

FARMAX

FARMAX

# Accreditation Handbook





# Contents

2	<b>Introduction</b>
4	<b>Monitoring Certification</b>
6	<b>Bronze Accreditation</b>
7	<b>Silver Accreditation</b>
8	<b>Elite Accreditation</b>
11	<b>Accreditation leads to more valuable on-farm discussions</b>
12	<b>Important information</b>

# Introduction

**The FARMAX Accreditation programme enables consultants, farmers and other agricultural professionals to become recognised as having advanced FARMAX skills in the areas of farm monitoring, farm modelling and farm systems analysis.**

There are three different levels of FARMAX Accreditation for both dairy and red meat: Bronze, Silver and Elite. Participants can complete up to any level of accreditation they choose, but they must be completed in the above order.

There is also a module called the FARMAX Monitoring Certification which provides evidence of best practice for users involved in data entry and updating of FARMAX files.



## **The benefits of becoming accredited**

- Acknowledgement of being a competent and skilled FARMAX user
- Profile on the 'Find a Consultant' page of the Farmax website (Elite and Silver only)
- Digital accreditation logo to add to your email signature
- Receive FARMAX accreditation merchandise - such as a branded polo shirt, thermos, cap and an engraved pen

Once accreditation has been obtained, participants must complete the refresher examination for the highest level of accreditation they have achieved every two years in order to remain accredited. For instance, if a participant has achieved Elite Accreditation, they will only need to complete the Elite refresher activity.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the FARMAX Accreditation programme is to develop and improve participants' FARMAX skills and knowledge, giving clients and employers confidence in an individual's FARMAX modelling ability.

The learning is both theoretical and practical with the aim of building on biological and financial pastoral farm systems modelling. At the end of the course, participants should be able to make decisions, find solutions and develop scenarios to produce meaningful information and engage in real-world scenarios in FARMAX.

## **Prerequisite criteria**

Participants must have a basic understanding of FARMAX and sound knowledge of pastoral farming. Participants who have not previously used FARMAX must have completed a FARMAX training course at any level.

In order to attempt the Silver Accreditation module, participants must have passed the Bronze module, and likewise, in order to attempt the Elite Accreditation module, participants must have passed the Bronze and Silver modules.

# Monitoring Certification

Successfully complete monthly updates to a FARMAX file and interpret current and forecasted data. Farm file and data will be provided.

Module cost: \$50

(Includes re-sitting the assessment if need be and excludes GST)



## Learning objectives

Following the completion of this module participants will be able to:

- Enter production and supply data
- Update forecast events with actuals
- Interpret data based on the updated forecast

## Topics

- Demand actuals
- Supply actuals
- Reports and forecasts

## Assessment

1. Enter actuals for a farm system.
2. Interpret reports.
3. Assess the forecast

The activities set out in the assessment are designed to help achieve the learning outcomes of this module. To pass, the participant must meet the following criteria:

- Obtain at least 80% for the module; and
- Submit completed work within 30 days of commencement

Participants who fail the criteria have the chance to re-sit the assessment.

The assessment must be completed independently and must be all your own work. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. FARMAX retains the right to revoke Accreditation upon evidence that these rules are not complied with

## Completion

Once the module has been successfully completed, the participant will be awarded with the Monitoring Certification. A two-yearly refresher assessment will be required to maintain the accreditation.

“It was valuable to have the accreditation process, just to solidify that knowledge as you went along..your knowledge base grew as you went, and it was acknowledged by the whole process.”

**Grant Leigh,  
LIC**

FarmWise®



# Bronze Accreditation

Independently create a high quality biological pastoral farm systems model using FARMAX. Information on the farm business to be modelled will be provided. Participants will be expected to accurately enter this information into FARMAX and make suitable assumptions where needed.

