4 My Plan

4.1 Diversification steps 33

- Diversification steps (over 5 years)

4.2 Diversification steps 37

- Diversification checklists
  - » How will I manage and resource the new option?
  - » Labour requirements
  - » Skills and knowledge
  - » Equipment and infrastructure risk
  - » Compliance and record keeping
  - » Contingency and risk management

4.3 My Farm Diversification Plan 42

- Your in-depth plan using the work you have completed throughout this Workbook

4.4 My Pathway 43

- Your overarching strategic business direction

Overview
In this section of the Workbook, you will dive deeper into your preferred diversification option (identified in **Section 3**). You will work with your service provider to develop a Farm Diversification Plan. This is an actionable and staged plan to guide you over the coming years if you choose to diversify into your preferred option.

You will also develop your overarching strategic plan – My Pathway – which sets out where you want to go and how you will get there.

To complete these activities, you will need to draw on:

- **Section 1.1 Future Goals and Vision**
- **Section 2.1.1 Farm Capacity**
- **Section 2.2.2 Farm Financial Health**
- **Section 3.2 Market Analysis**

4.1 Diversification steps

The activities in this section sketch out the steps you will take over the next five years to transition your current farm setup to your preferred future setup. This will form the basis of your 'Farm Diversification Plan'. **Section 4.4** provides you with a structure and guidance for creating your Plan, that you can use with support of your service provider.

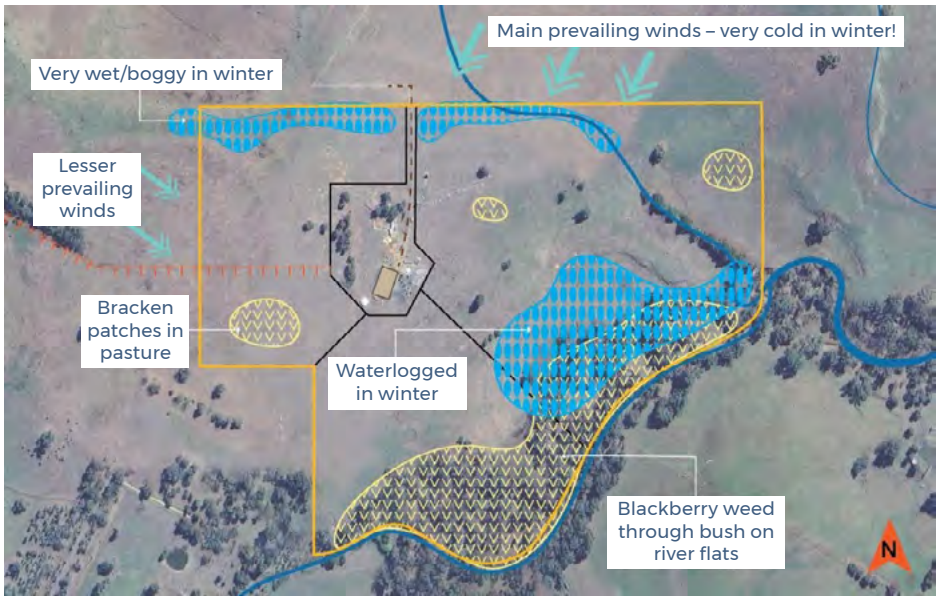
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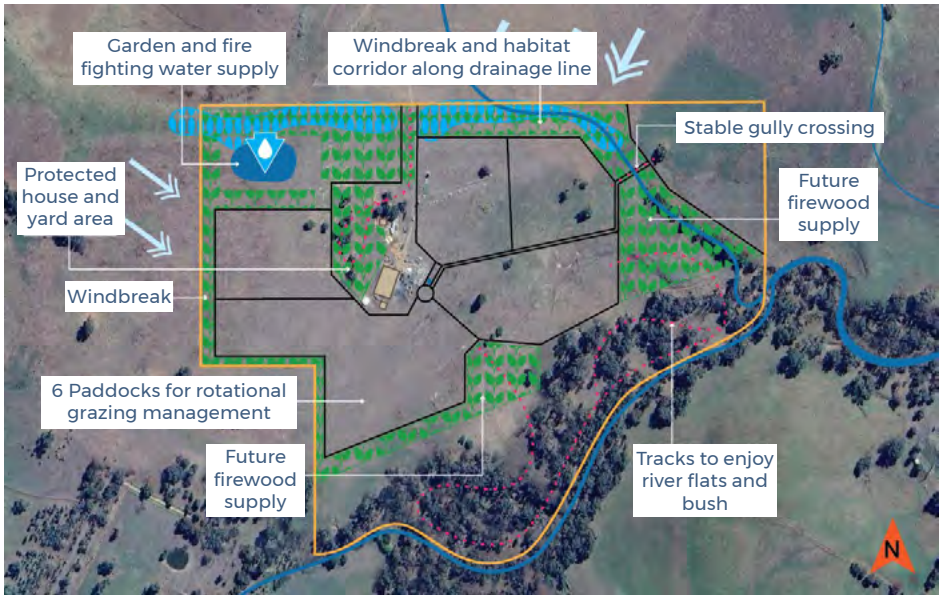
To get the best out of your Farm Diversification Plan, look at it regularly and review your progress. Review is a good time to consider what has changed on your property and what needs to be updated in your Plan.

