

APPLICATIONS OPEN

24th November 2025 – 9th January 2026



AgCAREERSTART IS A 10-12 MONTH GAP YEAR PROGRAM TO KICK-START YOUNG AUSTRALIANS' CAREERS IN AGRICULTURE.

This unique gap year program provides you with a paid job, training and development, as well as the opportunity to build your networks within the agriculture industry.

You can identify the enterprise type and location that you would prefer to be placed in. A matching process is undertaken to ensure participants are assigned to the type of farms that match their interests and skills.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

- Anyone aged from 18-25 can apply
- Must be legally able to work in Australia
- Minimum Provisional Driver's Licence required
- Previous experience in agriculture not required, but desired

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

- Full-time paid farm job with a passionate host producer
- A \$3,000 Training and Engagement Bursary to upskill yourself
- Opportunity to travel to industry events
- A dedicated 24/7 **support team**
- A network of peers across the country



BENJAMIN | 2022 PARTICIPANT

Placement Industry: Dairy

Location: Shepparton, Victoria



Benjamin always wanted a job in agriculture, but being from Brisbane and having no experience, he found it hard getting a foot in the door. It was important to Benjamin to find the right placement because of his disability, and he was matched with his host farmer, Mandy, who offered him a position as a Dairy Hand. Benjamin was able to perform a lot of different roles in the dairy, from milking to calf rearing, and droving. Using his Training and Engagement Bursary, Benjamin travelled to Sydney and Melbourne with the program to attend conferences and training opportunities, where he made great friends with some of the other participants in his cohort. After AgCAREERSTART, Benjamin stayed on the dairy farm and completed a Cert 3 in Dairy Production at TAFE. He has since been promoted to Senior Farm Hand, and is looking to learn even more skills to put him on the path to one day owning his own farm.



WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT TO GET OUT OF THE PROGRAM?

Get paid to learn

AgCAREERSTART is a unique pathway into agriculture, enabling you to get paid while you learn. Every day of your gap year will offer exciting challenges and opportunities to grow. On top of the skills and experience you will gain working on the farm, you will undertake farm safety training and gain access to a Training and Engagement Bursary to upskill yourself throughout your placement.

A new network

The program provides you with access to a network of like-minded young people also embarking on their gap-years. There will be many opportunities to build your networks and attend significant industry events, such as conferences, agricultural field days, and other local events, utilising your Training and Engagement Bursary.

Ongoing support

We know that starting a new job and moving away from home can be daunting, so the AgCAREERSTART team will provide you with ongoing support to ensure a safe and rewarding experience and the assistance to move into a career in agriculture at the completion of your placement.

FAQs



Where will I be placed?

During the application process you will be asked whether you would like to relocate interstate, or whether you are happier staying closer to home. When we are matching you with a farm, we take into consideration your location preference and industry preferences and try to match you to an appropriate farm.



Is AgCAREERSTART open to people of all abilities?

Yes, please let us know if you have any specific needs so that we can appropriately match you with the right host farm.



Do I get accommodation?

This is farm dependent – many farmers will provide accommodation, however in some cases you may have to find your own accommodation. You can elect whether or not you are happy to find your own accommodation during the application process.



Do I get paid?

Yes, the AgCAREERSTART program is an on-farm working gap year. Rates of pay will depend on the type of farm, the role, and your experience, but all pay rates will be in accordance with the appropriate Award.

PICKING YOUR INDUSTRY

Deciding which agricultural industry you want to work in can be hard, so here are some of the placements we've had so far:

- Cane
- Cotton
- Grain
- Pork
- Horticulture
- Viticulture
- Cattle
- Dairy
- Seafood
- Poultry
- Sheep
- Forestry

We have also offered placements in a number of niche industries, so if you're looking for something specific, we might be able to help you find it. Use this list to do your own research about what's involved, or reach out to the AgCAREERSTART team for advice about what might suit you.

