



Agribusiness Law

With the widest on the ground coverage of any law firm in Queensland, MacDonnells Law is based in centres with high levels of investment in primary industries: Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville. We can offer expert advice from the northern most point of the State, west to Normanton and Karumba and extending to the south east corner.

We advise those in the rural sector, from fruit plantations to large cattle stations and have had a long and close association with the sugar industry at both grower and mill level. We also advise fishing and trawling operators.

Our agribusiness lawyers have built up a niche practice, advising primary producers in relation to all aspects of property, commercial and private legal matters and have years of experience in:

- sales and acquisitions of plant equipment
- property transactions
- farming leases
- advice on and preparation of all types of trusts and family re-arrangements and corporate structuring
- cultivation and partnership agreements
- share farming arrangements
- implications of taxation, stamp duty, GST and capital gains tax
- estate and business succession planning
- compensation for statutory resumptions and mining tenements
- negotiation of family business issues
- pre-marital financial agreements
- company securities / liens on shares
- joint venture agreements
- estate administration

Fishing & marine

- licensing
- submissions to authorities and Government departments
- applications to appeal authorities
- share fishing agreements
- buying or selling boats and ships
- taxation and stamp duty advice
- salvage and towage claims
- fisheries prosecutions
- conducting appeals in the Queensland Fisheries Tribunal
- marine insurance.

MacDonnells Law understands primary producers and focuses on providing efficient and hassle free service.

Some of our substantial achievements include:

- representing a consortium of entities to successfully acquire the largest cattle and grazing company in the world at the time - Stanbroke Pastoral Company. This included all facets of the acquisition such as due diligence enquiries and corporate structuring.
- representing a National shipping and transport company in relation to sale agreements, vessel arrangements, charter boat agreements and other commercial matters.
- representing Georgina Pastoral Company in the landmark acquisition of the Colonial Agricultural Company from the conceptual stage onwards. Our involvement included negotiations with the vendor and financiers, property and corporate due diligence and subsequent corporate restructuring. This represented the second largest land transaction in Australia's history.



Our Agribusiness Team



Michael Keir | Partner
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Michael Keir has extensive experience in the rural and agricultural industries in Queensland and the Northern Territory. Michael has represented a National shipping and transport company in relation to sale agreements, vessel arrangements, charter boat agreements and other commercial matters. His experience also includes estate planning, share farming arrangements, compensation for statutory resumptions and mining tenements, leasing, joint ventures and sales and acquisitions. Michael acted for Stanbroke Pastoral Company and Georgina Pastoral Company in relation to the two largest land transactions in Australia's history.



Brian Healey | Partner
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Brian Healey is a specialist agribusiness lawyer with expertise in rural and commercial property and real estate transactions. He has acted for some of Australia's largest corporate agribusinesses and family based primary producers in the beef, grain, cotton, forestry and other agricultural industries as well as for leading commercial property developers and investors. Uniquely qualified to practice in Queensland, New South Wales and the Northern Territory, Brian has acted in some of Australia's largest rural property and agribusiness transactions particularly in Queensland and New South Wales.



Joanne Lillywhite | Senior Associate
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Joanne Lillywhite has been practising law since 1998 and advises primary producers in the areas of property and equipment sales and acquisitions, business structures, commercial and agricultural leasing and licensing and family arrangements. Joanne also advises owners and operators in the fishing and charter industry and has experience in relation to permits for operating in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.



Connie Navarro | Partner
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Connie Navarro has been practising law since 2003. Connie provides advice to prominent rural clients and has expertise in all agribusiness matters including sales and acquisitions of property, plant, equipment, water allocations and livestock, due diligence investigations, easements, leases, licences, property re-structuring, vegetation clearing, State lease conditions and renewals. She also assists clients in relation to claims for compensation arising out of mining tenements and statutory resumptions for gas/water pipelines, railway lines, roads and electricity transmission lines. Connie was part of the legal team representing Georgina Pastoral Company in one of the largest land transactions in Australia's history.



Don Macpherson | Partner
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Don Macpherson is an Accredited Family Law Specialist and can provide advice specific to rural law clients including family business and commercial issues. Don heads MacDonnells' family law team in Brisbane. His practice has particular emphasis on complex property settlement and child related matters. His commercial experience and qualifications give him particular insight in relation to business and commercial issues that often arise in complex property settlement disputes between married or de facto couples.



Susan Thomson | Partner
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Susan Thomson is an Accredited Family Law Specialist and heads MacDonnells' family law team in Cairns. Susan can advise rural clients on asset protection in the event of family breakdown, when considering new relationships, and when children marry. Susan has experience in litigated matters in which the primary assets available for division are farming enterprises, and in matters where inter-generational claims to property arise. Susan can advise on the effect of entering a marriage or de facto relationship on property entitlements, property disputes upon relationship breakdown, child support and spousal maintenance, as well as on parenting issues such as duties and responsibilities post separation and children's living arrangements.



Anita Chand | Senior Associate
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Anita Chand heads the firm's family law team in Townsville and is one of only two Family Law Accredited Specialists in private practice in Townsville. Anita has experience in providing advice to clients in remote areas and has an in-depth understanding of the unique challenges faced by rural clients. Anita is also an Independent Children's Lawyer, a Queensland Law Society Approved Mediator and a Registered Family Dispute Practitioner.

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