



Farming

RURAL CONTRACTOR

ALSO CALLED

- Contractor



WHAT'S THE JOB ABOUT?

- **A range of contractors provide services to agriculture, including fencing, spraying, marking, droving and mustering.**

- o **FENCING/YARD BUILDING** – Construct and repair farm fences and yards using a range of materials (timber, steel, concrete posts; plain, barbed, electrified wire, meshes).
 - Own and operate a range of mechanised equipment (tractors and attachments, chainsaws, welders, generators, hydraulic/air tools).
 - Coordinate purchase and delivery of materials.
- o **WEED/PEST CONTROL** – Manage and control weeds and other vegetation and a range of agricultural pests using chemicals.
 - Carry out vertebrate pest control.
 - Correctly identify weeds or pests and advise on appropriate control methods.
 - Own and operate a range of chemical application equipment (tractors, boom sprays).
 - Coordinate purchase and safe transport, handling and storage of chemicals.
- o **ANIMAL HUSBANDRY** – Coordinate a team who carry out a range of husbandry practices including:
 - Tail docking, castration, earmarking and tagging, vaccination, drenching and mulesing.
 - Crutching sheep either in shearing sheds or using portable crutching trailers.
 - Treating livestock for external parasite control.
- o **DROVING** – Walk livestock along travelling stock routes (long paddock) and roads between properties, stock reserves and selling centres.
 - Before large capacity trucks were widely used to transport stock, droving was the most common method of moving livestock. Droving is now a specialised skill most commonly used to keep stock alive during droughts.
 - Own, coordinate and use droving plant (vehicles, caravans, bikes, horses, dogs, portable yards and electric fences)
 - Often breed, raise and train horses and dogs.



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- o **MUSTERING** – Gather livestock into groups (flocks/mobs/herds) and walk from paddocks to yards and sheds.
 - Work livestock in yards and carry out animal husbandry tasks as required.
 - Own, coordinate and use mustering plant (vehicles, bikes, horses, dogs, ultra lights, gyrocopters)
 - Often breed, raise and train horses and dogs.
- o **MACHINERY** – Own or lease and operate agricultural machinery to carry out one or more of the following tasks:
 - Slashing, hay/silage making, bulldozing/earthmoving, cultivation, sowing, harvesting.

• **The contractor operates as an independent business:**

- o Communicating with the farm owner/manager
- o Assessing and quoting for the job.
- o Scheduling jobs allowing for location, season and the requirements of farmers to maximise efficiency.
- o Maintaining budgets, records and reports (purchases/sales, invoices, production records, chemical records, staff/contractor payments)
- o Managing and coordinating the contract team.

WORK CONDITIONS

- Contract farm work is very practical and usually outdoors. Depending on the season and activity the hours can be irregular and long.
- Contractors are expected to supply their own machinery, equipment, tools and plant (horses and dogs).
- Sufficient funds or financial backing are essential to establish the business and purchase or lease machinery and equipment.
- Planning on a daily and weekly basis can be affected by prevailing weather conditions.
- Contractors may work on their own, as part of a team or monitor the work of various teams in different locations.
- Depending on the size and structure of the contract business and team, involvement of the contractor in the actual work will vary. There will be a certain amount of time spent in the office and liaising with owners and suppliers.



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EXPERIENCE AND RELATED TRAINING

- Contractors need the experience, skills and knowledge that allow them to provide a specialised service.
- Gaining a formal qualification will help you to develop the knowledge and skills that you need to develop a successful contracting business.
- If you are already working at this level you can have your skills recognised by applying for a qualification with a training provider.
- Check whether there are training or licensing requirements in your state to do some tasks such as using chemicals or chainsaws, operating a front-end loader or driving a vehicle.

Career path	Training Requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracting Business You work as a sole trader or in a partnership and may employ a small number of staff. 	VOCATIONAL TRAINING <u>Certificate 3 in Agriculture/Rural Business</u> <u>Certificate 4 in Agriculture/Rural Business</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracting Company If your contracting business has been successful you may choose to expand the scale of your enterprise and move to a company structure with increased staff and machinery under the company's control. 	VOCATIONAL TRAINING <u>Diploma in Agriculture/Rural Business Management</u> <u>Advanced Diploma in Agriculture/Rural Business Management</u> TERTIARY EDUCATION <u>Degree in Agribusiness</u> <u>Degree in Rural Business Management (or equivalent)</u>

Related Jobs

- Farm hand
- Stockman
- Farm mechanic
- Farm manager
- Farmer
- Rural business manager/owner
- Company representative
- Extension officer
- Farm advisor/consultant
- Agriculture teacher
- Rural agency staff



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