



Code of Practice

AUSTRALIAN BLUEBERRY ASSOCIATION

Abstract

This Code of Practice (the Code) is intended to promote best practice blueberry operations across Australia, with a particular emphasis on sustainable farming practices as they relate to the use of land and natural resources, responsible application and safe use of materials used in the growing and harvesting of blueberries and ethical sourcing and safe engagement of labour inputs.

Alex Smith
INFO@ABGA.COM.AU

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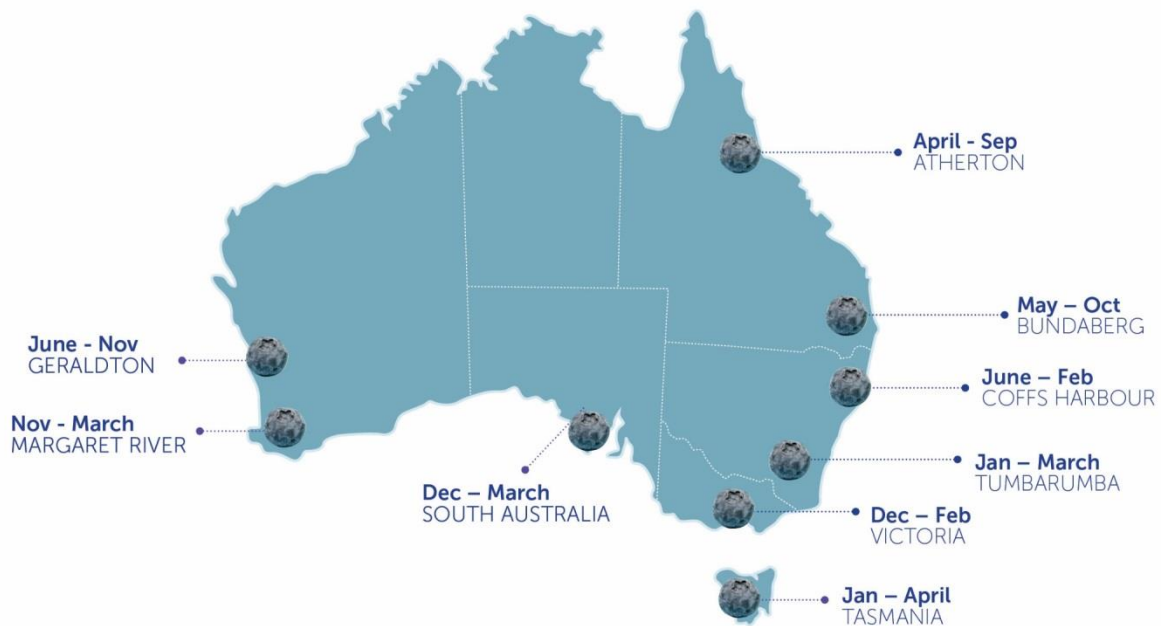
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1 Introduction to the industry

The Australian blueberry industry has experienced significant growth over the past decade. This has been propelled by growing consumer demand, improved varieties, technical advances in the way berries are grown leading to production efficiencies, and the opportunities presented by emerging export markets.

With double digit growth forecast over the coming years, the expansion of the industry will continue and the economic and social significance of the industry to Australia's horticultural exports will become even more prominent through increased capital investment and direct and indirect jobs growth in regional Australia.

Blueberries are also grown in NSW, Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia enabling year round production and supply to consumers.



In 2017 there were estimated to be up to 300 growers throughout Australia, ranging in size from small allotment growers (1 to 20 hectares), to those of a medium scale (20 to 100 hectares) through to large scale growers (100 plus hectares).

In calendar year 2017, it is estimated that the industry will generate approximately \$250 million of revenue. Based on a standard economic multiplier of 3.4, the industry generates circa \$1 billion in economic activity for Australia.

The industry provides employment for a significant number of workers given the labour intensive nature of blueberry farming. While much of this employment is seasonal with pickers engaged during harvest times, there is also a substantial year round permanent workforce made up of both skilled and unskilled workers who live in regional areas surrounding the farms.

Due to the use of seasonal workers, many of whom are backpackers, there is also a significant economic benefit to the local tourism, retail and accommodation industries.