It helps to use an aerial photo of your property and the tables below, to step out and visualise tasks that you will undertake each year to achieve the new farm setup.

Figure 4.1 shows an aerial photo of a farm with current state (A), and ideal state in five years (B)[3].

Figure 4.1 Now and future versions of your farm aerial view





RESOURCE

Australian Wine Research Institute vineyard removal and waste guide information pack

A useful resource on vineyard removal and waste can be found **HERE**. There is also a spreadsheet tool linked on the first page of the guide.

[3] Mitchell Shire Council (2024) Farm Plan Template. Accessed December 2025 at www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/assets/general-downloads/Environment-and-sustainability/Farm-Plan-template.pdf

Below are activities and questions to support development of your Farm Diversification Plan. Go back to your answers in the Farm Capacity Checklist **Section 2.2.1** and Farm Financial Health Checklist **Section 2.2.2** to help answer these questions.

Template 4.2 Diversification activities – year one

Questions	Your Response	Worked example
Which vineyard blocks will be removed this year?		*Remove 2/3 of vines*
What soil remediation is required before replanting?		*Rip, compost, cover crop.*
What new enterprises will be established this year?		*Jujubes and vegetables.*
What short-term cash flow will replace lost grape income?		*Vegetable cropping.*
What infrastructure must change or be added?		*Irrigation layout changes.*
What external advice will I rely on this year?		*Agronomist and soil consultant.*
What new skills or training do I need immediately?		*Tree crop establishment basics.*
What market research will I do this year?		*Speak with processors and buyers.*
What early market signals will I track?		*Prices, demand, specifications.*
What is my estimated total cost this year?		*$XXX,XXX.*
What are the biggest risks this year?		*Cashflow gap and establishment failure.*
How will I monitor progress and record decisions?		*Enterprise spreadsheet with monthly check-ins.*

Template 4.3 Diversification activities – year three

Questions	Your Response	Worked example
What proportion of the farm is now diversified?		*2/3 of farm is non-grapes.*
How are the new enterprises performing agronomically?		*Jujubes getting bigger; vegetables stable.*
What income is each enterprise generating?		*Vegetables generating cash; jujubes minimal income.*
Are markets still attractive and realistic for each enterprise?		*Mixed but viable.*
What market research will I do this year?		*Test market pathways and pricing assumptions.*
What processing or aggregation pathways must be secured?		*Identify jujubes and agave processing options and requirements.*
What feedback am I getting from buyers or processors?		*Quality promising: specs clarified.*
Which block or enterprise transitions next?		*Pumpkin area transitions to agave.*
What preparation is required for that transition?		*Soil prep, planting stock, irrigation checks.*
What new advice or skills are needed now?		*Identify olive and agave harvest and processing options and requirements.*
What is my cash flow position this year?		*Tight but manageable.*
What decisions must be made before next season?		*Confirm agave pathway, scale, and budget.*

