

A 6-step guide to becoming a

Farm Stay Operator

in the Gulf Savannah Region





An experience like no other



The Gulf Savannah region in Queensland is one of Australia's most unique and visually spectacular environments, offering vast landscapes, abundant wildlife and outback experiences like nowhere else.

Many visitors to the region are keen to experience what living in the Gulf is like, from staying on working farms, to soaking up the star filled nights over home-cooked meals. You can bring these experiences to life with Gulf Savannah Development's (GSD) farm stay guide, making it easier to set up a successful farm stay business.





A market ripe for farm stays

Agritourism is a rapidly growing market across Australia, which is hardly surprising given the unique country lifestyle experiences visitors can enjoy and the economic benefits farms stays bring to farmers and local communities.

The Gulf Savannah region is perfectly positioned to tap into the demand for farm stays given our vast agricultural industry, deep historical and cultural connections, and access to sought after outback landscapes that draw people in from across Australia and the globe.

Over half of visitors to our region have either enjoyed a farm stay experience or expressed a keen interest in doing so. This shows that people are ready and willing to visit and spend more on these unique experiences. The market is ripe for new agritourism ventures, whether it's accommodation, country cooking, Indigenous and cultural experiences, farm activities, eco-adventures, nature-experiences, or all of the above.

With the high level of support from local and state governments specifically targeted at farmers looking to diversify into agritourism, now is the perfect time to start your farm stay.

This guide has been developed with farmers in mind, making it easy to understand the key steps involved and where to find the right support.



WHAT IS A FARM STAY

A farm stay provides accommodation and experiences to paying visitors on a working farm, varying in size, type of accommodation and activities provided.



VISITORS TO THE REGION

APRIL-OCTOBER ARE THE MOST POPULAR MONTHS TO VISIT

ALMOST TWO THIRDS OF VISITORS TRAVEL FROM WITHIN QUEENSLAND

OVER 50% OF VISITORS TO THE GULF REGION ARE HOLIDAYMAKERS

TWO THIRDS OF VISITORS ARE AGED OVER 50

HOLIDAY VISITORS STAY ON AVERAGE 4.4 NIGHTS

TOURISM RESEARCH AUSTRALIA NATIONAL VISITOR SURVEYS AND INTERNATIONAL VISITOR SURVEYS FOR MARCH 2021 TO SEPTEMBER 2024

EXPERIENCES YOUR FARM STAY COULD OFFER

When thinking about what your farm stay could be, there are no fixed rules. There are many experiences that visitors to our region are keen to do, including:

- Star gazing
- Bird and wildlife watching
- Glamping
- Bushwalking
- Food and wine
- 4wd adventures
- Quad bike tours
- Hiking
- Fishing
- Mustering
- Swimming and kayaking

A rewarding experience

Farm stays offer a wonderful and rewarding way for farmers to diversify their income, share their unique country lifestyle, and tap into the growing demand for more outback, Indigenous and cultural experiences, ecotourism and nature-based experiences.

Farm stays are not just a business opportunity - they are a unique way to connect with travellers and educate them on farming life, share an authentic piece of outback living, and offer adventures they won't find anywhere else.

While it requires some planning, support is available, and once your business is up and running, the rewards are abundant.



BENEFIT TO FARMERS

- Provides the opportunity to meet new people and share the farming lifestyle
- Educates visitors about the rural heritage of the region and the need to protect the natural resources and amenities
- Supplements and diversifies income



BENEFIT TO VISITORS

- Provides a way to experience rural or 'farming' life
- Offers unique accommodation and experiences specific to the region
- Provides a convenient stopover for the drive tourism market
- Can be hands on, experiencing what it's like to work on a farm



BENEFIT TO THE REGION

- Reconnects people with farming and strengthens relationships between primary producers and visitors
- Supports the local economy by attracting visitors to spend more time and money in the region
- Provides additional employment opportunities, especially with larger farm stay establishments