ALEESHA | 2024 PARTICIPANT

Placement Industry: Beef and Cropping
Location: Pine Ridge, New South Wales



Growing up on a family farm in South Australia, Aleesha always knew she wanted to be in Agriculture – but just not sure how. After graduating school and knowing she didn't want to be stuck behind a desk or indoors, she applied for AgCAREERSTART. Placed on a beef and cropping farm in New South Wales, Aleesha found herself conducting a range of jobs including working with calves, yard work, vaccinating cattle, mustering, fencing and feeding. She also got to drive various types of machinery such as buggies, trucks, tractors and even telehandlers. With a keen interest to learn more, along with a kind and supportive management team, Aleesha decided to stay on-farm after her gap year. She has big plans to learn as much as she can, before eventually returning home to manage the family property and introduce a beef stud program.



FOR MORE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS, VISIT THE WEBSITE!



Will I get to meet other participants?

Yes! You will be connected with other participants in your area and be added to a national network of AgCAREERSTART participants, you might even meet them at events you attend while on program.



I already have farm experience, can I still participate?

Yes! AgCAREERSTART is for anyone wanting to work on a farm, whether you have tonnes of experience, or none. If you have worked on a farm before, AgCAREERSTART can help to find you the next role in your agricultural journey, whilst supporting you to gain further training opportunities and experience a different farm, industry, or location.



Do I need my own car/driver's licence?

A minimum provisional driver's licence at the commencement of placement is mandatory. Farms are geographically spread out and are often not located near public transport or townships. You will need a driver's licence to travel to and from work, and in many cases, your own vehicle. While some farms may provide access to a vehicle, this is not guaranteed and varies from farm to farm. While not mandatory, a manual drivers licence is highly desirable and typically encouraged by the Host Farmer.



What kinds of farm placements are there?

We have a range of farming placements available, ranging from outback cattle stations to inner-city vertical farms, to fruit growers to dairy farms. The world is your oyster! Check out our handy industry guide for the kinds of placements we have had in the past.

APPLICATION STEPS

You've decided you're ready to start your gap year in agriculture. Here's how the AgCAREERSTART application process works.

1. Head to the application page on the website to download a practice application.
2. Prepare your written statement OR a video telling us why you'd like to have a gap-year on an Australian farm and why we should select you.
3. Prepare a resumé to submit with your application that tells us about your work history, your education, key skills, and any extra-curricular activities.
4. Send the AgCAREERSTART Reference Template to your character referee. Note: your referee must not be related to you.
5. Submit your application via the AgCAREERSTART website, before the deadline.
6. Sit tight! The AgCAREERSTART team will process your application and let you know if you have been shortlisted as soon as possible.
7. The AgCAREERSTART team will commence matching shortlisted applicants and you will be notified of the outcome via email.
8. If you are matched into the program, you will be invited to attend an interview; online or in person.
9. Pending the outcome of your interview*, you will be offered a placement on-farm for 2026. At this stage, you will also select a start date with your host farmer.
10. Pack up your things, and head to farm to start your AgCAREERSTART placement!

GAVIN | HOST FARMER

Placement Industry: Cotton and Grain

Location: Griffith, New South Wales



Host farmer Gavin came to the AgCAREERSTART program looking to build his workforce on farm, and provide an opportunity for a young person to get started in the industry. Gavin was searching for someone who wanted to learn about cotton and the vast array of technology that he uses on farm. Gavin's participant, Julian, moved from Canberra and was able to experience the full scope of the cotton season, all the way from planting to picking. From the day he started, Julian was operating multi-million-dollar pieces of machinery, and Gavin even had him capturing and analysing farm data using sophisticated software programs. Like many of our host farmers, Gavin believes that it's more important that young people are keen and enthusiastic than whether or not they have a lot of experience.



*In the case of an unsuccessful interview, your application will re-enter the matching process and you may be matched with another host farm. AgCAREERSTART is a competitive program and not all applicants will be successful in securing a placement. Applicants who demonstrate enthusiasm and responsiveness will be given preference.

For more detailed application information, visit: agcareerstart.com.au



For handy videos about the program, check out our YouTube!



agcareerstart.com.au