Template 4.4 Diversification activities – year five

Questions	Your Response	Worked example
Which enterprises are now productive?		*Jujubes producing; vines now earning; agave established.*
What income does each enterprise contribute?		*More evenly spread income.*
How are winegrapes performing relative to expectations?		*Some price rebound; grapes contributing again.*
Are markets secure and diversified across enterprises?		*Multiple pathways; not reliant on one buyer.*
What market research will I do this year?		*Forward pricing, contracts, and buyer check-ins.*
What trends or risks am I seeing in each market?		*Ongoing volatility; input costs and labour risk.*
Should any enterprise be expanded, reduced or paused?		*Expand the best performer; adjust the weakest or replace.*
Is infrastructure still fit for the current mix?		*Yes, with minor upgrades.*
How resilient is the whole system now?		*Higher than Year 1.*
What skills or labour gaps remain?		*Harvest and seasonal labour coordination.*
How does this mix compare to grape-only returns?		*Lower overall risk; more stable cash flow.*
What is my priority focus for the next 5 years?		*Optimise yields, lock in markets, keep flexibility.*

4.2 Diversification checklists

How will I manage and resource the new option?

Growing a new crop isn't only about money. It also requires time, skills, labour and the right equipment.

This section helps you think through whether you currently have the capacity to grow the crop, and how you can find support if challenges arise.

Template 4.5 Day-to-day operation checklist

Items	What to think about	Grower notes
Key tasks	Planting, irrigation, spraying, harvest, packing	
Timing	When each task happens during the year	
Peak workload periods	Busy weeks or months	
Fit with existing enterprise	Does it clash with other crops?	

Labour requirements

Labour availability is often a big concern on the farm. This section helps you check how many people you will need at different times of the year and the skills and knowledge you might need.

Template 4.6 Labour planning table

Task	Who will do it?	Hours needed	Cost ($) hours x rates	When needed
Planting				
Spraying				
Irrigation				
Harvest				
Ongoing maintenance				
Total labour cost				

Template 4.7 Skills assessment

Questions	Answers	
Have I grown this crop before or a similar crop?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Do I understand its main risks?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Will I need training or advice?	Yes ☐	No ☐
Can I access reliable technical support/contractors?	Yes ☐	No ☐

Equipment and infrastructure risk

This section checks whether you already have the equipment you need for a new crop, or whether extra investment is required.

Template 4.8 Equipment checklist

Item	Already have?	Need to buy/ upgrade	Grower notes
Machinery (tractors, spraying)	Yes ☐ No ☐		
Harvest equipment	Yes ☐ No ☐		
Irrigation system	Yes ☐ No ☐		
Storage / harvest / cooling storage	Yes ☐ No ☐		
Packing / handling	Yes ☐ No ☐		



Compliance and record keeping

Many crops come with compliance requirements that may be new to a grower if the crop has not previously been grown at the farm. This checklist helps you identify what new systems you may need for the new option.

Template 4.9 Compliance checklist

Area	New system needed?		Grower notes
Chemical use and records	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Food safety and quality standards	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Accreditation and audits	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Workplace safety	Yes ☐	No ☐	

Contingency and risk management

This section helps you think through what could go wrong with your preferred option, and how you would need to respond to each risk.

Template 4.10 Contingency Planning

Risk	Likely impact	What will I do?
Labour shortage	Delayed operations	
Poor season and yield	Lower income	
Price drop	Reduced cash flow	
Equipment failure	Downtime	
Biosecurity incursion	On-farm response	

STOP AND CHECK!

Now is the time to check in and make sure the option(s) you have chosen is looking right for you. Consider:

- Do you have any hesitations about this diversification option(s)? If so, why?
- Do you have any concerns or issues that may affect the success of diversification? Is there anything else that you need to talk to your service provider about?
- Did anything come up during your answers to the questions in Section 3.1 that made you feel worried or concerned?