2 Purpose

This Code of Practice (the **Code**) is intended to promote best practice blueberry operations across Australia, with a particular emphasis on the following:

- Sustainable farming practices as they relate to the use of land and natural resources, including minimising environmental and amenity impacts on immediate and surrounding areas;
- Responsible application and safe use of materials (including chemicals) used in the growing and harvesting of blueberries;
- Ethical sourcing and engagement of labour inputs; and
- Provision of a safe working environment.

The Code enhances industry efforts to educate stakeholders and the community about the way the industry operates and importantly its commitment to recognising and voluntarily abiding by agreed industry standards and practices.

Best practice is usually about more than what is just legally required. If growers are to firstly review their practices and then to adopt what is considered to be **best practice** there needs to be an understanding and acceptance of what the consequences can be of poor practices. Adopting best practices in chemical use will result in low residues and best practice management of water use and soil conservation will result in controlling any runoff into creeks or other waterways. Growers should consider the consequences that can result in avoiding unnecessary conflict with regulators.

2.1 Application

The Code has been developed by the Australian Blueberry Growers Association (**ABGA**) in consultation with the New South Wales Department of Primary Industry (**DPI**) – which has extensive experience working with the blueberry industry.

The ABGA strongly encourages all growers to demonstrate their commitment to meeting and complying with the standards as set out in this document.

Each grower shall:

- Observe good and proper practice in the establishment, production and harvesting of blueberries;
- Develop and maintain practices to ensure that they comply with the Code;
- Keep up to date with all relevant legislation affecting their operations;
- Ensure that no prohibited conduct is engaged in;
- Obtain all appropriate approvals, licences, permits and consents that are required by particular laws;
- Cooperate and communicate with neighbours to ensure relationships are maintained;
- Carry out all orders or notices issued by regulatory authorities; and
- Complete an annual Self Audit Checklist as part of their commitment to complying with the Code.

The Self Audit Checklist (**Appendix 1**) will be completed each season and will signal a grower's commitment to abide by the Code and therefore apply good practice in the growing of blueberries.

The ABGA will review the Code every two years to ensure that it continues to be relevant and reflective of accepted industry practice and the latest legislative requirements. The Code may be amended by the ABGA upon review and approved amendments shall be notified in writing to all ABGA members.

2.2 Commencement

The Code comes into effect twenty eight (28) days after the publication of its adoption by the ABGA Committee.

ABGA members will be made aware of the Code and its contents during this time.

The Code is not intended to be an agronomic guide for blueberry development or growing. Information and further support regarding the technical aspects of blueberry growing can be found at the NSW DPI's website

[http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/horticulture/berries.](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/horticulture/berries)

2.3 Benefits of Industry membership

All growers are encouraged to join the ABGA, which is an industry body focused on developing and growing the blueberry industry in a sustainable manner, while engaging cooperatively with stakeholders and the community in general.

Voluntary membership levies fund activities to benefit all growers and the industry including:

- Providing support to growers to ensure the productivity of the industry;
- Development of training programs covering a wide range of relevant topics;
- Disseminating technical information regarding current best practice;
- Export and domestic market access assessment and entry;
- Research and development;
- Representing growers and the industry in public forums; and
- Marketing and promotion of the industry.

Further information and membership applications can be found at <http://www.abga.com.au>.

3 Establishment

The planning and establishment phase of any commercial blueberry development is critical to the success and sustainability of the grower's business. Each site is unique and the specific conditions need to be assessed prior to development. While a right usually exists to establish crops on rural zoned land, growers intending to do so should consult with local councils and planning authorities for advice on land use regulations as these regulations can change between areas and rural zones. Existing land use patterns are not necessarily an accurate reflection of current land use regulations and requirements.

Key considerations should include at a minimum:

3.1 Plant Licensing and Royalties

When choosing which blueberry varieties to plant, the grower needs to determine whether those varieties are protected by Plant Breeder's Rights (**PBR**) or if they are public varieties. Furthermore, some PBR protected varieties also attach marketing rights which determine where and how fruit is to be marketed. Growers should take care to understand all of the obligations attached to purchasing plants covered by PBR. Growers are legally obliged to purchase and manage the plants in accordance with PBR legislation (*Plant Breeder's Rights Act 1994*). For example, only obtaining the plants from the variety's owner or their agent, paying any required royalty, not propagating or selling plants, etc. For more information refer to the IP Australia website <https://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/plant-breeders-rights>.

