farm business, identify risks and build resilience to achieve your business goals.

Application, assessment, and award process

Stage 1 – Expression of interest (EOI) process

The Young Farmer Coordinator is available to assist applicants to develop their application. For assistance please email

Youngfarmer.Coodinator@agriculture.vic.gov.au

All applicants are required to read and accept the Program Guidelines before submitting an application. By submitting an application, applicants are deemed to have accepted the Program Guidelines and agreed to be bound by them.

Applicants may submit an application form online which can be found on the [Agriculture Victoria Young Farmer](#) web page.

A hardcopy application form may also be submitted. A PDF application form is available to be downloaded from the website. You may then scan and return the completed hardcopy form to;

Youngfarmer.Coordinator@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Receipt of applications will be confirmed via email.

Stage 2 – Shortlisting process

The Program Selection Committee (the Committee) assesses all applications and shortlists suitable applicants for interview.

Those who are not shortlisted will be notified by email.

The decision of the Committee as to which applicants will be interviewed will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Note the Department considers diversity criteria when assessing applications to ensure that each year's cohort includes a diverse range of scholarship recipients, including by geographic location, industry, gender, cultural background, and professional experience.

Stage 3 – Interview process

Shortlisted applicants may be invited to an interview with the Committee (either in person or by phone). Successful applicants will be offered a mentee position.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their interview by email or phone.

The decision of the Committee as to which applicants will receive a mentorship will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Stage 4 – Award of Mentorship

Successful applicants who accept their mentee position in the program will be required to sign a Letter of Agreement with the Department stating:

- Name of mentor,
- mentee,
- facilitator,
- planned start date/end date,
- agreement of privacy policy.

Mentees will be matched to facilitators by Agriculture Victoria. Mentees will then be paired with mentors at the discretion of their facilitator.

In the event that a mentee wishes to raise an issue with their mentor, they must first bring it to their facilitator. If a mentee wishes to raise an issue relating to their facilitator, they must contact the Young Farmer Project Coordinator.

Stage 5 – Progress Updates

Participants will be asked to provide regular updates detailing their experience with the Program to the department.

They may also be asked to take part in promotional activities, social media activities and events (online and/or live) associated with the program and other Victorian Government Young Farmer initiatives.

Stage 6 – Evaluation/ Completion of the arrangement

On completion of the 12-month mentoring relationship, each participant will be required to complete a short written, or video report on their experience and learnings. A template and questions will be provided at the appropriate time.

Assessment of EOI

Applications will be assessed against the eligibility and selection criteria set out in the program guidelines.

Assessment of applications is based on merit taking into consideration diversity.

The Department aims to ensure the program includes a diversity of mentorship recipients, including by geographic location, industry, gender, cultural background, and farming experience. An objective scoring process is used to assist in assessing applications to represent diversity across mentorship recipients.

Individuals who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander are encouraged to apply.

Selection Committee

Members of the Committee are appointed by the Department.

Complaints process

Complaints, enquiries and feedback in relation to the processing of applications should be sent to

Youngfarmer.Coordinator@agriculture.vic.gov.au.

If an applicant, or any other person, continues to be dissatisfied with the administration of the Program they may raise their concerns with the [Victorian Ombudsman](#).

The Victorian Ombudsman may be contacted by telephone on 03 9613 6222.

Responsibility of mentees

Mentees are expected to manage all communications with their facilitators and mentors independently.

You must notify your facilitator of any changes to contact details or circumstances affecting your ability to complete the program as soon as possible.

Special considerations

If you are experiencing financial hardship or there are special circumstances which may impact your ability to accept your place in this mentorship program as per the Program Guidelines, please contact the Department.

Review and amendments

The Department in its absolute discretion may review and amend the Young Farmer Mentoring Program Guidelines.

Contact

Agriculture Victoria

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