



12 May 2021

Hon Daniel Mookhey MLC
Committee Chair
Select Committee on the future of work and workers in NSW

Dear Mr Mookhey,

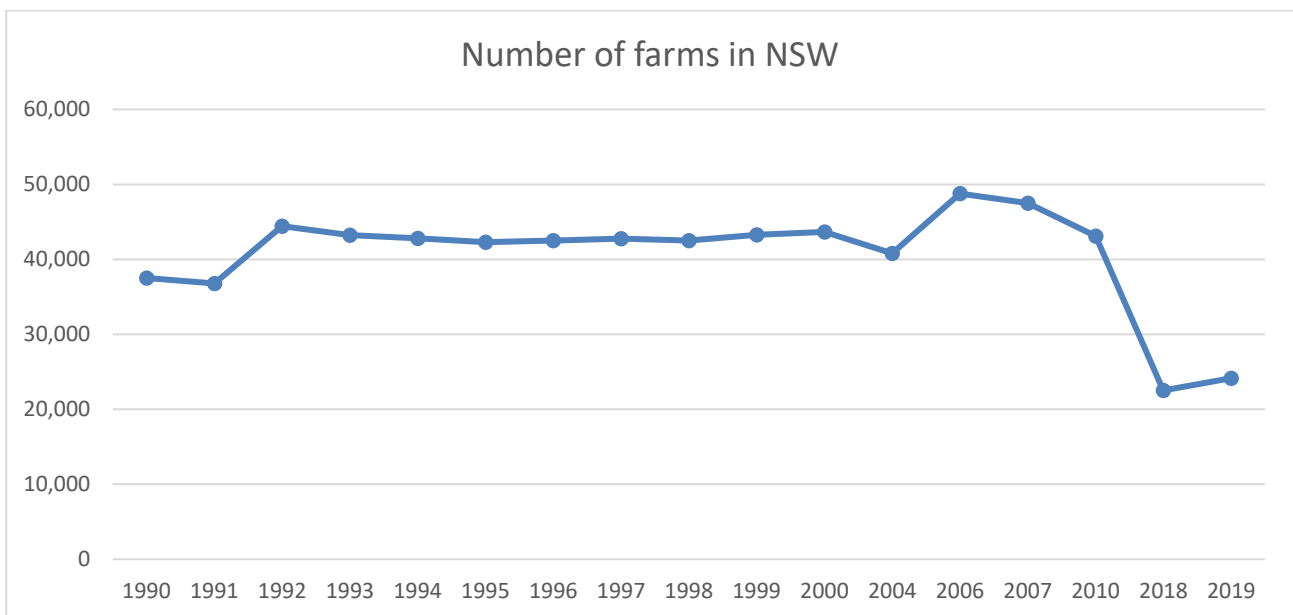
RE: NSW Farmers Association's response to questions taken on notice

The NSW Farmers' Association thanks the Committee for the opportunity to appear at the hearing to provide the agricultural industry and regional community perspective to this inquiry into the impact of technological change on the future of work and workers in New South Wales. No corrections to the transcript are required. As requested, my opening statement is enclosed for tabling.

Further to the submissions and commentaries provided, please find below responses to the questions taken on notice during our appearance:

1. Number of farm businesses in NSW over the years

Estimated value of agricultural operations (EVAO) is a measure of the value of production from farms and a measure of their business size. The number of establishments in NSW having EVAO of \$5,000 or more in 1990 was 37,539¹. Based on the latest available ABS data, there were 24,509² farms in NSW in 2018–19.



¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 7113.0-Agriculture, Australia, 1999-2000, <https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/7113.0>

² Australian Bureau of Statistics, Agricultural Commodities - Australia, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/industry/agriculture/agricultural-commodities-australia/2018-19>

