

# Fertcare Program Evaluation

Preliminary Findings

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Tim Cummins & Associates  
Dr Elaine Barclay IRF UNE

## The review

- Determine efficacy of Fertcare;
- Review effectiveness of training material development and renewal;
- Estimate training and monitoring costs;
- Identify potential improvements; and
- Identify potential to monitor outputs and outcomes.

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# Fertcare

- Industry managed accreditation program
- Objectives:
  - manage risk and liability;
  - influence public policy.
- Voluntary implementation with firm targets
  - 3000 industry staff over three years.
- If not met – look at compliance mechanisms.
- External pressures may result in regulated compliance.

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# Accreditation

- Encourage training uptake through licensing of the Fertcare brand;
- Maintain skills currency;
- Provide quality assurance process for
  - accredited advisors; and
  - premises;
- Provide a certification scheme for application equipment.

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# Three levels

- Level A – targeted at the operational level transport, storage and spreading.
- Level B – awareness of issues to improve customer communication and to provide warnings and simple advice.
- Level C – detailed and complex knowledge.

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# Firm targets (total market ~ 3,000?)

- December 2005 – 20%
- December 2006 – 45%
- December 2007 – 70%
- December 2008 – 100%

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# Adoption (July 2007)

- 455 Level A
- 402 Level B
- 439 Level C
- 1296 Total
- Vic 442
- WA 302
- SA 158
- Tas 140
- Qld 130
- NSW 119
- ACT 3
- NT 2

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# Points of Interest

- 'Churn'
- 76 of 1296 in Reef Catchments
  - 2 since 2005
  - 25 non-core (e.g. BSES)
  - 8 north of Townsville
- 47 total non-core
- Majors ~ 75% levels B&C

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# Survey

- Want repeatability
- Focus group
- Mailed to ~350 accredited staff
  - Face to face with 20 in Reef catchments
  - 64 total responses to date (want 80 for statistical validity)
- Mailed to 150 Qld farmers
- Interviewed 9 industry non-participants
- Interviewed 9 farmers

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# Survey Respondents

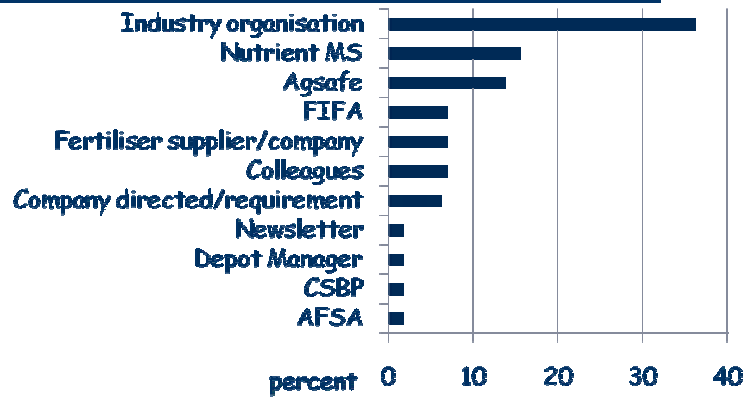
- Level A - 5%
- Level B - 48%
- Level C - 47%
- Average 14 years in fertilizer industry (longest 35 years, shortest 1 year).

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# Introduction to Fertcare

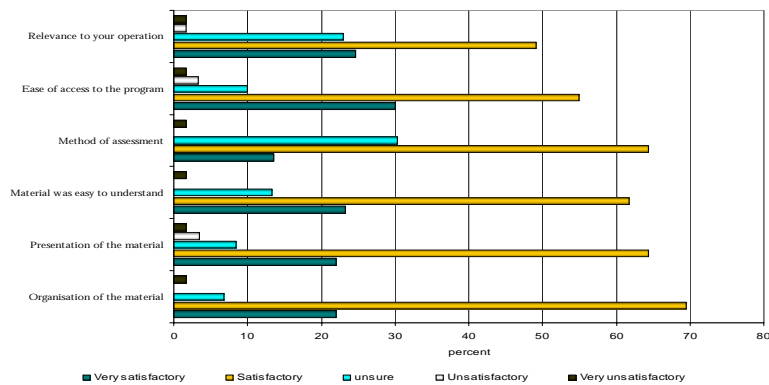


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# Satisfaction

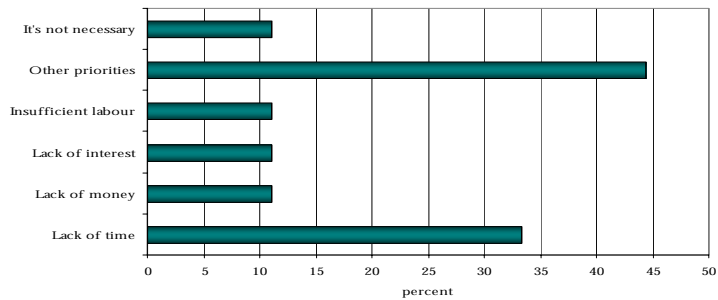


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# Non-attendants



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# Non-attendants

- *"Cost of programs are prohibitive. The outlay in time and cost and a shortage of labour is difficult for a private business."*
- *"If people want to do courses, the website is not always up to date. Also courses get cancelled. I've been trying to do Level C, and had to phone Qld to get an indication of where the next course in Vic/SA and NSW would be and when. It was not listed on the internet anywhere. Course has now been cancelled until 2008"*

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# Market pressure?

- "There was a massive groundswell of energy when Fertcare first came out; there was a race to see who could get their company accredited first. We were told we just had to do it. All the companies were in a mad rush to get the logos on their letterheads. There wasn't anywhere near as much enthusiasm from the distribution chain - except perhaps from the corporates like Elders and Landmark. The thing is farmers didn't know anything about Fertcare ... there was no market pressure to keep it up. There were no farmers saying: 'Hey, when are you getting your Fertcare accreditation.' There was none of that."

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# Training material

- Professional
- Fit for purpose
- Meets federal 'competency' requirements
- Lacks systematic process for update and review

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# Costs

- ~\$500 per head per workshop
- Travel and accommodation
- 10–40 hours preparation

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# Potential improvements

- Stronger links with Agsafe
- Stronger integration with nutrient training
- Self-sustaining business model

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# Preliminary conclusions

- Need higher ratio of Level B to Level C
- Need higher uptake in Reef catchments especially north of Townsville
- Need more accessible workshops
- Need clearer compliance model
- Need self-sustaining business model
- Targets won't be met