



australian farm tourism

**F** FREQUENTLY  
**A** ASKED  
**Q** QUESTIONS  
Australian Farm Tourism



### **Where does AFT operate?**

AFT operates Farmstay Host programs in QLD, NSW and VIC as well as group farmstays and technical visits in numerous rural towns and cities throughout Australia.

### **How are farmstays different to homestays?**

Farmstays usually include 3-5 students per farm, rather than 1-2 with homestay. Farmstay programs include activities daily, whereby homestay families need to work so guests must do activities on weekdays.

Farmstay programs are more expensive as they incorporate activities and farm hosts take time out of work to spend time with the guests.

### **How far are the farm host families from the pick up location?**

Depending on the region, most farm families are within a 30-minute drive from the pick up location for groups. Individual guests are able to self-drive to the farm.

### **Can you accommodate large groups?**

Most regions where we manage farm host programs can accommodate a maximum of 80 guests. However, the following regions can accommodate larger numbers:

|                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Gatton/Toowoomba:  | up to 200pax |
| The Hawkesbury:    | up to 300pax |
| Cairns Tablelands: | up to 400pax |

### **What options are there for groups that wish to stay together?**

Group Farmstay is the best option. Guests are hosted on a commercial farm specifically set up to host groups including meals and activities. These farms are not usually working farms but provide organised activities with a farm theme. **Activities include but are not limited to:** Horse-riding, Whip Cracking, Billy Tea and Damper, Canoeing, High/Low Ropes, Feeding farm animals, Picking Fruit, Planting Trees.

### **How many people can stay in each farm on the Farmhost program?**

The majority of farm host families accommodate 3-4 guests due to vehicle or room capacity. Some hosts may even be limited to 2 guests while some hosts are able to take up to 7-8 guests and can host an entire family.

### **Can we choose the type of farm we stay at?**

If the type of farm is available in the location the group is visiting, clients can request the type of farm they would like to stay at. If it is available, we will match them accordingly. This is particularly recommended for Agricultural students who would like to stay on a farm that is relative to their field of study. Types of Farms include but are not limited to: Vegetable, Fruit, Dairy, Cattle, Alpacas, Horticulture, Horse Studs, Flowers, and Sheep.

### **Can you guarantee 2 or 3 students / farmstay?**

Surcharges apply to guarantee 2 or 3 per home. If our office allocates 2-3 due to farmstay capacity, there are no surcharges.

### **Can we stay only one night in a Farmstay?**

While one night can be arranged, we recommend 2 -3 nights to gain a full Farmstay experience. Work Experience students are encouraged to stay at least one week to gain the full benefit of their working experience.

### **Do students / guests have to work on the Farmstay?**

Many groups book as part of a school excursion program and whilst the teachers are looking for a true Aussie experience for their students, we understand students might not wish to get their hands dirty. Farm hosts are aware of this and will arrange easy and fun activities that might include sightseeing and light activities on the farm so that they will still have a great experience.

### **What kind of activities are there on the farm?**

Activities on the farm might include but are not limited to: Feeding the farm animals, collecting the eggs, riding the tractor, bush walking, swimming in the creek, planting trees, weeding, milking the cows, riding the horses, picking and packing the fruit or vegetables. At night, there is nothing like seeing the Southern Cross from the outback, night spotlighting or enjoying a marshmallow on the campfire.

### **Are there restricted activities?**

We do not allow students or guests to ride on ATVs or motorbikes. Depending on the school policies and procedures, some groups are allowed to participate in handheld horse riding. We allow students and guests to swim under adult supervision if the school/agent policy allows.

### **Do you cater for seniors?**

Yes. Many of our farmers are seniors and many of our programs are in Series tours for European/American Senior Coach Tours. The groups enjoy a tour of the property upon arrival and then the farm activities are based around some home cooking, reading a book on the back porch or enjoying Devonshire tea and scones. For 2 night stays, farmers can also take guests to local wineries, waterfalls and other local sightseeing locations.

### **What happens if a student becomes ill?**

Firstly, all students must have traveller's insurance. If the student is part of a group, the Tour Escort will be contacted and arrangements will be made for the student to be transported to a 24 hour Medical Centre or hospital. This might be via the farm host family if they are available or in a taxi. The tour escort will look after the student. If the illness is contagious or serious, the student must stay at a hotel with the tour escort or at the hospital by a Doctor's request. If a student is travelling as an individual, AFT will provide assistance to make arrangements for medical treatment. Our 24 hour Emergency numbers are provided to all students during the orientation.