Module cost: \$100

(Includes re-sitting the assessment if need be and excludes GST)



## Learning objectives

Following the completion of this module participants will be able to:

- Create a feasible short term biological pastoral farm model
- Use the information at hand and overcome the missing pieces to develop the whole farm system
- Make realistic assumptions based on information provided
- Set up the file for further analysis

## Topics

- Model properties
- Understanding long-term and short-term modes
- Land and stock attributes
- Calibrating a model

## Assessment

1. Create one short term biological pastoral farm model based on a farm story.
2. Convert this to long term.

The activities set out in the assessment are designed to help achieve the learning outcomes of this module. To pass, the participant must meet the following criteria:

- Obtain at least 80% for the module; and
- Submit completed work within 30 days of commencement

Participants who fail the criteria have the chance to re-sit the assessment.

The assessment must be completed independently and must be all your own work. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. FARMAX retains the right to revoke Accreditation upon evidence that these rules are not complied with.

## Completion

Once the module has been successfully completed, the participant will be awarded with the Bronze Accreditation. They will now have the option to continue on to the Silver Accreditation. A two-yearly refresher assessment will be required to maintain the accreditation.



# Silver Accreditation

This module will focus on the basic financial information in FARMAX and how it can be used to complete basic financial analysis. This will be expanded on by looking at a scenario analysis and briefly comparing multiple files.

Module cost: \$150

(Includes re-sitting the assessment if need be and excludes GST)



## Learning objectives

Following the completion of this module participants will be able to:

- Understand how the financial and physical aspects of FARMAX work together
- Understand the financial capabilities of FARMAX and how to use this to interpret different aspects of a pastoral farm system
- Model changes to the farm system and analyse the options

## Topics

- Financial databases in FARMAX
- How to apply different financial components to a FARMAX model
- Create a scenario file and compare this to the current farm system
- Learn what financial reports are available in FARMAX

## Assessment

1. Update financial information in the FARMAX model from the previous Bronze Module.

2. Complete an assessment on different FARMAX financial reports based on the changes made in the model.

The activities set out in the assessment are designed to help achieve the learning outcomes of this module. To pass, the participant must meet the following criteria:

- Obtain at least 80% for the module; and
- Submit completed work within 30 days of commencement

Participants who fail the criteria have the chance to re-sit the assessment.

The assessment must be completed independently and must be all your own work. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. FARMAX retains the right to revoke Accreditation upon evidence that these rules are not complied with.

## Completion

Once the module has been successfully completed, the participant will be awarded with the Silver Accreditation. They will now have the option to continue on to the Elite Accreditation. A two-yearly refresher assessment will be required to maintain the accreditation.

\*Participants must have successfully completed the Bronze Accreditation in order to undertake this module.

# Elite Accreditation

This module will focus on the ability to create different scenarios in FARMAX to come up with practical options for the farm. It will also test participants on their ability to present their findings in a professional report.

Module cost: \$250

(Includes re-sitting the assessment if need be and excludes GST)



## Learning objectives

Following the completion of this module participants will be able to:

- Make decisions, find solutions and develop scenarios to produce meaningful information
- Engage real-world scenarios in FARMAX that consider practical implications outside of FARMAX
- Present alternative recommendations in a professional manner with sound justifications

## Topics

- Create realistic, practical scenario files in FARMAX
- Add files together in FARMAX in order to compare different scenarios
- Write a professional report outlining recommendations to the client

## Assessment

1. Two scenarios/recommendations created in FARMAX will need to be submitted.
2. A report will need to be submitted at the same time as the two FARMAX files which will support your recommendations to the farmer.

The report will be in a professional format and will outline the summary, changes investigated, recommendations, and any financial and physical implications for the farm. The activities set out in the assessment are designed to help achieve the learning outcomes of this module. To pass, the participant must meet the following criteria:

- Obtain at least 80% for the module; and
- Submit completed work within 30 days of commencement

Participants who fail the criteria have the chance to re-sit the assessment.

The assessment must be completed independently and must be all your own work. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. FARMAX retains the right to revoke Accreditation upon evidence that these rules are not complied with.

## Completion

Once the module has been successfully completed, the participant will be awarded with the highest level of Accreditation - Elite. A two-yearly refresher assessment will be required to maintain the accreditation.

\*Participants must have successfully completed the Silver Accreditation in order to undertake this module.