NSW Farmers' Association

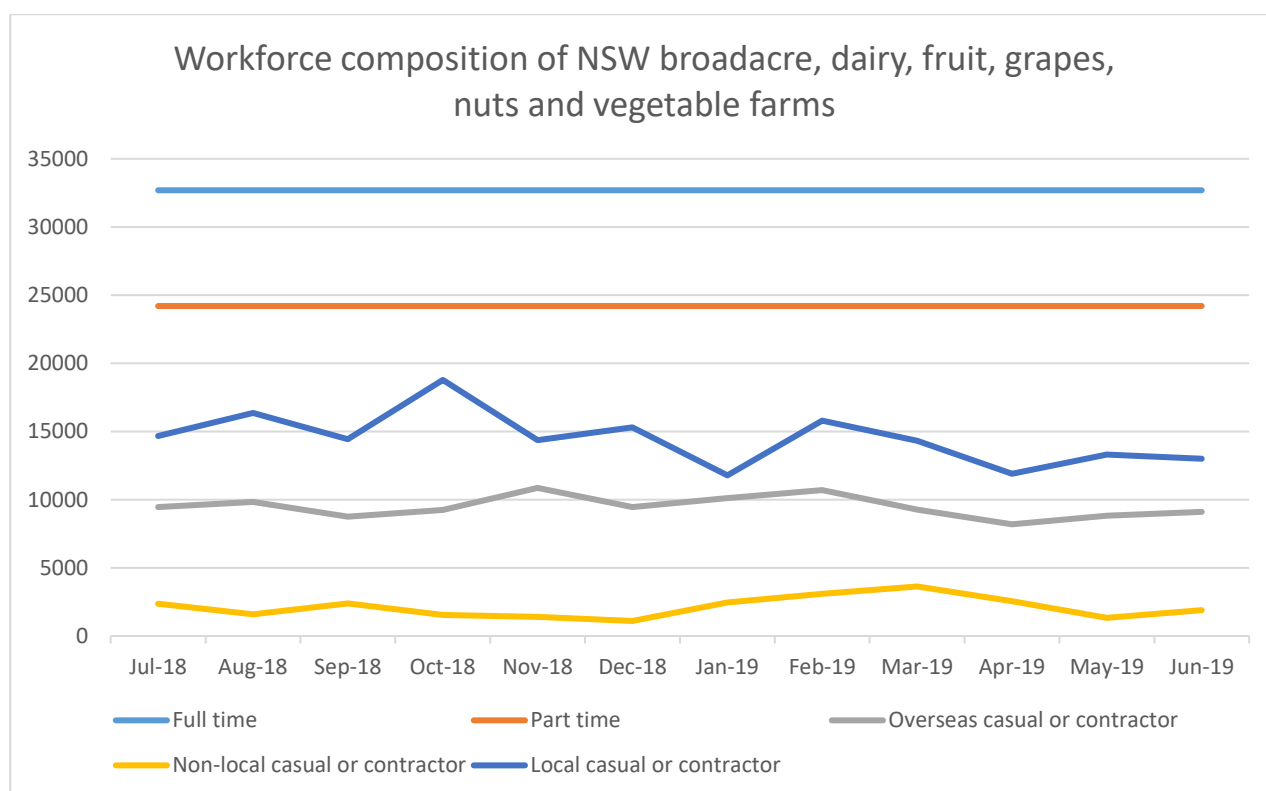
ABN 31 000 004 651 PO Box 459 St Leonards NSW 1590 Level 4 154 Pacific Highway St Leonards NSW 2065
Member Service Centre 1300 794 000 T 02 9478 1000 F 02 8282 4500 www.nswfarmers.org.au

2. Breakdown of farm businesses in NSW by value of production

Around 41 per cent of farms in New South Wales had an EVAO between \$50,000 and \$150,000. These farms accounted for only 9 per cent of the total value of agricultural operations in 2018–19. In comparison, 10 per cent of farms in the state had an EVAO of more than \$1 million and accounted for an estimated 47 per cent of the total value of agricultural operations in New South Wales in 2018–19³.

3. Breakdown of employment types of farm workers in NSW

Between July 2018 and June 2019, the average workforce composition in broadacre farms, dairy farms, fruit, grapes, nuts and vegetable farms is as follows: 39.39% full time employed, 29.16% part time employed, 11.42% overseas casual or contractor, 2.54% non-local casual or contractor, and 17.47% local casual or contractor. When the casual and contractor categories are combined, they total 31.44% of the workforce composition⁴.



It is to be noted that the workforce composition data above do not capture all agriculture subsectors, for example: poultry, piggery, aquaculture. There are no readily available agriculture wide data that provide comprehensive breakdown by employment type and by state.

4. Commentaries on middle school syllabus and Cert III syllabus

Agriculture in Years 7-10 Syllabus

The NSW Design and Technology (Stage 4&5) includes the context area of Agriculture with a design focus on the investigation of animal enterprise, environmental, and plant enterprise. This is one context area within

³ ABARES, About my region – New South Wales, <https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/research-topics/aboutmyregion/nsw#agricultural-sector> (accessed 10 May 2021)

⁴ ABARES, ABARES farm labour force survey and horticulture for 2018-19, <https://public.tableau.com/profile/australian.bureau.of.agricultural.and.resource.economics.and.sci#!/vizhome/ABARESFarmLabourForceSurveyandHorticulture/Story1>

the suite of 6 of which 2-3 context areas are required to be studied. A further context is Food Technologies and NSW Farmers considers that the most effective learning about the role of food and fibre production would occur where the individual schools choose to deliver both. Agriculture has been a context area since 2019. Given that choice of contexts is determined at the individual school level the breadth of delivery is unknown. Anecdotally it appears that the agriculture context is prioritised in regional schools and there would be value in prioritising this context for all students.

The value of studying Agriculture within a Design and Technology framework is the potential exposure to the breadth of food and fibre production. Within the syllabus framework this has the potential to include investigation of the changing work and production environment while expanding the awareness of multiple employment and career opportunities within the sector.

Vocational Qualifications – Certificate III in Agriculture

The mandatory and elective elements of the qualification allows for the course content to be selected to meet/respond to the interests and needs of the individual student co-hort. In terms of content NSW Farmers considers that the regular review process, including industry engagement to amend and add to meet changing work environments is appropriate to respond to the changes within agriculture. The variability will occur based on how the course is delivered (face-to-face, online or blended) and the resources available to build the students capability through experiential learning.

5. Submissions on competition and supply chain reform

The Association was requested to provide the Committee with previous submissions we have made in relation to competition and supply chain reform. Please find enclosed the following submissions:

- a. Fresh Food Pricing Inquiry (2018)
- b. Dairy Code Exposure Draft (2019)
- c. Perishable Agricultural Goods Inquiry (2020)
- d. Foreign Investment Reform Consultation (2020)
- e. Unfair Contract Terms Review (2020)

Yours sincerely,

Pete Akle
Chief Executive Officer