**Call for experiences in the use and application of three sets of CFS policy recommendations on smallholder agriculture in the context of food security and nutrition**

**Template for submissions**

 **Please use this**[submission form](http://bit.ly/2nAitb1)**to share your experience in the use and application of three interconnected sets of CFS policy recommendations on smallholder agriculture in the context of food security and nutrition.

For the necessary background and guidance, please refer to the topic note:** <http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/discussions/CFS-smallholders-fsn>**.**
**You can upload the completed form to the** FSN Forum **(**[www.fao.org/fsnforum](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum)) **or send it via email to** fsn-moderator@fao.org**.**

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| **Title of your submission\*** | **Australian Food Sovereignty Alliance (AFSA) Submission** |
| **Geographical coverage***Indicate if your submission covers several levels, e.g. national level and regional level* | *(e.g. national, regional if several countries of the same region or/ and global if several countries in more than one region)**National* |
| **Country(ies)/ Region(s) covered by your submission** | *Australia*  |
| **Contact person**  | Name: Anisah Madden (AFSA Int’l Liaison) and Tammi Jonas (AFSA President)Email address: international@afsa.org.au president@afsa.org.au  |
| **Affiliation (indicate your affiliation)** |  Government UN organization **Civil Society / NGO** Private Sector Academia Donor Other ………………………………………………………… |

*\*Please choose a title for your submission, referring e.g. to your organization or/ and geographical coverage*

**If the information provided in your submission results from a multistakeholder consultation, please also fill the table in annex.**

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| 1. Awareness of CFS policy recommendations
 | * How have you heard of these policy recommendations (e.g. CFS meeting or event, internet, colleagues, government, civil society organization)?

Through active participation in the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) (multiple ongoing processes) and CSM work (Australasia sub regional inputs; Agroecology WG; ad-hoc Evaluation WG). However, we have not participated in Monitoring WG activities. * Have you taken any actions to make these policy recommendations known to colleagues or other CFS stakeholders (Please tick the answer below)?

[ ]  No[x]  Yes If yes, please explain: 1. AFSA has not directly used CFS policy recommendations for **Investing in Smallholders (2013)** as at the time of its release, we were just beginning to actively participate in international policy fora.
2. AFSA has shared **What Roles for Livestock (2016)** with our members, followers, and the broader public, but have not directly used them, as we have only recently become aware of these recommendations through our revived participation in the CSM as of 2018. This set of policy recommendations will be very useful to our advocacy work, as livestock comprise a significant part of Australian agriculture.

However, we have always lobbied for the kinds of recommendations in both of these documents, and will now be engaging with the policy recommendations directly in our advocacy work with and for members, in partnership with allied organisations, in our work with local, state and federal governments, and internationally.1. AFSA has been aware of, promoting, and using for lobbying activities the CFS policy recommendations on **Connecting Smallholders to Markets since their release in 2015.**
	1. We have shared them with our national farmer and allied organisation member base (we have more than 700 individual, organisational, business, and farm members), and have encouraged our members and allies to use them in their lobbying efforts
	2. We have met with a number of federal, state, and local politicians to discuss and share these policy recommendations. We have not received any responses from these discussions.
	3. We have used these recommendations to successfully lobby for reforms to both food safety and land use legislation in the state of Victoria (a state in South Eastern Australia) to support small-scale livestock producers by improving infrastructure and access to markets. See details below.
* What would you recommend to CFS member states, Rome-based Agencies or/ and other stakeholders to make CFS policy products more widely known? Please explain:

All levels of Australian government should mainstream CFS recommendations in any policies related to the food and agriculture sector, and use them to guide legislative reforms, change and develop policies, and create programs to support small farmers, processors, and the right to food for all (RtF), guided by and in partnership with those same constituencies.State and municipal governments should also consider CFS recommendations in relation to strategic land use planning and rural economic development, to ensure the protection of agricultural land and improvement of livelihoods for smallholder farmers, particularly women and youth, according to our needs and preferences.Finally, the federal government should use the CFS policy recommendations to guide its national science research agency: the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to develop research programs that are led by and benefit the needs of smallholder, agroecological and regenerative farmers in Australia. |
| 1. Use of the three sets of policy recommendations

  | * Which set(s) of policy recommendations have been used at sub-national, national, regional or/ and global level to support smallholder agriculture (please tick the answer below)?

