



FARM BUSINESS RESILIENCE PROGRAM

Accelerating Apiculture Business Skills and Resilience

About the Program

- Future and resilience focus – drive profit and sustainability with strategic foresight
- Leap ahead & lead the next generation of farming
- Arm yourself with knowledge and confidence to be resilient, tackle change and get ahead of it
- Build on your existing skills, embrace innovation and turn risks into opportunities



Case Study: Building Confidence and Clarity Through Better Business Planning

Participants: David and Fiona Routley
Outback Bee Company, Mundaring, Western Australia

For David and Fiona Routley, the Farm Business Resilience Program (FBRP) has been nothing short of transformational. As relatively new entrants to the commercial beekeeping industry, they joined the program seeking guidance and left with a clear plan, stronger financial tools, and renewed confidence about the future of their business.

"It has made us aware of services – particularly Rural West – and has allowed us to work with industry to put in place economic plans for our business going forward. Without this help and knowledge, I believe our business may have been at risk."

The Power of Industry Connections

For the Routleys, the networking component of the program proved especially valuable. "It's always good to network in the industry, building relationships that build business."

During one session, Dave discovered Clappia and Google Sheets through another beekeeper – tools he has since used to develop a custom record-keeping app for field data and internal benchmarking. This new system now allows the team to log daily activities, helping track performance and guide decisions. "Dave has developed an app for record-keeping in the field, which will be used by all employees to keep detailed records for future planning."

Learning to Work on the Business, Not Just in It

Before participating in the FBRP, much of the Routleys' business planning was informal and "in Dave's head." The program provided structure and professional support to turn those ideas into documented plans. The Routleys were introduced to Rural West as part of the FBRP and they developed financial forecasts – helping them stay proactive and aligned. "We've learned to work on the business, not just in it. Now we meet monthly to go over profit and loss statements."

They also recognised the importance of personal wellbeing in running a sustainable business, introducing social activities as part of their routine to support mental and emotional health.

Resilience Beyond Drought

The FBRP also encouraged the Routleys to think more strategically about environmental and resource management. "We're now more thoughtful about where the bees are placed – choosing locations that minimise water use and fuel costs. We track weather patterns to help predict resource availability."

These small but deliberate changes – the "1%ers," as they call them – have already led to more efficient operations and a more resilient business model.

Building Farm Business Resilience - Program Journey



IN PERSON DELIVERY AND BUSINESS COACHING

DAY 1: STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR YOUR BUSINESS

- Building business resilience
- Drought, climate change and risk management
- Your business health check
- Vision and goal setting
- Navigating and driving change

DAY 2: INNOVATION AND PLANNING FOR CLIMATE CHALLENGES

- Natural resource management and regenerative agriculture
- Data driven decision making
- Carbon and farming system innovation
- ESG- environment, social and governance
- Biosecurity and risk management

DAY 3: BENCHMARKING AND FINANCIAL DATA DRIVEN DECISIONS

- The economics of building farm business resilience
- Financial management and budgets
- Analysing your revenue stream and cost structures
- The drivers of profit and access to finance
- Innovation- agtech, automation, AI

DAY 4: BUILDING PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESILIENCE

- Health and Wellbeing
- Building social and community resilience
- Succession and future planning
- Embedding change and endurance

ONE-ON-ONE BUSINESS COACHING

Turning Knowledge into Action

The couple describes the program as “game-changing,” highlighting how it combined practical learning with emotional support. “It’s given us learning and contacts that have given us confidence to move forward and know where to find help if we need it.”

A New Approach to Business Planning

Before the program, the Routley’s didn’t have a formal planning process. Now, their business goals and projections are clearly documented and supported by data. “In the beginning, most of it was in my husband’s head. Now it can be seen clearly on spreadsheets.”

They also appreciated that the program recognised the importance of mental and physical wellbeing, helping them create balanced goals that supported both business and personal resilience.

Growing Together as Business Partners

Participating in the FBRP not only strengthened their business management skills — it also improved how David and Fiona work together. “My husband and I are more on the same page now. We both see the benefit of working on the business, especially in knowing the economics.” “We’re now on the same page, with clear direction and structure — and that’s made all the difference.”

The couple now review their budgets together and discuss goals more openly, which has helped reduce stress and improved decision-making. “It’s helped us talk about and analyse finances objectively. It’s even helped my anxiety levels by being able to do this.”

Looking Ahead

With their new systems in place, the Routley’s are confident about the future. They plan to continue using their app for record-keeping and performance monitoring, maintain monthly financial reviews, and regularly update their goals and forecasts as their business grows. “We’ll definitely be analysing our spreadsheets monthly, and we’ll continue to assess goals and revise them as necessary.”

The Outback Bee Company intend to expand into new markets for their high-value honey, using the financial discipline and planning skills developed through the FBRP to guide that growth.

The program has given them clarity and confidence — a strong foundation to build from as they grow their family-run beekeeping business.