3.2 Land development controls

The development of land for blueberry cultivation must conform to the land use zonings defined in the Local Council's Local Environmental Plan (**LEP**). Borders between land use zones, for example agricultural land adjoining residential land, have the potential to generate conflict with neighbours. If a grower is unsure of the zoning of their land or development controls applicable to it, they should consult with the Local Council or a town planner prior to commencing any development. Local Councils may also be able to provide advice on the suitability of land for cultivation, for example mapping of flood prone areas will assist growers in understanding the constraints on the land.

3.3 Environmental impacts

If establishment of blueberries requires native vegetation to be cleared then the relevant legislation must be followed. Approvals to clear land under the native vegetation laws can be sought by making an application to the relevant authority (e.g. In NSW the Local Land Services).

Threatened species - Removal of vegetation may also impact on threatened species (plants and animals) which will require the appropriate biodiversity legislation to be

followed. Growers should be aware of the relevant controls on environmental impacts and should obtain suitable planning advice where required. Relevant government agencies can provide advice (e.g. in NSW the Office of Environment and Heritage).

Watercourses - Maintaining appropriate buffers in respect to a watercourse (e.g. creeks and rivers) is good practice and in some cases buffer distances are regulated. In NSW, works within 40m of a watercourse require approval from the NSW Office of Water. Growers are encouraged to consult with their local authorities to check if regulations apply. Works undertaken in close proximity to a watercourse may require consent from authorities responsible for riparian health (e.g. In NSW a Controlled Activities Approval may be required from the NSW Office of Water).

Erosion and sediment control - The control of soil erosion and sediment movement is important during the establishment of plantings. Special mitigation measures need to be undertaken on land that has steep topography and in many cases flat land will also need consideration in heavy rainfall. Growers should control and manage water and sediment within the property boundaries – avoiding discharges onto adjacent properties. Control of drainage within the property (runoff and run-on waters) should aim to minimise sediment transport.

3.4 Cultural Heritage

Various legislation exists relating to the identification and protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage which includes physical objects and culturally significant sites. Growers should be aware of the laws applicable to their area. Activities such as clearing, earthworks and excavations have the potential to disturb cultural heritage sites or objects. Growers should seek expert advice where required and consult with appropriate government agencies (e.g. in NSW the Office of Environment and Heritage).

3.5 Water availability

A suitable supply of irrigation water should be identified early in the planning stages to ensure that the farm will be sustainable. Extraction of water from creeks or bores for irrigation and construction of dams for irrigation supplies must comply with relevant legislation (e.g. In NSW contact Water NSW for more information) and in many cases water licenses will apply.

3.6 Infrastructure

Access to electricity should be considered when planning developments which may require the establishment of easements and maintenance of appropriate offset distances. Road infrastructure for access to the farm for workers, deliveries, pickers and harvest traffic should be developed to a suitable standard. Specific care should be taken at intersections with public roads and car-parking areas should be provided to ensure safe

operation throughout the season. Infrastructure such as on-site sewage systems should be constructed in accordance with local government requirements and appropriate standards. Installation of farm buildings needs to comply with appropriate Building Codes and Australian Standards.

3.7 Site development and design

Design and development of the site should consider appropriate buffer distances and proximity to existing buildings/residences, roads, and other neighbouring land uses. Growers should seek localised advice and guidance from government agencies and local councils when designing the layout of an orchard.

