



Laura Cunningham



Growing up in south west Victoria with grandparents who owned a livestock transport business, horses and cattle played a big part in Laura's younger years. Through friends and her grandfather Laura developed a passion for Angus cattle.

After finishing high school Laura furthered her agricultural career working in the livestock industry not only working at cattle studs but also participating in the Angus youth development program.

In 2010 Laura moved to the Northern Territory, taking on a rural services role comprising mainly horticulture and agronomy sales as well as

irrigation. Although this was a steep learning curve, with the support

of many local business owners, Laura gained experience across the sector and the region. Through this experience and network Laura gained her next role as an industry development officer. "This role has provided me the chance to give something back to the community that has helped develop my technical skills" Laura adds.

Laura's role includes assisting growers with production issues that they may encounter, including intergrated pest management. Laura is also involved in the VegNET program, which provides scientific research based information, and through this has also been able to support growers to gain knowledge and confidence required to effectively implement best management practice change to their businesses.

Laura has found another benefit of her role has been the facilitation of training programs to the Vietnamese and Cambodian communities, helping them to achieve best practice and certification for food safety requirements.

"I have been welcomed with open arms and mentored by many very experienced Government and industry leaders who have freely given me their time, taken me under their wing and taught me the ways of the North."

Extension Officer

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The Role	Prerequisites	Skills Needed	Horticulture Award	Training options	Resources needed	Next career step
<p>Crop Monitoring</p> <p>Pest Identification</p> <p>Disease Identification</p> <p>Nutrient Imbalances</p> <p>Recommendations to improve crop health</p> <p>Undertake Trials and training for new products</p> <p>Facilitation of training</p>	<p>Agricultural Science Degree</p> <p>Field experience is useful</p> <p>Enjoy working outdoors</p> <p>Able to work autonomously</p> <p>Can manage your own time</p> <p>Enjoy meeting people</p>	<p>Critical Thinking</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Good organisational skills</p>	<p>\$49,000 - \$83,000</p> <p>Depends on size of enterprise and responsibilities</p> <p>(payscale Australia)</p>	<p>Diploma in Agriculture, Agricultural Science</p> <p>Degree in Agriculture, Agricultural Science</p>	<p>A driver's licence and own transport a must</p>	<p>Senior Agronomist</p> <p>Researcher</p> <p>Biosecurity Officer</p>