

The Fertilizer

News and information from the Fertilizer Industry Federation of Australia



National Fertcare Accreditation Launch

The Australian Government Minister for Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon Peter McGauran MP, officially launched the Fertcare Accreditation program in Canberra on 12 October 2005. [More...](#)

Successful AGM and changes to the Board

On September 8th the FIFA AGM was held in Canberra, Chairman Peter McEwen presented a review of the last three years, there were three changes to the Board and an issues forum covered impurities, environment policy, markets and shipping and the FIFA strategy review. [More...](#)

Fertilizer Industry Environment Awards

The 2004 Industry Environment Awards were presented at the 2005 FIFA AGM, by senior officials from the Australian Government agriculture and environment departments. The four prestigious awards were made to companies and individuals who have made outstanding efforts to minimize any adverse impacts of fertilizers during 2004. [More...](#)

Fertcare Accreditation, Apply Now

Six businesses are now licensed to use the new Fertcare logos under the accreditation scheme launched by the Hon Peter McGauran MP on October 12. "Fertilizer users will know that a business bearing the Fertcare logo will provide them with expert, up to date and independently audited advice" said the Minister. You can apply for accreditation now. [More...](#)

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Nutrient Workshops in North Queensland

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The new regulations relating to security sensitive ammonium nitrate will be in place in most States by the first of January. A quick summary of the effective dates in each state and contact details may help you comply. [More...](#)

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National Fertcare Accreditation Launch



The Minister launches Fertcare

“Fertilizer users will know that a business bearing the Fertcare logo will provide them with expert, up to date and independently audited advice” said the Minister.

The launch was attended by about 40 representatives of government, industry and the media. Reports on the launch were made across the ABC rural network and in the rural press.

The Australian Government Minister for Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon Peter McGauran MP, officially launched the Fertcare Accreditation program in Canberra on 12 October 2005.

The launch was held on the lawns in front of Parliament House, where one of Paul Wyer’s (NSW AFSA Secretary) spreader trucks demonstrated the Accu-Spread testing program. Speeches were also made by David Ford (FIFA Vice Chairman) and Shane Dellavedova (AFSA National President).

In launching Fertcare, the Minister said he hoped that the program was quickly recognized in the agricultural industry and that farmers actively sought fertilizer supply and advice from Fertcare accredited people and businesses.



AFSA National President Shane Dellavedova, the Hon Peter McGauran MP and FIFA Vice Chairman David Ford at the Fertcare launch.

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Successful AGM and changes to the Board

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FIFA Chairman, Peter McEwen, presented a review of the last three years of FIFA activity. Highlights included the successful implementation of new fertilizer import protocols as a result of a joint FIFA and AQIS project; The implementation of a comprehensive Fertcare program in cooperation with the Australian Fertiliser Services Association and a very successful international conference attended by 350 people from 17 countries.

Peter pointed out the change in FIFA membership from 7 ordinary members in 2001 to 28 in 2005, and the huge increase in FIFA's public profile and engagement in Public Policy. FIFA is represented on a number of national intergovernmental committees, the conference was well supported by government both in attendance and sponsorship and over the last three years the Federal Government has provided project funding totaling \$700,000.

Peter challenged members to make the most of this momentum with full support for the Fertcare program and continuing involvement in the activities of FIFA.

In elections for the FIFA Board new members **Andrew Jenkin**, Hi-Fert and **Shane Dellavedova**, AFSA, were elected to join Chairman **Peter McEwen**, Summit Fertilizers, Vice Chairman **David Ford**, Impact Fertilisers, **John Lewis**, Agrow, **Daryl Roe**, Incitec Pivot, **Darryl Dent**, CSBP, **Mat Denton**, Elders, **Jeff Landels**, Southern Cross Fertilisers, and **Phil Nixon**, United Farmers on the Board for 2005-6.

The major business of the Board was consideration of the recent survey of members to evaluate and modify FIFA's strategy. The main messages from the survey were very consistent and are summarized as follows:

- Environment (including food safety) and quarantine remain the two most important issues.
- The issue of security has become more important and FIFA should have a clear policy.
- Standards for fertilizers were seen as important.
- Public standing and perception of the industry were seen as a critical part of FIFA's role.
- Communication within the industry needs to improve.
- Communication and standing with Governments has been successful at a Federal level and focus is now needed at the State level with the assistance of members.

Members were strongly supportive of the current approach of positive engagement with Government and other stakeholders underpinned by Fertcare on the Environment and Food Safety front and the Import Logistics Committee on issues of quarantine.

Presentations on Regional Natural Resource Management and Greenhouse Gas from agriculture continued the process of engagement with public policy debates.