***[If these policy recommendations have not been used, please go directly to question (xi)]**** For each set that has been used, please indicate for which main purpose(s) it has been used

(*e.g training; awareness raising; capacity development; development/ assessment of projects, national strategies, plans of action, legislative or policy framework; investments by national governments or international financial institutions in favour of smallholders; development of finance proposals that are more favourable to small-scale producers; formulation and implementation of specific national strategies in favour of smallholder agriculture; other*) [ ]  Set 1: [Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security and Nutrition](http://www.fao.org/3/a-av034e.pdf)  Main purpose(s): [x]  Set 2: [Connecting Smallholders to Markets](http://www.fao.org/3/a-bq853e.pdf)Main purpose(s): 1. *awareness raising; capacity development; petitions, smallholder round tables, development/ assessment of planning reforms at state level (Victoria, NSW), state level funding program for small artisanal producers. From 2017-present.*
	1. AFSA created an e-petition and paper petition to lobby for scale-appropriate regulation for small-scale pastured pig and poultry farmers, and delivered this to the Victorian Parliament.
	2. We also lobbied the Municipal Association of Victoria (the peak body for local councils in the state) and they put forward a motion to the Victorian government to support AFSA’s recommendations for scale-appropriate regulation for smallholder farmers.
	3. Through forming alliances with other non-partisan stakeholders, we were able to galvanise broad support for these lobbying activities. We collectively made over 270 submissions to Agriculture Victoria in 2017 calling for scale-appropriate, risk-based planning provisions (AFSA Submission to Draft State Planning Policies for South Australia, 2018) which resulted in successful outcomes:
2. *development of funding programs that are more favourable to small-scale producers*; *awareness building, capacity and infrastructure development.*
	1. The federal government partnered with Southern Cross University to develop a 3-year program called Farming Together. Farming Together was designed to help farmers at all scales (broadacre to smallholder) develop collaborations and cooperative business models to support shared distribution and processing. AFSA has been involved in Farming Together with smallholder producers:
	2. Following a loss of local and regional abattoirs, AFSA organized multiple “Slow Meat” symposia over the past two years, which featured abattoir roundtables, bringing small-scale pastured pig and poultry producers together from across Australia and the USA, to facilitate farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing and solidarity building. As a result, there has been increased engagement in efforts to facilitate the construction of on-farm and small-scale regional abattoirs; a number of these are currently under construction, some supported by Farming Together program.
	3. AFSA’s involvement in this program has also allowed us and our members to have conversations with broadacre farmers who want to transition out of the destructive practices of industrial agriculture to regenerative /agroecological farming practices. These conversations facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration, supporting wider transitions to more sustainable agricultural practices across the country.

☐ Set 3: [Sustainable Agricultural Development for Food Security and Nutrition: What Roles for Livestock?](http://www.fao.org/3/a-bq854e.pdf)Main purpose(s): awareness raising * Which policy recommendations were found particularly useful to support smallholders and their food and nutrition security? Please explain:
* As the Australian government has continuously demonstrated strong support to enable GM developments in livestock (with recent approvals for CRISPR and other genetic techniques in pigs), AFSA is increasingly using the recommendations to preserve biodiversity in our lobbying efforts with government. We also use the data and arguments from the livestock report to support small-scale livestock farmers in their efforts to raise heritage breeds of livestock.
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| 1. Present and expected benefits for smallholders

