

**QUESTION ON NOTICE**  
**No. 1008**  
**Asked on 16 June 2011**

**MR CRIPPS** asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies (MR MULHERIN)–

**QUESTION:**

Will the Minister advise the number and title of workshops, seminars, presentations, symposiums or other events conducted by the primary industries agency to assist agricultural producers in 2009-10, 2008-09 and 2007-08?

**ANSWER:**

The Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) offers a significant range of practical assistance to businesses (including a very wide range of services to primary producers) in the form of workshops, seminars and symposiums.

The food and agricultural sectors are and will remain a significant part of DEEDI's focus. These sectors are supported by the broad range of DEEDI's activities and services targeted at businesses and individuals and helping them to respond to the economic challenges they face.

The information requested in this question relates to a significant number of activities. Last year, in the Science, Agriculture, Food and Regional Services (SAFRS) service area of DEEDI alone, there were 1 133 structured programs/activities aimed at helping businesses build their capacity, improve their performance and/or access opportunities plus 192 consultative and engagement forums held with industry and community stakeholders. In addition, if you include the other service areas of DEEDI, there were 3 210 structured programs/activities and 326 consultative and engagement forums which may well have included primary producers as well.

The structured capacity building programs and activities have included information on: building capacity to change; providing technical information, skills and advice relating to specific primary industries; improving efficiency and sustainability of primary production; enhance quality of primary products and develop products to meet market demands; improve clients skills, knowledge and capacity to manage their businesses; support the protection and sustainable management of natural resources and avoidance of environmental impacts; and support industry consultation and the development and management of Government policy and legislation.

Some examples of the types of forums undertaken during this period include:

- Queensland Freshcare Environmental workshops (2007) aimed at ensuring vegetable industry access to markets as part of the Horticulture for Tomorrow project conducted around Australia.

- Farm Economic Analysis Tool workshops (ongoing) aimed at training sugarcane farmers to be able to consider their planning options for smut resistant varieties or farming system changes.
- Grazing Land Management workshops (ongoing) aimed at assisting land managers improve their profits in a sustainable way by understanding the relationships between pasture, soils, woodlands and biodiversity to allow for better assessment of suitability of different pasture development options and determination of the financial impact of a range of grazing management options.
- Rural Women's Symposiums (2009) and road shows (2010) explored what was happening across rural Queensland to help foster and develop roles and opportunities for women and improve the sustainability of rural communities for women and their families.
- Soil and Vegetable Health Research workshop (2010) aimed at informing vegetable growers about the latest Integrated Pest Management tools for managing vegetable diseases and soil health to increase farm profitability.

DEEDI's purpose since its inception has been on developing a globally competitive, sustainable Queensland economy. For the coming year, DEEDI will continue a major focus on supporting businesses in agriculture, mining, tourism and small business to recover and to build stronger and more resilient regions. It aims to continue to support these businesses to respond to the economic challenges they face.