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Fertilizer Industry Environment Awards

The 2004 Industry Environment Awards were presented at the 2005 FIFA AGM, by senior officials from the Australian Government agriculture and environment departments. The four prestigious awards were made to companies and individuals who have made outstanding efforts to minimize any adverse impacts of fertilizers during 2004.

The industry environmental awards were established to acknowledge and promote eco-efficiency excellence within the industry. Eco-efficiency means producing goods with the least amount of energy and natural resources, resulting in less waste and pollution. The awards are presented in four categories, to recognize small, medium and large companies, as well as individuals.

The 2004 Platypus Award was won by **CSBP Limited** for its ongoing commitment to research and advice on the efficient use of fertilizers, especially to WA farmers. CSBP was regularly exploring different types of products and the way they are applied, to ensure farmers not only increase their profits, but lose fewer nutrients to off-site ground and surface waters. This is the second year that CSBP has won the award.

The Eucalyptus award was won by **Impact Fertilisers**. Impact has a superphosphate plant adjacent to the Derwent River in Tasmania and has a license to discharge storm-water under certain conditions. In close collaboration with local and state government agencies and nearby industries, Impact has committed considerable resources to an on-site water recycling system. Rainwater and cooling water from the factory is captured by a securely lined retention pond and then reused in the manufacturing process. The system has led to a greatly reduced risk of any discharge to the river, massive reductions in the use of potable (treated) water in the fertilizer manufacturing process, and considerable savings in water treatment costs.

The Kookaburra award was won by **Fertspread**, a contract spreading business near Yass, NSW. Fertspread has fully embraced the industry product stewardship program, Fertcare, and is the first company to be fully accredited under the new licensing arrangements. Not only are all of the eligible Fertspread staff accredited under Fertcare, but company director Paul Wyer spends considerable resources on promoting Fertcare to other businesses and stakeholders across NSW.

The 2004 Snapper award is made to an individual member of the fertilizer industry who has made a significant personal contribution to fertilizer eco-efficiency. **Garry Kuhn** from **Incitec Pivot Limited** was the very popular winner of this prize, due to his long and tireless commitment to sustainable fertilizer use. Garry has represented the industry on a range of government, research and industry convened committees over many years, and has provided a valuable communication channel for information into and out of the industry. Most recently, Garry has made critical contributions to the industry's Eco-efficiency Agreement, the development and promotion of Fertcare, and the implementation of the Great Barrier Reef Water Quality Protection Plan.

FIFA urges all members to consider contesting the 2005 awards. Applications for the awards will be called for early in 2006.

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David Ford, CEO of Impact Fertilisers receives the Eucalyptus Environment Award from Ian Carruthers, First Assistant Secretary DEH.



Paul Wyr and Catriona McAuliffe of Fertspreed receive the Kookaburra Award from Mike Lee, General Manager, Natural Resource Management Team, Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry.



Andrew Macrae, Materials Procurement Manager for CSBP receives the Platypus Award from Mike Lee, General Manager Natural Resource Management Team, Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry.

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You can apply for accreditation now if you meet the requirements of the program. The criteria for accreditation are being phased in between now and the end of 2008 and are summarised in the following table:

Measure	2005	2006	2007	2008
Eligible staff Fertcare trained	20%	45%	70%	100%
Trained staff refreshed/quality assured			100%	100%
Eligible premises quality assured		50%	100%	100%
Spreaders Accu-Spread certified	50%	75%	100%	100%

Accreditation gives a business a license to use the new Fertcare logos and is assessed and renewed every two years. If you apply in 2005 you must have 20% of eligible staff Fertcare trained and 50% of the spreader trucks in the business Accu-Spread accredited. You would then be reassessed in two years time and would have to meet the requirements applying in 2007 in order to have your license renewed. So there is some incentive to get in early.

If you would like to apply you can download the application, and find all the details at www.fertcare.com.au.



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Fertcare Training Materials Completed

Extensive revision to the Level A training materials have now been completed and tested. Competency based training is now available at Level C (advisor), Level B (sales) and Level A (logistics and spreading).

The Fertcare Level A training material has received a major face-lift, thanks to the support of the Australian Government National Landcare Program (NLP). All four units have now been updated to meet the requirements of new national standards for fertilizer training, and reflect a strong commitment by the Australian fertilizer industry to best practice supply, advice and use of its products.

The original Fertcare Level A training material was based on the Australian Fertiliser Services Association - *Codes of Practice* and developed with the support of the. This material helped to train over 300 industry personnel in best practice fertilizer supply – specifically in the transport, spreading, storing and retail sectors.

With the support of a new NLP grant, the Level A training material has been dramatically improved to ensure it:

- meets the requirements of new Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) national competency standards;
- can be delivered by suitably qualified trainers across Australia (previously delivered by just one trainer);
- is integrated with the other levels of Fertcare training – Level B (Sales) and Level C (Adviser); and
- is professional and captivating in its delivery.