Consideration of buffers, when designing an appropriate set-back, the grower should consider the topography, the distance, and the type of vegetation used in a vegetated buffer and understand the determining factors of a suitable separation buffer to sensitive receivers. Growers should also consider the purpose of the set-back or buffer to assess its effectiveness. The site should be laid out to reduce the potential for spray drift, minimise soil erosion and nutrient run-off (including slope, drainage and vegetation buffers), and enable effective access for maintenance and harvest (including access roads, turning circles and drainage). Guidance can be obtained from various state government Industry websites e.g. DPI in NSW

Land use conflict and assessment, growers should also consider safe machinery operations when designing their orchard layouts. A well-designed orchard will ensure a more profitable and easier to run farm as well as reduce the potential for land use conflict. Growers can consider conducting an onsite land use conflict risk assessment to identify early in the establishment phase any potential for conflict that may occur (e.g. noise, odour, visual) and plan for adjustments to onsite design to mitigate these concerns (refer to state agency websites for further information).

Emergency preparedness, such as flood, bushfire and climate change risk levels and management should be also considered.

3.8 Remediation

When establishing their farms, growers should think through possible remedial actions if they decide to remove the blueberries. This may require documentation of buried or hidden infrastructure (such as irrigation lines) and developing a post-blueberry strategy for their property.

Typically, growers have a right to establish and grow their crop on land that is zoned rural without the requirement to submit a development application. However, growers should be aware of their surrounds and endeavour to maintain productive relations with their

neighbours, including an open dialogue about any establishment and expansion plans. Growers should talk to their neighbours regarding their intentions prior to establishment. This includes being available to address any issues or concerns that a neighbour may have in relation to the impact (including potential impact) of the grower's operations on their property and/or amenity. Every effort should be made in the first instance to resolve the matter amicably and to the satisfaction of both parties before it is referred to a third party for mediation and/or resolution.

4 Operation & Maintenance

4.1 Irrigation and Water Use

Blueberries will typically require irrigation for a successful commercial crop. Water use can vary widely depending on growing methods, soil types, and weather conditions. Water should be applied in an efficient manner to minimise waste. Irrigation systems and infrastructure should be well maintained.

Runoff from cropped areas should be minimised and appropriate buffer strips adopted to protect sensitive areas. Water sources (dams, river abstractions and bores) should be utilised in compliance with conditions specified on the associated licence such as; total annual extraction volume, daily abstraction rate, seasonal abstraction rate and zero-take flow control rules. The regulating authority (e.g. In NSW WaterNSW) should be consulted to clarify licence conditions if required.

In addition to being required for compliance, the monitoring of water use throughout the season is good practice as it enables better forward planning for the farm.

4.2 Soil Conservation

Growers may have a duty of care when it comes to soil conservation and run off during operational and maintenance activities. Erosion and sediment control measures require ongoing maintenance throughout the life of a farm and should be managed appropriately.

Additionally, Growers should also consider the implications of disturbing contaminated land. Land that has been used for other forms of horticulture such as bananas may have ongoing contamination. Cattle dips on grazing land that is being considered for blueberry orchards will need to be identified and dealt with in line with government and council regulations.

4.3 Chemical and Fertiliser Use

Chemical use is governed by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) and State pollution control authorities (e.g. In NSW the Environmental Protection Authority). Growers must only use approved chemicals with approved methodologies. All users of chemicals must maintain the appropriate records (ie. Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)) and ensure staff have appropriate training and accreditation.

The use of agricultural chemicals and fertilisers can be a source of concern for the community. Where agricultural land adjoins residential areas special considerations should be made to adopt methods for minimising over-spray and spray drift. Over fertilising can have major pollution risks and be a waste of money for growers. Growers should consult with industry organisations and the various primary industry agencies on fertiliser usage for Blueberries. Establishing good rapport with neighbours and keeping them informed about spraying activities on the farm is important to maintain community support for farming.

4.4 Waste

Productive farms will generate waste products on an ongoing basis. These will include items such as fertiliser and chemical containers. Growers must take care to dispose of these

containers in an approved manner. Growers should also consider waste generated by picking labour and how this may be collected and disposed. DrumMuster and ChemClear are examples of national programs established to remove chemical containers and unused chemicals. Disposal of growing media waste, plastics, netting and waste water runoff will need to be done in accordance with regulations and growers are encouraged to seek guidance on what compliance needs to be achieved. Burning of waste is prohibited in most locations and can result in significant fines and other repercussions.