### **Can all farm host families provide appropriate food to students with allergies/dietary requirements?**

It does depend on the severity of the allergy/requirement. We choose families that can provide the appropriate food e.g., some families might be better suited to feed a vegetarian student, some families may be better suited to supply gluten free or peanut free meals. For some dietary requirements, a higher fee is paid. i.e. Halal food. All requests are taken into consideration. (We do understand the significance of ensuring the safety of the students). Students with severe allergies are requested to bring Epi-pens with them and permission to be admitted to hospital immediately in the case of a reaction. Please note that many farms have at least a working dog that is usually kept outside. If there are too many students / guests with allergies, then we ask for the severity and can ask hosts to keep the dogs away from the students/guests

### **Do you accept single farmstay?**

While we can arrange single farmstays (again with a surcharge), it is only available in some locations and there are not a lot of farms that are available to take singles. In most cases it is only arranged for work experience students that aim to stay at least 1-6 weeks, working on the farm.

### **What should guests bring with them on a farmstay?**

Guests should bring personal items including clothing and toiletries. It is preferred that guests have closed in shoes and keep in mind they might be walking in mud and their shoes might become dirty. We also recommend bringing long sleeve shirts, long pants and jacket as the temperature is cooler at night inland and in the mountains. Most farmstays will provide gloves for any farm work. Please also bring sunscreen and insect repellent.

### **Do you offer FOCs for Tour Escorts and Guides?**

Our FOC policy differs according to numbers but is applicable for Bonafide TCs and TGs

### **Can you arrange Farmstay inspections?**

Most teachers wish to inspect all of the homes their students are staying at during their visit. Our on-location AFT guides arrange to take clients to the homes. Costs do apply for the guide and a vehicle can be arranged if required. A farm visit takes approximately 1 hour; Guides must be booked for a minimum of 3 hrs. Within this time, we can usually fit in 3-4 farm inspections. Over an 8-hr period, up to 12\* farms can be visited depending on the location. \*As long as visits to each farm are kept to a minimum

### **Do teachers have to stay on the farm with students?**

Families are provided with training and are able to take care of the students during their stay. Teachers may stay on a separate farm and also enjoy the experience.

### **Do you have bilingual guides?**

We have bilingual guides in Queensland. In other regions, we would book a guide from a guiding company.

### **Do students have to stay in one location using AFT?**

We can arrange visits Australia-wide and highly recommend groups considering different technical visits in a variety of locations so they get to see different aspects of Australia.

### **What is the procedure in regards to providing the applications and when would we receive the final farm host matching?**

The following scenario is when the school conducts the matching. If AFT is required to conduct the matching, please contact us for different terms and conditions.

The proposed number and gender to be supplied to AFT as soon as possible after booking, complete with any known health issues if possible.

1. A full manifest to be supplied to AFT at least 8 weeks prior to arrival of the group. Manifests need to include name, age, gender, class grouping and any known health issues.
2. If a specific request has been made for the number of student / farm, these details to be finalised 8 weeks prior and included in the above manifest. Eg Request for all students to be in 2-3 / farm. (NB Surcharges are applicable)
3. AFT will provide the available farm host profile with the number of beds available at each farm 4 weeks prior to arrival. (AFT determine the number of farms to be use by farm host availability). This gives the agent/school 2 weeks to conduct the matching. Should it be required any earlier, please advise at the time of booking.
4. Farm Host details supplied will include: address, phone number, type of farm, number of beds available, preferred gender, number of family members living at home and any pets.
5. The agent is to provide the completed farm host list with student names entered 2 weeks prior to arrival.
6. All application forms need to be supplied minimum 2 weeks prior to arrival so that they can be passed to farm hosts in plenty of time. Please ensure all information is accurate and any medical conditions have detailed information and doctor's certificates if required.
7. If children have allergies to cats, dogs or other animals, we will try and ensure that students are not allocated to farms with cats and dogs etc. However, due to the nature of the farmstay business, this cannot be guaranteed. It is recommended that agents be specific on whether the student has an allergy, rather than requesting no to animals due to being nervous. It is also recommended where possible that students with similar pet allergies are grouped together so they can stay with a farm host that does not have pets.
8. Any changes to farmstay allocations within 7 days of arrival may incur amendment fees, depending on the circumstances.