The key component of this project has been the developed of new and comprehensive *PowerPoint* presentations for the units:

- Basic Product Knowledge
- Spreading
- Transport
- Storage

The Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE also developed new assessment material for each of the four units, to ensure the process is rigorous and met AQF requirements. People previously trained under the old Level A material will be required to complete this assessment process by June 2007, to maintain their Fertcare accreditation.

Whichever level of training you are interested in, you can now be sure that it will give you valuable skills and knowledge, will achieve recognition for one or more national competencies, and will be delivered professionally.

Information on the three levels of training and dates and contact details for courses are available at www.fertcare.com.au.

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Nutrient Management Workshops in North Queensland

FIFA has received \$100,000 from the Australian Government to promote soil testing and nutrient planning in the catchments of the Great Barrier Reef.

The project is being undertaken by *Nutrient Management Systems Pty Ltd*, and focuses on the grazing and horticulture industries in northern Queensland. Best practice fertilizer use is a target activity under the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan, and governments and the industry are implementing a suite of initiatives.

The project involves the provision of free soil tests and interpretations to growers, as well as an invitation to attend a one/two day workshop where nutrient management issues are presented and discussed. The overall results of the soil test are discussed with growers, particularly in terms of how fertilizer recommendations should be made. In each case, Level C trained Fertcare Advisors are involved in providing detailed nutrition advice and in the running of the workshops.

The first workshop was held in the week of 22 August 2005 and the level of interest by growers was good. Further workshops are planned for the Tully, Innisfail and Burdekin regions before the end of 2005 and early in 2006. Each participant is asked to fill out a questionnaire about their nutrient management practices, both before the workshops and after. The objective is to see a greater use of the various nutrient management tools, over time.

The project is funded under the Fertilizer Industry Eco-Efficiency agreement. The photo below shows attendees at the launch of the agreement in 2003 being shown good environmental practices on a cane farm.



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2004 Public Environment Report

The 2004 FIFA Public Environment Report was released earlier this year and is available from the FIFA website. Along with the 2002 and 2003 reports, the 2004 report presents information on how the industry is working towards eco-efficiency in all aspects of its business. It highlights some of the significant measures undertaken by FIFA and Australian Fertiliser Services Association members to achieve improved environmental and productivity outcomes – in relation to importing, manufacturing, distributing, applying and advising on fertilizer use.

The 2004 report includes a number of highlights, notably the highly successful industry conference, the inaugural industry environmental awards, and the development and promotion of Fertcare. In terms of the specific eco-efficiency performance measures, some of the highlights were:

- A survey response rate of 81%
- Only 38 breaches of EPA license conditions (a 75% reduction on 2003)
- A decrease in the quantity of potable (treated) water used to manufacture fertilizers in Australia
- An increase in the number of people trained in all levels of Fertcare.

This is the industry's third environment report, and the final one required under the industry's Eco-efficiency Agreement with the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage. While FIFA's obligations to DEH have now been met, the FIFA Board is committed to producing at least two further environment reports – for 2005 and 2006.



The 2002, 2003 and 2004 FIFA Environment Reports are all available from the [FIFA website](#).

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SSAN Regulations Taking Effect

The new regulations relating to security sensitive ammonium nitrate will be in place in most States by the first of January. A quick summary of the effective dates in each state and contact details may help you comply.

SSAN Summary				
	Regulation	Compliance	Agency	Web
ACT			ACT WorkCover	
NSW	1/09/2005	1/01/2006	WorkCover	www.workcover.nsw.gov.au
NT		1/10/2005	Worksafe	www.nt.gov.au/deet/worksafe/
QLD	1/11/2004	1/07/2005	Natural Resources and Mines	www.nrm.qld.gov.au/mines/
SA	1/10/2005	1/01/2006	Workplace Services	www.eric.sa.gov.au
TAS	Agricultural Use Banned			
VIC	1/10/2005	1/01/2006	WorkCover	www.workcover.vic.gov.au
WA*	1/01/2006	1/07/2006	Department of Industry and Resources	www.doir.wa.gov.au

*not yet announced but planned

The regulations appear to be reasonably consistent between the States although there are some anomalies with how they recognise interstate licences, whether multiple licenses are required to perform more than one role and in how much the States are charging.

FIFA has written to the various States asking them to clarify issues such as pricing and the mechanism for recognizing interstate licences. FIFA is also in the process of developing its policy on product security as we know that other fertilizer products not currently classified as SSAN are being assessed for their security risk.

If you are looking for information on the new SSAN regulations try the web sites listed above first and if you can't find what you are looking for feel free to contact FIFA.

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