*Indicate the results obtained/ expected in the short term and in the medium-to-long term, with quantitative indications where feasible (i.e. estimate of the number of smallholders that have been or are expected to be affected)*  | How have smallholders benefitted (or are expected to benefit) from the use of these policy recommendations for food security and nutrition in the short and medium to long-term? How have they contributed to the progressive realization of the right to food? *(please answer in the two boxes below)* |
| Results in the short term (qualitative and quantitative):*(In addition to providing a qualitative assessment, please indicate where feasible the number of smallholders that have been directly involved in activities, e.g. six training involving a total of 250 people)*AFSA used Connecting Smallholders to Markets to successfully lobby for planning reforms in the state of Victoria. The Victorian government responded to the collective efforts of our members and allied organisations. They have streamlined regulations and made them scale-appropriate for small-scale pastured pig and poultry producers, removing unnecessary red tape and restrictions on smallholder farmers (who had been inaccurately classified as “intensive” livestock farmers). AFSA and its allies, a variety of non-partisan stakeholders, also used these policy recommendations to lobby for funding support for smallholders. These advocacy activities contributed to the creation of a $2 million, state-level Artisanal Agriculture Grants program in 2018. Through this program smallholders have access to funding for infrastructure development – for example, on-farm infrastructure (e.g. boning rooms, farm gate shops, and possibly abattoirs) to support ethical and ecological agricultural production. By supporting producers to control the means of production from farm to plate, and reducing unnecessary and costly regulatory requirements, these reforms and programs are improving smallholder access to territorial markets of their choice.While the exact number of smallholders affected by these reforms is not known, based on AFSA’s membership and regular engagements, we believe there are at least 100 smallholder livestock farms in Victoria benefiting from the reforms and the artisanal agriculture grants. |
| Results in the medium to long term (qualitative and quantitative):(*In addition to providing a qualitative assessment, please indicate where feasible the number of smallholders that have been or are expected to be indirectly affected by activities, e.g. training leading to development of local plan of action expected to affect 1,000 smallholders*)We foresee the above programs and reforms will benefit existing farmers in Victoria and hopefully encourage new smallholder farmers to start ethical and ecological farming activities in our region.We hope to use the victories outlined above to continue lobbying for similar reforms in other states and at the federal level.As there is no reliable data on how many smallholder farmers there are in Australia, it is difficult to estimate how many might benefit in the medium to long term. |
| 1. Present and expected benefits for female smallholders
 | * Have any specific actions been taken (in line with these policy recommendations) topromote the realization of women’s empowerment, women’s rights and gender equality in the context of smallholder agriculture? Please explain:
* How have female smallholders benefitted (or are expected to benefit) from these actions in terms of food security and nutrition and the progressive realization of the right to food? Please explain:

While there is no significant institutional policy platform to empower women in agriculture, anecdotally we can say we are witnessing the visibility of women in small-scale agriculture increasing rapidly, and women’s leadership appears to be a key factor in the sharp growth of the small-scale agroecological farming movement in Australia.  |
| 1. Present and expected benefits for the youth
 | * Have any specific actions been taken (in line with these policy recommendations) to promote the involvement of youth in agriculture and related activities in the context of smallholder agriculture? Please explain:
* How have youth benefitted (or are expected to benefit) from these actions in terms of food security and nutrition and the progressive realization of the right to food of youth? Please explain:

While we do not have data on benefits to youth and none of the current reforms that benefit smallholders are specifically designed to support youth, anecdotally we have witnessed a resurgence of interest in farming among youth within the small-scale farming movement in Australia. We believe that the reduction in regulatory and financial barriers is assisting (though admittedly marginally) with the increase in young farmers, but that it is primarily a consequence of young peoples’ concerns about climate change and desire to be part of the solution. |
| 1. Contribution of the use of these policy recommendations to SDGs
 | * How has the use of these policy recommendations contributed (or is expected to contribute) to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDGs 1 & 2 and some of the SDGs targeted in the 2019 review, and to fostering policy coherence? (please tick the answer):