### **Complaints**

Host Farms with 2 complaints are taken from our database for a period of 6 months, depending on the severity. A further complaint will take them from our list permanently.

**NOTE:** Any serious cases result in cancellation from the database immediately and permanently.

### **If a group/client does not have time to stay overnight, can you arrange a day visit to a farm?**

Yes. A large part of the AFT business is our technical visits. Visits can be arranged from 1.5 hours to the whole day or several days if a group prefers to stay in alternate accommodation. We can arrange programs all over Australia. We are not limited to only where AFT guides are located so the opportunities are endless. If a group needs a full day program, we suggest 3 - 4 technical visits and lunch. Please feel free to enquire at our office if you have any request and we will try to accommodate the needs of your client.

*Please see the section on Technical Visits for relevant FAQs.*

## **TECHNICAL VISITS**

### **What is a Technical Visit?**

A Technical Visit (TV) is a behind the scenes tour of a working farm, factory or market; and can include a lecture or a seminar by an industry related specialist or Government Official. Technical Visits do not include accommodation but can be combined with a Farmstay within the same geographic area.

### **How long is a Technical Visit?**

TVs can range from 1.5 hours to multiple day visits.

### **Types of Technical Visits may include but are not limited to:**

- Dairy Tours, Cattle Farms, Sheep Farms
- Flower Farms, nurseries/gardens
- Fruit and Vegetable farms
- Coffee Plantations
- Wineries
- Abattoirs, Wholesale Butchers, Auctions
- Wheat Farms, Silos, Sugar Mills
- Seafood or Fish Farms
- Aquaculture programs
- Behind the Scenes programs at local markets

### **Specialist programs with government offices including:**

- Meat and Livestock Australia
- Dairy Farmers Association
- Department of Primary Industries etc.

### **Regarding Flemington Market and other markets, do you provide an AFT guide?**

Yes. We provide a guide for most AFT touring. Our contract with Flemington states that we must also have 1 bilingual Guide per 20 pax. Other markets have similar contracts. Some markets such as Brisbane Market have currently cancelled the opportunity to do a tour due to groups abusing the system so we ensure we abide by their conditions.

**NB** Our AFT guides are specialists in their field and have detailed knowledge of specific geographical locations and the local farm industry.

## **WHY CHOOSE US?**

### **Experience**

- Longest standing farmstay coordination company in Australia, since 1978
- Operating Australia wide with the ability to take large groups over more than one location
- We love discussing and planning new projects and have years of knowledge and experience that we bring to the table

### **Locations**

- Most of our farming regions are not far from major cities enabling schools to use Farmstay for only 1 or 2 nights in short itineraries, packaged with other famous sightseeing options.

### **We Listen**

- We listen, we discuss, we advise. Sounds obvious but we listen to your needs, plans and objectives for your group. We then create the best program to fit.

### **Quality Assurance**

- Qualified, skilled, bilingual friendly staff who are willing to help with all enquiries
- All host farms are carefully selected and assessed and have undergone training.
- Comprehensive orientation on arrival when requested (Japanese / Chinese is also available in some locations)
- 24 hour bilingual coordinators
- AFT Agricultural Specialist guides to accompany groups for Technical Visits
- Public Liability of \$20 million

### **Creative & Technical**

- Whether it's a one day farm visit, a specialised agricultural program or a large group farmstay we like to keep everything under one roof to make it easier for our customers.
- We offer the opportunity for students to do work experience in the farm during their stay
- We develop custom made programs for farmers and business clients to learn about Australian agricultural practices.
- Offer agricultural host programs whereby students are matched with farms relative to their studies

### **Passionate**

- We thrive on the thrill of working on a great program with a fantastic client. We care about our clients and can often be found working out of hours to get everything 'just right'!
- We are constantly investigating new options and avenues to improve our product and we recommend them when they are become available.
- We love what we do, some might say a bit too much, and we bring enthusiasm and commitment to every project we work on.

Put simply, if you want a company who cares about your farmstay experience, choose AFT.



### **STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?**

Please contact us at AFT Headquarters anytime and our team of friendly staff will be able to assist you.



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