4.5 Workplace Health and Safety

Growers have legal responsibilities to implement workplace health and safety practices under relevant State acts and regulations (<https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/>). These are designed to protect the health and safety of employees, contractors, volunteers, visitors, customers and the public. They include the requirements to:

- provide safe work premises;
- assess risks and implement appropriate measures for controlling them;
- ensure safe use and handling of goods and substances;
- provide and maintain safe machinery and materials;
- assess workplace layout and provide safe systems of work;
- provide a suitable working environment and facilities;
- have insurance and workers compensation insurance for employees; and
- provide appropriate safety inductions for all employees

Growers should ensure that adequate toilets and hand washing facilities are available both at the pack house and in the field. A Model code of Practice is available from SafeWork Australia at www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/model-code-practice-managing-work-environment-and-facilities. Growers should promote a culture of safe work practices to ensure the safety and well-being of their workforce, minimize lost injury time and avoid litigation.

4.6 Biosecurity

Growers should maintain awareness of biosecurity pests (e.g. fruit fly), diseases (e.g. Blueberry Rust) and regional biosecurity risks. Systems should be adopted to prevent on-farm entry of biosecurity risks through supply of crop and other land use inputs (e.g. nursery stock). Suitable monitoring systems should be established to identify if biosecurity risks are present and (if present) determine the level of severity. Plans should be in place to conduct curative and/or preventive control measures for biosecurity threats. Action should be taken in a timely and effective manner. Growers should comply with all inter and intrastate biosecurity requirements for inspection and traceability of all product despatched.

5 Harvest

Effectively managing the harvest period is critical to the success of a blueberry grower's business. This requires both planning and a commitment to quality control. In addition to labour requirements (including pickers, harvest supervisors, packhouse managers and logistics managers) the following key areas should be closely managed:

5.1 Field

The efficient picking of blueberries is critical for quality control and ensuring the product's longevity. Good practice includes picking fruit only when it is dry and picking carefully so as not to damage the fruit (tears and bloom damage). It is good practice to store the fruit in a coolroom before transporting it to a packing house (if so used). Personal hygiene of the highest standard should be observed by all pickers at all times. Suitable facilities should also be provided to enable pickers to maintain hygiene standards. Picking vessels should be washed thoroughly on a daily basis.

5.2 Packing

The timely packing of blueberries is critical to maintain the quality of the fruit prior to transportation. Cooling systems are required to remove the field heat from the fruit and extend shelf life. Cooling systems require maintenance and calibration to ensure stable temperatures are achieved. Condensation should be minimised to prevent the growth of mould on the fruit.

5.3 Transport and cool chain

The seamless transportation in refrigerated units of blueberries is required to maintain the shelf life of the fruit. Suitable access roads and loading facilities should be provided to enable trucks to be loaded efficiently and safely. It is good practice to use data loggers in the refrigerated containers to monitor the conditions that the fruit experiences during transport.

5.4 Quality Assurance (QA)

Growers are encouraged to adopt a recognised Quality Assurance (QA) system, such as Freshcare (<https://www.freshcare.com.au/>). Adoption of these systems provides product traceability and access to broader markets.

QA systems ensure compliance with good practice controls relating to many aspects of farming including harvest specific issues, spraying records and methodologies, and food safety aspects.

6 People

The blueberry industry is labour intensive requiring a large seasonal workforce to pick and pack the berries.

Growers should be aware of their legal obligations under relevant workplace law and should at all times comply with that law as it applies to the engagement, ongoing employment and payment of those people they employ directly and/or source through third party suppliers.

Consistent with the Horticulture Award, growers can remunerate pickers through payment of either a piece rate or an hourly rate. If a worker is paid a piece rate, then there must be a written piecework agreement between the employer and the individual employee signed by both parties. The employer must give the individual employee a copy of the piecework agreement and maintain appropriate employment records. When in doubt the Fair Work Ombudsman <https://www.fairwork.gov.au> is a good starting point for obtaining and/or verifying the details of relevant awards and agreements.

As with the general agricultural sector, the blueberry industry has a reliance on backpacker labour, made up of both local and overseas workers, who most commonly come to Australia on a Working Holiday Visa (Subclass 417). This is a temporary visa for young people who want to holiday and work in Australia for up to a year. It also encourages cultural exchange and closer ties between Australia and eligible countries. A number of other visa classes are also available for attracting and employing seasonal workers.

