

# Rural Checklist



## Self-assess your business risk

We've pulled together a handy checklist so you can self-assess the risks for your rural business. It's just for your own information purposes and won't affect your policy – **so you don't need to send it back to us.**



Allow approximately 25 mins to complete this checklist

### Contingency plans and business interruption

Are compliance documentation and operating consents up to date and in line with current legislation?

Do you have a contingency plan to deal with:

- key staff, including yourself, being unable to work
- the inability to use key buildings, plant or equipment
- natural events such as floods or fires

Have you considered employing specialists to advise on business continuity management and cyber security?

### Legal hotspots

Are you aware of and complying with biosecurity requirements and governance?

Do you have a system to batch, track and recall products?

Are you adhering to health and safety regulations?

### Land clearing and controlled burns

Do you check with the local authority, FENZ, about any fire danger and fire season?

Do you ensure the weather conditions are suitable before starting the burn?

Do you advise neighbours of the planned burn?

### Accidental damage

Do you have a farm induction plan for contractors, workers and seasonal staff and are they adequately trained/qualified to undertake the required work?

Are access roads, gateways, driveways and bridges suitable for the vehicles using them?

Can vehicles (e.g. tractors) move around the site without the need to drive under irrigators?

Are designated parking areas allocated for vehicles?

Do you check for underground infrastructure before digging?

Are buildings protected against impact damage?

Do you check your contractors have adequate public liability insurance before starting work on your site?

Are storage racks and packing systems braced against collapse?

Do you halt spraying operations during periods of high wind?

## Weather and flooding

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Do you have a wild weather emergency plan and does everyone know what to do?

Have you identified:

- critical plant and equipment that could be moved to higher ground if flooding is possible and the safe areas for this equipment?
- equipment and stock that could be affected by high winds and may need to be tied down? Do you have suitable tie downs to use?

Do you have a means of flood protection such as sandbags, barricades or more permanent flood protection?

Do you position irrigators "end on" when high winds are predicted?

Are drains kept clear of debris that could prevent water from draining away?

Is there a program to regularly inspect and trim trees near buildings, power lines and farm equipment?

Are above-ground fuel tanks banded and strong enough to prevent them from toppling over e.g. due to running flood water or ground tremors?

## Fire safety

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Do you have a reliable method of calling emergency services?

Is the property clearly identifiable to emergency services, e.g. RAPID number or farm name?

Is there a fire plan and have firefighters from the local fire stations visited to familiarise themselves with your site?

Do you have the right number of fire extinguishers, knapsack sprayers? Are these in the right locations?

Are staff familiar with the site emergency plan and have they been trained to use the fire extinguishers?

Are the important areas on-site freely accessible, e.g. key buildings, water sources etc.?

Have you clearly signposted the location of firefighting water sources?

Do water storage tanks and bore supplies have fire brigade compatible couplings?

Are areas within 10m of buildings free of long grass, vegetation and other combustibles that could burn?

Is hay dried out before baling?

Do you limit the use of machinery and plant (e.g. welders) that could result in a fire during extremely dry conditions?

Have you considered installing automatic fire detection or sprinklers in larger buildings?

## Water supply

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Do you have an inspection and maintenance programme for water and septic tanks and associated equipment?

Is the water supply filtered to remove sediment?

Are external water pipes insulated and protected from freezing temperatures?

## Hot work

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Do you manage hot work such as cutting, welding, grinding and open fires?

Is outdoor hot work stopped when the fire danger is high?

Are precautions taken to ensure combustibles are removed from the work area, there is a serviced fire extinguisher nearby, a fire watch is in place and post hot work checks are carried out?

## Maintenance

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Are buildings checked regularly for damage and appropriate repairs made?

Do you regularly check fences, gates, windbreaks, stockyards and underpasses?

Do you keep an inventory of spare parts, especially for older equipment?

Is your plant and equipment maintained according to the manufacturer's specifications?  
Is maintenance undertaken when due and repairs made when necessary?

Is there a regular inspection routine for:

- submersible pumps and variable speed drives?
- wells which include liners, screens, shafts, piping, headworks and ancillary equipment?
- irrigators to check for damage to pipework and hoses, condition of tyres, cables, bolts, frames?
- checking plastic and rubber components for UV damage?

Are farm vehicles serviced and maintained regularly?

Is the temperature of refrigerated areas monitored, e.g. cool rooms, chillers etc.?

Do you check that any insulated sandwich panels are in good condition with no inner core exposed?

Are service penetrations through sandwich panels properly sheathed?

Have you considered removing or encapsulating polyurethane foam insulation from buildings to reduce fire risk?

## Electrical equipment

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Do you undertake periodic verification to ensure electrical installation remains safe and fit for purpose?

Are electrical switchboards and electrical controllers regularly inspected and maintained by a registered electrician?

Have you considered installing an emergency generator to allow critical equipment to continue running and a UPS unit to protect against an erratic power supply?

Are electrical switchboards enclosed to limit the build-up of dust, nests, pests and debris?

Do you limit the use of extension leads and multi-boards?

## Security

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Are yards secure with good quality fencing?

Are the perimeter, yard and entry/exit points well lit?

Are gates, entry/exit points and bulk fuel tanks secured with closed shackle padlocks?

Is there a lock-up routine ensuring all doors, windows, gates and padlocks are secure?

Are high value items kept in a secure area?

Have you recorded the serial numbers of high value items?

Are key buildings/areas protected by a monitored intruder alarm system and a suitable response process in place to investigate the alarm?

Have you considered the suitability of a CCTV system on your site if you don't already have one?

Are vehicle keys removed from unattended vehicles and either kept with the driver or locked away?

Are quad and motorbikes parked in a safe and secure area?

## Hazardous substances

- Are you familiar with the legal requirements for the storage and use of hazardous substances?
- Have you considered using a professional to advise on hazardous goods compliance?
- Are hazardous substances stored in clearly labelled and suitable containers?
- Are larger quantities stored in fit-for-purpose cabinets or bunkers located away from other storage or processing areas?
- Are incompatible hazardous substances kept separate (e.g. fertilisers and flammables)?
- Are flammable gasses in a secure cage outside of buildings? Are quantities limited to only what's needed?
- Do you maintain an accurate inventory of all hazardous substances along with their safety data sheets?
- Is signage indicating the presence of hazardous substances clearly displayed?
- Are hazardous substances inside buildings limited to working quantities only?
- Are gas cylinders protected from impact damage?

## Housekeeping

- Are external waste bins/recycle skips and timber pallets and crates located at least 10m from buildings?
- Do you carry out checks to ensure the continued integrity of fire walls and doors?
- Is there a daily clean-up around mechanical plant and machinery?
- Is electrical equipment clean and free of dust and other combustible build-up?
- Do you check for birds' nests in machinery and tractors before start-up?
- Are vehicles and machinery regularly cleaned to ensure they are free of oil, dust, grease, grass and other combustibles?
- Is smoking on-site managed and controlled to reduce fire risk?
- Are areas between buildings clear of combustibles?
- Do you have a pest control programme?
- Are ignition sources such as battery chargers, lighting and heat-generating equipment well clear of sandwich panels and polyurethane foam insulation?
- Are combustibles such as timber pallets, fruit crates, packaging, rubbish, firewood, rags etc. adequately separated from ignition sources, e.g. heaters?

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