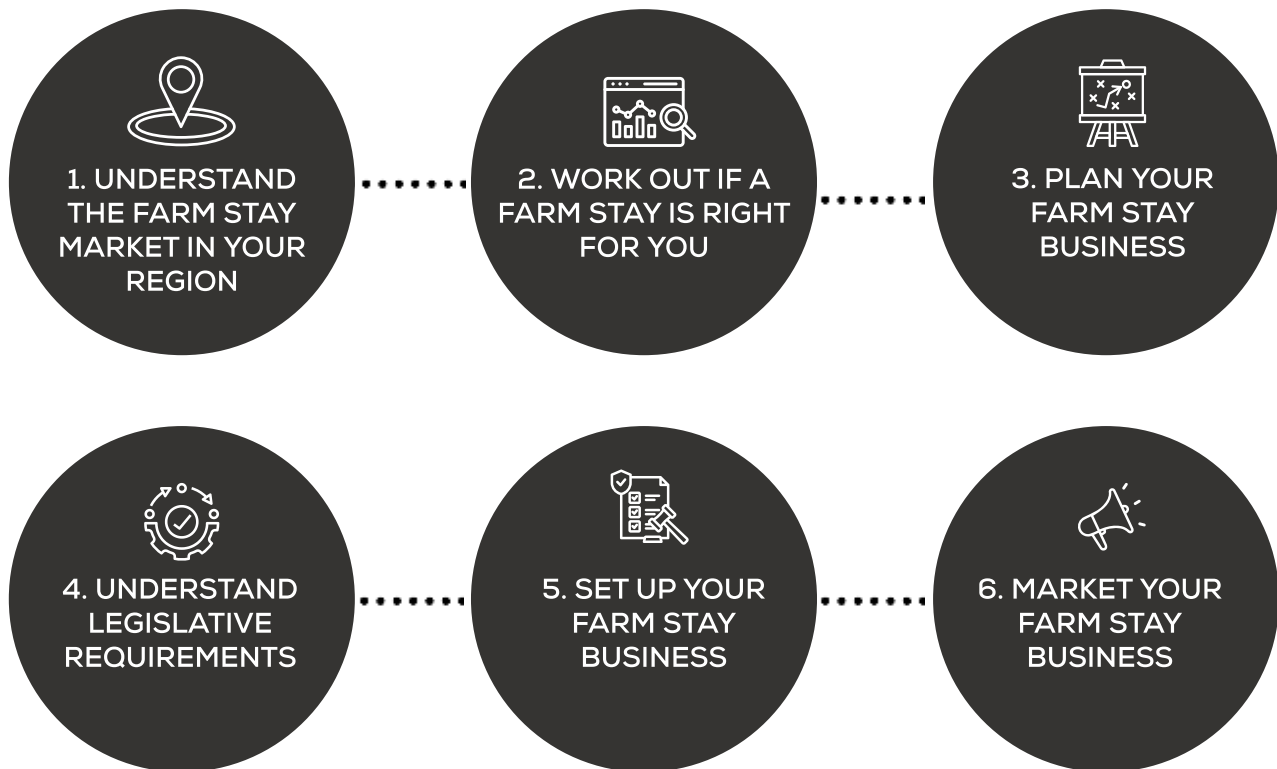
It's easy to get started

Simply use the guide and follow the 6 steps to starting a farm stay.

The guide will talk you through what a farm stay is, the market opportunity, what the benefits are to you, setting up your business, other considerations such as regulations and local laws, and marketing your business.

You can contact Gulf Savannah Development at any time for further mentoring and support to guide you through this process.

Starting a farm stay takes an investment of your time and effort, as well as start-up capital costs, but it doesn't have to be difficult. As you work through each step of the guide, you'll start to build the picture of what is involved.



Important regulations

Starting a farm stay is extremely rewarding, but there are certain local laws and state regulations you may have to abide by.

The guide steps you through this process, and with support from GSD, Council, State Government agencies that look after leasehold land and Native Title arrangements, and your legal adviser, you can manage this process easily.

Aspects to consider include:

- If your tenure allows for farm stay operations
- Whether you have native title requirements and what permission you need to use the land for non-pastoral use
- What accommodation licences/approvals you should apply for from your local Council or the State
- Planning scheme requirements for your local area
- If you need to obtain a building and plumbing permit for dwellings
- What duty of care there might be with regards to Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
- How to comply with any approvals and/or licences for additional activities such as wildlife encounters
- What codes of practice and national standards are relevant to the setup of your business

Setting up for success

When establishing a farm stay, you'll need to work through steps that will ultimately set you up for success. A bit of hard work in the beginning can save a lot of time and effort down the track.

The guide suggests simple actions for you to complete. It also points you to additional information and support that will help you reach your goal.

Contact GSD today to discuss your plans and start enjoying the benefits of your new farm stay venture.

Where to find support

Support is available to help you on this journey. Your first step is to read through the guide to understand what areas you may need additional support, then you can:

1. Contact GSD for mentoring and advice on setting up a farm stay
2. Speak to your local Council to understand local planning laws and other requirements
3. Seek professional advice to help you set up your business and understand regulations



Contact and support

Chief Executive Officer
Gulf Savannah Development
Email - ceo@gulf-savannah.com.au
Website - gulfsavannahdevelopment.com.au
Mobile - 0408 051 358



Images courtesy of Tourism and Events Queensland