Growers should only engage visa holders who have a valid visa that allows them to undertake paid work in Australia. If a grower engages visa holders via a third party supplier, they must also satisfy themselves that the visa holder has a valid visa and an entitlement to work in Australia.

It is good practice for growers to be aware of any impacts that their workers may be having in the local area. Many of these seasonal workers come from overseas and in some cases English is not well understood. These workers can and do have an impact on smaller rural communities. These impacts are both positive (economically) and can be negative if basic information and education are not part of the workforce management practices. Simple customs that may be rightly acceptable in a worker's home country may be against regulations in some areas. For example, marine parks prohibit the collection of shell fish and other rock dwelling marine life. However, in some worker's home environments the collecting of these marine creatures is accepted and a delicacy. Information about what you can or cannot do in the local communities is a way of avoiding community conflict. If there are known instances of poor treatment of workers off-farm, including the provision of sub-standard accommodation or exploitation by landlords, then growers should report this to the appropriate authorities without delay.

The health and safety of all farm workers is paramount. Growers should be aware of their legal obligations under relevant health and safety laws and will provide so far as is reasonably practicable a healthy and safe work environment for all people associated with the grower, including employees, contractors, suppliers and visitors.

Safe work practices should be developed for all key tasks and adequate resources allocated to ensure all staff are appropriately trained in the activities that they undertake so as to minimise the risk to their health and safety. A reliance on a seasonal and multi lingual workforce necessitates the development of a well planned and executed workplace health and safety policy.

7 Liaising with the Community

7.1 Rules and Regulations

There are many Commonwealth, State and Local laws which govern of the running of an agribusiness in Australia. Growers need to familiarise themselves with laws not only in relation to their farming practices, but also those that related to commercial, employment and taxation laws.

It is important that growers follow all applicable laws in order to build trust in the industry, and to protect its reputation and social licence.

Growers should seek professional advice in the first instance where they are unsure of the applicable laws.

7.2 Working with Neighbours

Many farms are located adjacent to rural land, forests or non-populated areas and have minimal impact on amenity. In those circumstances where a farm neighbours a residential or rural residential property, growers need to take extra care to ensure good neighbourly relations. Before commencing a development, legislation may compel a grower to notify neighbours. Growers need to be aware of legislation in their area of operations.

Farming is not an activity conducted in isolation, so farmers should strive to also maintain high ethical standards at all times when conducting their farming activities, including having a good relationships with neighbours. Growers should be aware of their neighbours during the establishment and operational phases of their farm's development.

Potential buyers of rural residential properties also need to be aware of the consequences of living near farms. Whilst farmers have a responsibility to be good neighbours, neighbouring property owners should respect the rights of farmers to conduct legal farming operations on appropriately zoned land without conflict or interference.

7.3 Conflict Management

From time to time, there may be instances where a grower is accused of engaging in an activity which may be in breach of the law or inconsistent with this Code.

Recourse by a complainant to legal remedies in the first instance to resolve disputes can be costly and time-consuming for both the complainant and the grower. The grower should advise any complainant that the initial focus of the parties involved should be to seek to resolve any issues amicably and without recourse to legal remedies.

Documented below are simple steps to follow in the event of a complaint being made by a neighbour or interested party. These steps are intended in the first instance to achieve a satisfactory outcome for all parties involved.

Step 1. Complainants should be advised to check whether an activity is legal before escalating a complaint

A complainant should ensure they check whether the activity which is of concern is illegal or potentially in breach of the law. Activities that may seem counter-intuitive, such as spraying crops at night may actually reflect best farming practice and are not illegal.

Step 2. Growers should advise potential complainants that they should notify the grower in the first instance if they have an issue, or if they suspect a breach.

If possible, the best course of action is for a complainant to talk directly to the grower. By having a frank and honest discussion an outcome may be achieved where both parties are happy and the issue can be resolved. If this is not possible, then involving a mediator or another third party which can also help with mediation may be the best way forward.