Write your answers in the box below and discuss with your service provider.

REMEMBER

The diversification process takes time. It may take you 6-12 months to complete the steps in this Workbook. Checking and checking again is important when you are potentially going to invest significant time and money into a new revenue stream.

4.3 My Farm Diversification Plan

By this point in the Workbook, you will have a picture of what you want for your future, what the farm might reasonably support, and which diversification option(s) you are planning to pursue. You have done all the thinking to see what your farm could look like and how you will get there. The next step is to pull all your thinking together and turn it into a consolidated plan.

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Your Farm Diversification Plan needs to be both realistic and workable. At this stage, service providers play a central role. They can help you to review and re-test ideas, fill gaps in knowledge, and walk through decisions in a way that reduces risk and builds confidence.

Your Farm Diversification Plan should be structured similar to the following, pulling information from the activities you completed earlier in this Workbook. The Farm Diversification Plan might end up being between 20-25 pages.

Table 4.3 Farm Diversification Plan structure and content guidance

SECTION NAME	CONTENT	RELEVANT ACTIVITY / TEMPLATE	PAGE NUMBER
Introduction	Overview of your farm (e.g. ha, location, people, history, farm map). (1 page)	2.1 Mapping your current situation	14
Vision and Goals	Provide your final vision statement and 3-5 goals. (1 page)	1.1 Future goals and vision	9
Situation	Detail why you are diversifying and what led you to this point. Draw on your Farm Financial Health Checklist and Farm Capacity Checklist to provide context for your shift. (1-2 pages)	2.1 Mapping your current situation 2.2 Understanding your numbers	14 19
New revenue option(s): Market analysis	This is where you will describe your choice of diversification option(s). Provide detail on your market analysis. Copy across your BMC and scenario analysis of your chosen option(s). (3-5 pages)	3.2 Market analysis	26
Transition stages	Your transition activities over the 5-10 year period. The details on: · How will I manage and resource the new option? · Labour requirements · Skills and knowledge · Equipment and infrastructure risk · Compliance and record keeping · Contingency and risk management. (5-7 pages)	4.1 Diversification steps 4.2 Diversification checklists	33 37

SECTION NAME	CONTENT	RELEVANT ACTIVITY / TEMPLATE	PAGE NUMBER
Review process	This section details how you will monitor success over time and keep checking on progress towards achieving your goals and vision. You should review your Plan regularly and confirm strategic direction. (1 page)	**5.1 Refine your Plan** **5.2 Using your Plan to guide change**	47 48
My Pathway	You can include your strategic plan on a page at the beginning of your Plan, as an appendix, or stick it up on your office wall. (1 A3 page)	**4.4 My Pathway**	43

We recommend opening a new Word document and copying the content that we have recommended above, using the guidance provided to structure your Plan.

You can use the following template to capture your pathway as a plan on a page. This is a high-level, strategic overview of your Farm Diversification Plan.



4.4 My pathway

Summarise your Farm Diversification Plan on a page. The A3 poster on the following page can be put up on the wall of your office to remind you of where you are going, why and what you are hoping to achieve. This is also a useful tool to communicate with your farm team and family.

The poster is for your **first year** of transition and you can update it for each subsequent year.

MY PATHWAY | Plan on a page

My vision statement

section 1.1

My 3-5 goals for 20 __

section 1.1

My needs

What is your current reality?	What do you want to change or improve?	What does the evidence show us?

Key inputs

What resources are necessary to achieve my goals this year?

Key activities

What activities will help me meet my goals this year? Draw on Section 4.1 Transition Steps to complete this.

Key outputs

What are the things I will see as a result of these activities?

Desired outcomes

What are the changes I will see as a result of this work?

STOP AND CHECK!

- Are there any areas in your Farm Diversification Plan that need further thinking? Is there anything you are unsure about?
- Do you still feel like your vision and goals are relevant and align with what you are hoping to achieve?
- Were there any gaps in your final Farm Diversification Plan or My Pathway 'plan on a page' that you need to address with your service provider?

Write your answers in the box below.

