



Media release

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Farming grants for improving water quality now open

Grants of up to \$25,000 have been put on the table for North Queensland horticultural growers to increase their productivity and maximise their profits through better farming practices.

A total of \$750,000 in Horticulture Water Quality Improvement Grants will be available to farmers under round four of the Australian Government's Reef Rescue initiative.

Applications are now open for growers who want to carry out works that will improve the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef.

NQ Dry Tropics Project Officer, Colleen James, said farmers seeking to make a positive difference should take advantage of the grants.

"We're interested to hear from horticultural growers who want to make changes to their practices, such as reducing the level of nutrients, sediments and pesticides leaving farms and entering waterways," Colleen said.

"Introducing these changes often means new equipment or infrastructure is needed and that, of course, comes at a cost.

"These grants recognise the expense involved in changing practices. New irrigation systems, minimum tillage equipment, flow rate controllers, and increased groundcover are just some examples of what the grants are designed to cover.

"Aside from improving water quality, landholders also stand to benefit from increasing their productivity and product quality."

More than 280 farmers in the Burdekin Dry Tropics are already using Reef Rescue funds to pay for improvements. It has benefited 460,000 hectares of horticulture, sugar cane and grazing land.

Natural resource management body NQ Dry Tropics will make funding available for horticultural growers in the area stretching between Bowen and Crystal Creek.

Interested growers can call NQ Dry Tropics on 07 4724 3544 for more information or email rrhort@nqdrytropics.com.au.

NQ Dry Tropics' region includes the local government areas of Townsville, Charters Towers, Burdekin, Isaac, Barcaldine, Etheridge, Hinchinbrook, Palm Island and the Whitsundays. **Media contact** Sara Lando 4722 5729; 0466 014 728.

Working together to improve land and water