Disputes can often occur through misunderstandings, and as a result are often escalated unnecessarily. Misinformation, malicious gossip, and third parties can all inadvertently contribute to what is a relatively minor issue becoming a major dispute.

Step 3. Complainants notifying the relevant authorities

If there is no satisfactory resolution after completing steps 1 and 2, it may result in a complainant making a formal complaint. In order to achieve a resolution that is timely, harmonious and achieves a lasting outcome, growers can advise complainants that it is important that any complaints be directed to the relevant authority or regulator (e.g. complaints regarding dams or water extraction in NSW should be directed to NSW Office of Water and in QLD it is the Department of Energy and Water).

Step 4. Industry Feedback

The ABGA is not a statutory authority and therefore has few regulatory powers to compel growers to action. However, if industry recognises a problem early, it is able to better respond and educate growers so that issues are resolved in a timely manner. In order to facilitate and ensure that the Code is effective, authorities and regulators need to provide regular feedback to the ABGA where possible.

The ABGA is committed to overseeing a sustainable industry, and maintaining the blueberry industry's social licence to operate and contribute positively to those communities in which it has a presence.

By committing to this Code of Practice, the industry and individual growers also undertake to engage in open, transparent and timely communication with stakeholders in order to achieve and maintain a productive and harmonious relationship with the community.

8 Grower Checklists

Growers need to be aware that recorded documentation, such as checklists, can be part of an auditable body of evidence that supports the practices undertaken by individual growers. In the future the ABGA will introduce technology enabled applications to make record keeping more effective and easier for individual growers. It is critical that the industry builds an integrated body of evidence to monitor and manage grower practices that positively supports export market management and government or community perceptions. These current checklists are not exhaustive and represent the minimum level of consideration that growers should give to their practices. Where appropriate, regional or local issues should be included in these checklists.

8.1 Orchard Pre-Establishment Checklist

Aspect	Consideration	Yes/No
Variety selection	Have I identified the most appropriate variety to plant?	
	Comments: ** DESIGNERS NOTE – PLEASE LAY OUT EACH SECTION WITH MERGED CELL FOR COMMENTS UNDER EACH QUESTION **	
	Have I obtained the necessary plant breeders rights to grow the varieties?	
Development controls	Do I know what the zoning of the land to be developed is?	
	Do I understand the relevant local government/council development controls associated with this zone?	
	Have I discussed the proposed development with a council planner?	
	Are there likely to be land use conflicts? And if so have I taken steps to address neighbours' concerns? Are my buffers appropriate for the task required?	
Environmental impacts	Do I need to clear vegetation to establish my farm?	
	Are any Threatened species likely to be impacted by my development?	
	Have I consulted with the relevant authorities over environmental concerns?	
Cultural Heritage	Are any culturally significant sites likely to be impacted by my development?	
Watercourses	Have I identified which watercourse could be impacted by my development?	

Aspect	Consideration	Yes/No
	Have I established methods to protect watercourses?	
Water supply	Do I know how much water my farm will require?	
	Have I identified a source of water for my farm?	
	Do I have the necessary licences/permissions to obtain sufficient water for my farm each year?	
	Do I have the necessary licences/permissions to establish infrastructure such as bores, dams and abstraction intakes?	
Erosion and sediment control	Do I have suitable erosion and sediment control plans in place for the construction phase of development?	
	Will my development include long term measures to control erosion?	
Electricity	Do I know what the power requirements of my farm are?	
	Have I identified the power supply for my farm?	
Roads and access	Have I considered access to my farm for all vehicles?	
	Have I complied with local government requirements for traffic access?	
Facilities	Do I understand what facilities are required on the farm?	
	Have I complied with local government regulations (building, waste disposal, worker accommodation etc.)	
Neighbours	Have I discussed my plans with each of my neighbours?	
Pack Houses and Cool Storage Compliance	Have I checked that my pack house and cool storage is compliant and up to date for large customer regulations and local council considerations.	