“Becoming accredited gave me the ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses of various farm systems and able to more confidently discuss this with clients and fellow consultants.”

**Angela Tanner,  
BakerAg**





## CASE STUDY

# Accreditation leads to more valuable on-farm discussions

The FARMAX Accreditation programme has been running for five years now, with dozens of agricultural professionals partaking to enhance and test their FARMAX skills across three levels: Bronze, Silver and Elite.

We've created the programme alongside consultants which helps us ensure that the accreditation is as straightforward and valuable as possible.

One of our Elite Accredited consultants, Sandy Campbell, AgSupport lead at AgDesign, appreciates that the whole accreditation programme is broken down into manageable parts.

"The process from Bronze to Silver to Elite was helpful as it breaks FARMAX down – to initially get your head around how the programme works in terms of setting a farm up for Bronze and then bringing in the financial aspect through Silver and bringing everything together in Elite.

"It gave me a lot of confidence around how FARMAX works and how I use the program," says Sandy.

The intent of the FARMAX Accreditation programme is to recognise these rural professionals as having advanced FARMAX skills and enabling more in-depth and analytical use of the system. When asked if becoming accredited had led to more valuable conversations with co-workers and clients about their farm systems, Sandy said yes – without a doubt.

"Key to that is the background knowledge of my clients' farming systems and background knowledge of practical management on farms. It is difficult for anyone to look at outputs

from FARMAX and translate that into what that means on farm without having the background practical knowledge of what needs to be done day to day to make that happen," explains Sandy.

"What FARMAX does is give me a pretty clear template or a visual template to show farmers, to tell them if you do x, y and z this is the likely outcome, and this is where we hope to be set."

Sandy says he tends to do a lot of forward budgeting in FARMAX – sometimes up to four or five years ahead, which is useful for his largely conceptual work. On farm, the main FARMAX feature he uses is average cover, as it is "the biggest, major indicator of whether or not you will succeed".

For new rural professionals starting with FARMAX, the accreditation process is a simple way to get up to speed in easy bite-sized chunks. The FARMAX team is always on-hand for support throughout the whole process and training materials are supplied.

Sandy appreciates that for new professionals entering the ag sector there is a lot to learn, but his advice is to be positively critical and inquisitive.

"Don't view an outcome or common practice as verbatim fact. Look into the detail and view it in context of the wider picture. There are multiple complexities and outcomes that can come from any decision; we are facing big changes so innovation and adaptation are imperative," says Sandy.

"FARMAX is great tool to look at the outcomes and see where they stem from initially and then to see how you can affect the future moving forward."

"By going through the accreditation process I really started to understand the complexity of the software and how much you could manipulate to get the desired outcomes."

**Sandy Campbell**

# Important information

If you have any further questions about the accreditation programme, please contact the Farmax HelpDesk at [support@farmax.co.nz](mailto:support@farmax.co.nz).

## Review and evaluation

At the end of each calendar year, there will be an independent module review which will be administered by Farmax. We value in-depth comments about what worked well and suggestions for improvement so that we can adapt the modules for future participants.

The FARMAX Accreditation programme is subject to change at any time that Farmax sees fit.

## Resources

Resources to provide some guidance can be found on the Farmax website in the Help section. Contact the Farmax HelpDesk with any questions, however, please note that we will only be able to supply limited information during an assessment period.

## Marking

The marking schedule can be found in each assessment. When an assessment is submitted, a completed marking table will be attached alongside results.

## Farmax End User Licence Agreement

In order to complete the FARMAX Accreditation modules, participants will be required to use the software program FARMAX and therefore must accept the terms of the Farmax EULA.

A copy of this agreement can be found at: [www.farmax.co.nz](http://www.farmax.co.nz)





**YOUR ADVANTAGE**

For enquiries relating to this activity manual please contact:

Farmax HelpDesk

0800 327 629  
[support@farmax.co.nz](mailto:support@farmax.co.nz)

Waikato Innovation Park  
1 Melody Lane  
Hamilton 3216

[farmax.co.nz](http://farmax.co.nz)