[x]  SDG 1 (no poverty)Please explain:AFSA’s use of Connecting Smallholders to Markets has supported policy, planning, and funding programs that help to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in Australia, many of whom are living below the poverty line and must engage in a variety of income-generating activities beyond the farm to survive.[x]  SDG 2 (zero hunger)Please explain:These recommendations are supporting AFSA’s work to build a fair and food secure future for all Australians, through the promotion and development of agroecological farming. By lobbying for governance systems to support smallholders and encourage broadacre farmers to transition to more sustainable practices, we are collectively making healthy, nutritious, ethical, and sustainable foods available to more people across the country.[x]  SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth)Please explain: Research shows that there has been a 25% decline in the number of farms in Australia over the last 25 years (Alston, 2004), with a growing differentiation between wealthy and poor farming families. The top 20% of farms report income of over $100,000 while the bottom 20% report incomes of less than $10,000 (in Alston, 2004: p39). The middle 50–60% of farm families survive by diversifying their income generating strategies. Using the Connecting Smallholders to Markets policy guidelines has helped AFSA successfully lobby the Victorian government to streamline regulations and make them scale appropriate, develop infrastructure tailored to the needs of smallholders, and provide funding opportunities for smallholders. All of these initiatives help to reduce unnecessary stress, financial costs, time spent navigating regulatory red tape, and improve farmers’ livelihoods and ability to focus on farming and distributing their products to consumers.[x]  SDG 10 (reduced inequalities)Please explain: Please see above comment under SDG8[x]  SDG 13 (climate action) Please explain:AFSA’s involvement in this program has also allowed us and ourmembers to have conversations with broadacre farmers who want totransition out of long commodity chains and industrial practices to regenerative /agroecological farming practices. These conversations facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration, supporting wider transitions to more sustainable agricultural practices across the country. |
| 1. Relevance and expected benefits of the use of these policy recommendations to the [UN Decade of Family Farming](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1479766/files/A_RES_72_239-EN.pdf) and the [UN Decade of Action on Nutrition](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/259)
 | * How could these policy recommendations contribute to the UN Decade of Family Farming or (further) contribute to the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition for improving the food security and nutrition of smallholders? Please explain:

These policy recommendations offer guidance to governments, civil society, and other stakeholders to address policy and legislative barriers for smallholders, implement reforms, and develop concrete programs to support smallholders through investments in infrastructure and developing territorial markets. |
| 1. Catalysts and constraints
 | * What were the key catalysts that influenced positively the use of these policy recommendations for improving the food security and nutrition of smallholders?

AFSA’s awareness of them and collective uptake and use by civil society partners and other stakeholders in lobbying for planning and policy change (which we are already actively involved in on an ongoing basis).* What were the main constraints and challenges in using these CFS policy recommendations for improving the food security and nutrition smallholders?