8.2 Annual Pre-Season Checklist

Consideration	Yes/No/Comment
Do I have an adequate water supply and the appropriate licences to use water?	
Is my irrigation system operational and well-maintained?	
Are the chemicals I use appropriate and approved by legislation?	
Do I have an adequate waste collection and removal method?	
Do I understand my Workplace Health and Safety obligations and am I doing everything I can to create a safe work space?	
Are there any biosecurity threats that I need to inform the relevant authorities about?	
Are my harvest systems appropriate and ensuring that I am complying with food safety requirements?	
Is my cool chain system optimised to ensure a quality and safe product is produced?	
Is my Quality Assurance system in place and has it been signed off by the relevant accreditation body?	
Am I paying my staff in accordance with legislative requirements?	
Do all of my staff have the appropriate visas and paperwork and do I have a copy of this on file?	
Am I minimising the impact of my farm on the surrounding community and environment?	
Am I maintaining positive relationships with my neighbours?	

References

Topic	Useful Links
Water use and availability	<p>All http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/693341/irrigation-management-of-blueberries-in-nthn-nsw.pdf</p> <p>NSW http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/water-licensing</p> <p>QLD https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/water/authorisations/licences/requirements</p> <p>VIC http://waterregister.vic.gov.au/water-entitlements/about-entitlements/water-use-licences</p> <p>TAS http://dpiuwe.tas.gov.au/water/water-licences</p> <p>WA http://www.water.wa.gov.au/licensing/water-licensing</p>
Erosion management	<p>http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/horticulture/berries/growing-guides/blueberry-bmp</p>
Clearing of vegetation/ Native species	<p>NSW https://www.ils.nsw.gov.au/sustainable-land-management/facts-sheets2/allowable-activities-for-landholders http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/vegetation/index.htm</p> <p>QLD https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/land/vegetation/clearing</p> <p>VIC https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation/native-vegetation</p> <p>TAS http://www.fpa.tas.gov.au/compliance http://www.threatenedspecieslink.tas.gov.au/Pages/Cutting.aspx</p> <p>WA https://www.der.wa.gov.au/our-work/clearing-permits</p>
Plant Breeder's Rights	<p>All States https://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/plant-breeders-rights</p>
Chemical use	<p>All states https://portal.apvma.gov.au/ http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/566349/Berry-plant-protection-guide-2016-17.pdf</p> <p>NSW http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/pesticides/pesticides-nsw-overview</p> <p>TAS http://dpiuwe.tas.gov.au/agriculture/agvet-chemicals/legislation-and-subordinate-legislation</p>

Topic	Useful Links
Labour - visas	All states https://www.border.gov.au/Busi/Empl/Empl/employing-legal-workers/legal-workers-a-guide-for-employers
Labour - pay	All states https://www.fairwork.gov.au/pay/minimum-wages/piece-rates-commission-payments-industry-specific/horticulture-award
Workplace Health and Safety	All states https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/ NSW http://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/law-and-policy/legislation-and-codes/work-health-and-safety-legislation QLD https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/ VIC https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/laws/ohs TAS http://www.worksafe.tas.gov.au/ WA http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe
Biosecurity	All states http://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/industries/blueberries/ NSW http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/plant QLD https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/farms-fishing-forestry/agriculture/land-management/certification-moving-plants VIC http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/horticulture/moving-plants-and-plant-products TAS http://dpiwve.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/plant-biosecurity WA https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/biosecurity-quarantine/biosecurity/plant-biosecurity SA http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/primary_industry/horticulture
Quality Assurance	All states https://www.freshcare.com.au/ http://harpsonline.com.au/
Neighbours	NSW http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/421996/Considerations-when-buying-rural-land.pdf

Topic	Useful Links
	<p>https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/412551/Land-use-conflict-risk-assessment-LUCRA-guide.pdf</p> <p>QLD</p> <p>https://www.npsr.qld.gov.au/policies/pdf/op-pk-cor-good-neighbour-policy.pdf</p> <p>VIC</p> <p>http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/farm-management/business-management/new-landholders/good-neighbours</p> <p>TAS</p> <p>http://dpiwve.tas.gov.au/about-the-department/good-neighbour-charter</p>
Waste removal	<p>http://www.chemclear.org.au/</p> <p>http://www.drummuster.org.au/</p>

9 Contacts

For more information about this Code, please contact the ABGA by email on info@abga.com.au.