



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

LEVIES explained



Job no. 950684

LEVIES explained

OVERVIEW

Australian farm businesses are world leaders in production efficiency, sustainability, product quality, innovation and the ability to supply, and respond to, market needs.

The Australian Government and the agriculture industry recognise the importance of coordination to ensure these results benefit individuals and the industry as a whole.

Effective use of primary industry levies and charges can greatly assist producers. By pooling their effort and resources, industries can work together to find solutions to priority issues.

Many of Australia's traditional primary industries strongly value the levy system and the support it provides for research and development, promotion and marketing, residue testing, plant and animal health programs.

The system has enabled established industries to maintain their standing in highly competitive world markets. Smaller and emerging industries also value the benefits of industry cooperation and resource sharing.

The government's role, through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, is to liaise with industries that want a levy system and to implement an effective collection system at minimum cost.

WHY DO WE HAVE LEVIES AND CHARGES?

Industry members pay primary industry levies and charges to fund research and development (R&D), marketing and promotion, plant and animal health programs and residue testing activities that benefit industry. In many cases, and within certain prescribed limits, the Australian Government matches the R&D component of levies on a dollar for dollar basis.

HOW ARE LEVIES AND CHARGES INITIATED?

An industry representative body usually identifies a problem or opportunity facing industry and the need to respond with collective industry funding via a levy or charge. The industry body should consult with the department and make use of the *Levy Principles and Guidelines* when preparing a case for a levy or charge to be considered by industry members. If a majority of industry participants supports the levy or charge proposal, the industry body submits the proposal to the Australian Government for consideration. If approved, the levy or charge is imposed and collected under legislation.

In some circumstances, the Australian Government may introduce or change a levy or charge in the public interest.



LEVY PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

The *Levy Principles and Guidelines* were developed to help industry bodies prepare a sound case for a levy or charge to be considered by industry members. The principles and guidelines require industry bodies to inform all potential and existing payers about the proposal and to provide an opportunity for all prospective levy payers and other interested parties to express their views.

The *Levy Principles and Guidelines* can be accessed at www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/levies/publications.

COLLECTION AND ADMINISTRATION OF LEVIES AND CHARGES

The Levies Revenue Service (LRS) is an agency within the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, and is responsible for the effective collection and administration of levies and charges.

The LRS collects levies and charges from levy payers in more than 60 different industries. These monies are then paid to the levy and charge recipient bodies to fund activities that benefit levy paying industries.

To ensure that all levy payers contribute fairly to the funding of their own industry's activities, the LRS conducts regular audits to confirm levies and charges are being paid correctly.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Levy and charge recipient bodies are accountable to levy and charge payers and to the Australian Government. They are required to table annual reports in parliament and to hold annual general meetings.

The LRS reports annually to industry representative bodies and to levy and charge recipient bodies on its collection and administration activities.

HOW ARE LEVIES AND CHARGES USED?

Activities funded by levies and charges include R&D, marketing and promotion, plant and animal health programs and residue testing for levy paying industries. For information on these activities, access the relevant recipient body's website at:

www.daff.gov.au/agriculture-food/levies/industry

Contact details for the recipient bodies also accompany this brochure.

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LEVIES ONLINE

LRS has developed a system that allows levy payers to lodge their levy returns online as well as change account details and view previous returns. On registration, online users receive a username and password to access web based versions of the current levy forms.

Levy payers can continue to submit manual return forms if they prefer.

NOTE: If you have never paid a levy before, please contact the Levies Revenue Service to apply.

Find out more about Levies Online at [www.daff.gov.au/agriculture food/levies/leviesonline](http://www.daff.gov.au/agriculture_food/levies/leviesonline).

MORE INFORMATION ON LEVIES REVENUE SERVICE

For more information about the services we provide visit our website www.daff.gov.au/levies.

To order the LRS business plan and report to stakeholders call **1800 020 619**.

For more information about levy issues contact our regional offices:

South Australia, Northern Territory and Tasmania

Phone: 1800 814 961
Fax: 08 8201 6099

New South Wales and ACT

Phone: 1800 625 103
Fax: 02 9325 6677

Victoria

Phone: 1800 683 839
Fax: 03 9322 5500

Queensland

Phone: 1800 647 801
Fax: 07 3716 9177

Western Australia

Phone: 1800 895 506
Fax: 08 9334 1677

Information on levies can also be obtained from the LRS Central Office in Canberra:

Post: The Director
Levies Revenue Service
Locked Bag 4488
Kingston ACT 2604

Phone: 1800 020 619
Fax: 1800 609 150

Email: levies.management@daff.gov.au
Website: www.daff.gov.au/levies

Levies Online Project Manager
Phone: 1800 022 384
Email: leviesonline@daff.gov.au