Australia currently takes an export-oriented approach to agriculture. Almost 97% of Australian farms are family owned (Alston, 2004) and are classified as small businesses (with an annual turnover of less than $2 million), (Australian Government,2015). The majority of farming in Australia consists of broadacre[[1]](#footnote-1) and dairy farms. Around 65% of agricultural production is exported (top 3 markets are China, Japan, and the US). The Government’s 2015 Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper outlines policies focused on improving the efficiency and competitiveness of export-oriented producers. The government’s White Paper also recognises the challenges faced by farmers who sell to domestic markets, noting the declining terms of trade that put farmers under increased pressure to reduce costs in a highly competitive market. It notes the concentration of power over supply chains by major supermarket chains increases vulnerabilities faced by growers who have fewer and fewer options to get their product to market. Despite a 2015 Competition Policy Review which found laws to prevent the misuse of market power were not working as well as they should, the government’s will to address this is limited. It maintains that ultimately, market operation relies on negotiations between buyers and sellers (p28), leaving small producers to fend for themselves. To increase competitiveness, small producers are encouraged to form cooperatives, so they can “scale up” and compete in highly concentrated domestic and export markets. If they cannot manage to do that, they are told to sell their farms, seek counselling, and apply for welfare payments (Alston, 2004).However, smallholders farming in inland rural and remote areas are structurally disadvantaged through a lack of infrastructure, education, and services, and cannot compete in these markets. When agriculture is only seen as viable if it is producing for export or supermarket chains, the economic, social, and environmental benefits provided by smallholder farms are not seen. The development of and participation in territorial markets by smallholders, processors, distributors, and eaters across Australia do not feature in these discussions, and **there is little to no data on smallholder territorial markets in Australia.**In Australia’s food and agriculture policies, there is a lack of recognition of the social, environmental, economic and cultural contributions of smallholder regenerative agriculture and Aboriginal foodways to Australian food security and the progressive realisation of the RtF. Despite the recognition that sustainable land use and agricultural practices are key to improving food security and mitigating climate change, smallholder farmers, fisherfolk, and other small scale food producers, processors and distributors remain conspicuously absent from national and state-level policy discussions and directions. Aboriginal agricultural systems and sustainable land and water management practices, developed over thousands of years, remain under-researched and under-valued. When smallholder agriculture is mentioned, it is in regard to “scaling up” their operations so they can compete in long supply chains in domestic and export markets.“Farmers are stewards of 53 per cent of Australia’s landmass (ABS 2015b), use 65 per cent of consumed water (ABS 2014c) and are the front line natural resource managers in Australia” (in Australian government, 2015: p95). However, Australian government policy continues to promote chemical-dependent industrial farming models, monoculture cropping systems, and individualized approaches to water management and drought preparation. Australia’s relatively fragile dry landmass is constantly threatened by fires, floods, and drought. Drought is a significant issue for smallholders in Australia. Instead of working to change practices that are exacerbating drought, learning from Australian Aboriginal traditional owners and regenerative farmer land and water management practices, government policies focus on how individuals can prepare for and manage drought and mitigate risk through commercial insurance products. Although the government recognises the economic, emotional, and social hardship faced by farmers in climate changing times, with increased frequency of extreme and unpredictable weather events, their approach is one of farmer adaptation rather than system adaptation and mitigation. The government provides concessional loans, counselling, and social safety nets for small farmers who lose their farms due to prolonged drought. There is little in the way of policies to conserve and manage land and water to support system-wide adaptations to sustainable management or policies to mitigate drought.The government has invested $1billion for a National Landcare Program and $700 million to the Green Army to deliver training in conservation management (Australian Government, 2015). While the need to address water and land use and management policies is recognised in principle, much more needs to be done in practice. Regenerative farmer and Aboriginal traditional owners’ land and water management strategies need to be sufficiently recognised and integrated into national and state policies.Investment in agricultural R&D is focused on industry partnerships to foster technological innovation to improve competitiveness. Genetic improvements in livestock, pasture research for dairy producers, minimum tillage and genetic modification in the grains industry, and selective breeding of sheep (p96) are designed to benefit large producers and are directly at odds with the recent FAO report on the State of the World’s Biodiversity in Food & Agriculture. Innovations in digital technology, sensor technology, robotics, communications and management of natural resources are geared towards increasing productivity and market competitiveness. These technologies could be oriented to support small scale farmers and food producers’ regenerative farming practices, investments in smallholder production systems, and support for the establishment and development of territorial markets.Citations: Alston, M. (2004). Who is down on the farm? Social aspects of Australian agriculture in the 21st century. *Agriculture and Human Values*, *21*(1), 37-46.Australian Government (2015). Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper. Retrieved from <https://agwhitepaper.agriculture.gov.au/white-paper> Luhrs, D. E. (2018). Australia's family farms and farming communities: Interdependent, reconstituted, threatened spaces. *Journal of Rural Studies*, *62*, 77-86. |
| 1. Good practices
 | * What good practices would you recommend for successful use of these policy recommendations?

Comprehensive engagement with smallholder farmers, and civil society organisations by local, state, and federal government to identify specific barriers and opportunities to smallholders in realizing the aims of these recommendations. Collaboratively create and implement plans of action that integrate and streamline policy and regulations through all levels of government. Recognise the contributions of smallholders to Australian economic, ecological, and social well-being, and seek to build on these to develop resilient, ecological, and ethical food and agriculture systems. |
| 1. Lessons learned
 | * Do you have any suggestions to make to CFS in order to enhance the use of these policy recommendations for improving the food security and nutrition of smallholders?

Provide funding and technical support through the CSM to smallholder and other civil society organisations at sub-regional and national levels to facilitate outreach activities to build awareness of the CFS policies and facilitate collaborative action.Facilitate engagement of smallholders and civil society organisations with their national governments to further implement these policy recommendations at the national level.  |
| 1. Potential use of the policy recommendations for improving the food security and nutrition of smallholders
 | * If these policy recommendations have not been used (or not sufficiently used), how could they be (further) used in the future for improving the food security and nutrition of smallholders, advancing the progressive realization of the right to food, achieving SDGs or/ and fostering policy coherence? Please explain:

Smallholder food and agriculture production systems and markets should be properly recognised as distinct from industrial farming systems and long-chain domestic and export-oriented markets in legislation, policy, and regulations. Unfortunately, small farms in Australia are subject to many of the same regulations as industrial farms, leading to an enormous and unnecessary regulatory burden. Unfortunately, most existing planning provisions are designed to manage risks identified in industrial livestock farming operations, which have vastly different production, processing, and distribution systems to small scale systems. These differences should be reflected in terminology and legislative and policy development, to facilitate recommendations 17 (promote investment of and for smallholders) and 18 (Access to markets) in CFS policy recommendations for Investing in Smallholders.In regards to improving the sustainability of agricultural systems, smallholders’ and Aboriginal traditional owners’ attention to ecological feedback cycles should be recognised as a highly knowledge-intensive and technical innovation that provides essential information to foster the sustainable management of land, water, crops, and animals. AFSA’s submission to the Australian Productivity Commission in August 2016 requested the Commission broaden its perspective on the benefits of rural production systems. Currently, the Commission narrowly focuses on financial gains. AFSA has lobbied the Commission to take into account the broader social, economic, and environmental benefits that regenerative smallholders working in rural production systems provide to the wider Australian community. These benefits contribute to multiple SDGs, by reducing poverty and hunger, improving livelihoods and wellbeing, and fostering sustainability.In regards to biosecurity risks, Australia should shift its narrow focusing on treating the consequences of avoidable risks, and instead work to improve food and agriculture systems so that they are healthy and resilient to pests and diseases.* What actions could be taken (in line with these policy recommendations) to promote the realization of women’s empowerment, women’s rights and gender equality in the context of smallholder agriculture? Please explain:

Both women and men work in agriculture in Australia. In 1998, research demonstrated that, women contribute 48% of real farm income through both on and off farm labour (Alston, 2004;40). However, gender inequities in the division of household labour persists, with women still performing the majority of domestic and childcare tasks (Alston, 2004). Gender sensitive public and private investments in child-care, health-care, nutrition and education (as per Investing in Smallholders recommendation #14) particularly for rural and remote areas, could significantly improve women’s rights and gender equality. Recommendation 20 – investing beyond the farm, could also be taken up to promote public investment to develop a decentralized, rural, non-farm economy to support smallholders’ access to alternative sources of income. In addition, investing in participatory research, extension and farming service systems, particularly those that respond to the needs of smallholders and women farmers, should be prioritized as per Investing in Smallholders recommendation #15. The integration of regenerative farmers’ and Aboriginal traditional owners’ knowledge with western scientific research should be oriented to benefit sustainable, democratic food and farming systems.* What actions could be taken (in line with these policy recommendations) to promote the involvement of youth in agriculture and related activities in the context of smallholder agriculture? Please explain:

The Australian government is investing $664.1 million in the Industry Skills Fund to support up to 250,000 training places and support services for businesses (Australian government, 2015). The food and agribusiness sector has priority access to this programme. This programme and others should be focused on helping youth build skills in agriculture, not only for the agribusiness sector but for the rural sector more generally, and specifically to support regenerative farming practices. Youth are only mentioned a handful of times in the government White paper, and only in regard to access to higher education. No mention of encouraging young people to take up farming is made, which is surprising given that Australian farmers are aging overall (in line with trends in other industrialised countries). Who, then, will be growing our food in the future? |
| 1. Link to additional information
 | <https://afsa.org.au/>  |

**Annex: to be filled if the information provided results from a multi-stakeholder consultation**

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| **Date of the multistakeholder event** |  |
| **Location of the event** |  |
| **Which groups of stakeholders participated in the event?**  |  Government UN organization Civil Society / NGO Private Sector Academia Donor Other ………………………………………………………………… |
| **Who organized the event?** |  Government UN organization Civil Society / NGO Private Sector Academia Donor Other ………………………………………………………………… |

1. “Broadacre farms are large farming properties where the productive enterprises require extensive land for grazing (sheep, cattle), cropping (cereals, grains, hay) and/or mixed farming (mixed livestock, mixed crop and livestock). Large dryland dairy farms are also included in this definition because of the similar family ownership structures, their size and their distribution in western Victoria” (Luhrs, 2018: footnote 2, page 77) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)