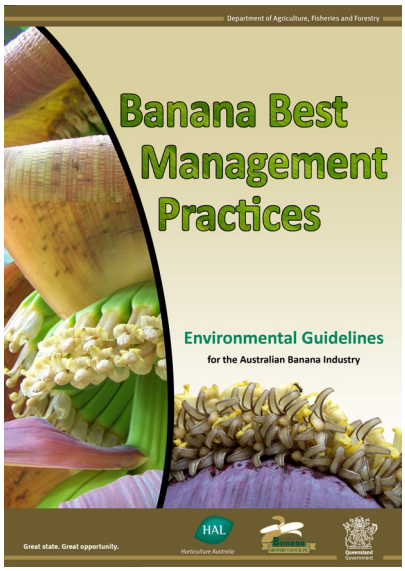
Banana Best Management Practices

Environmental Guidelines

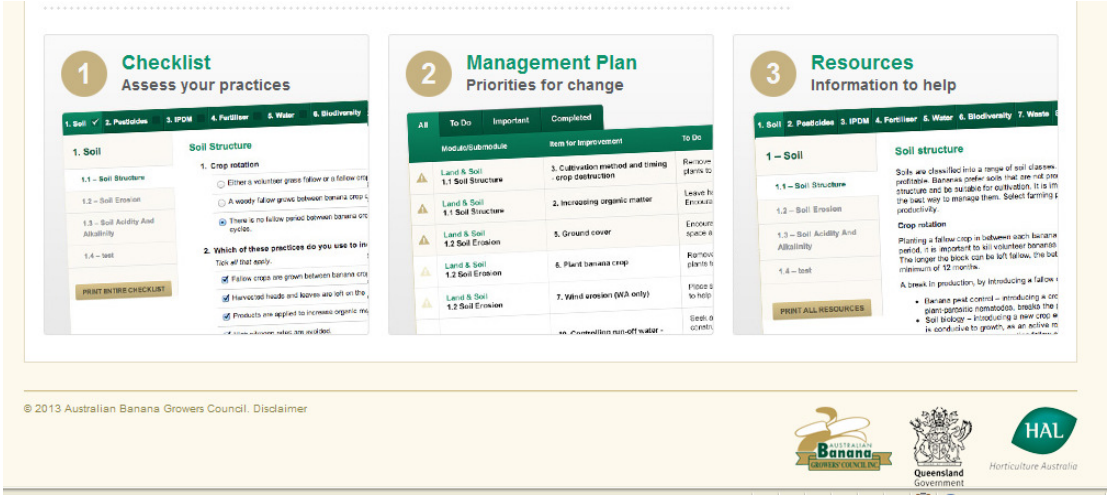
Online-Training Instructions



The Banana Best Management Practices (BMP) Environmental Guidelines have been developed in partnership between DAFFQ, ABGC and HAL. The information has been largely developed and validated by a reference group of 13 banana growers, whose involvement and enthusiasm for the project are gratefully appreciated and acknowledged. There has also been significant input from industry consultants and service providers to ensure that the content is precise and practical.

The Banana BMP has two main functions. Firstly, it provides a system for banana growers to be able to assess their farming practices and identify what their priority actions are. Secondly, it provides the resource material that gives practical information for growers to assist with practice change.

The Banana BMP is essentially a 3 step process.
STEP 1 Self assessment checklist – where you can assess your farming practices
STEP 2 Management Plan –identify your action items or priorities for change
STEP 3 Resources – information to help change



Accessing the Banana BMP

The Banana BMP is available as either a hardcopy or online system. These training instructions have been developed to assist users of the online system.

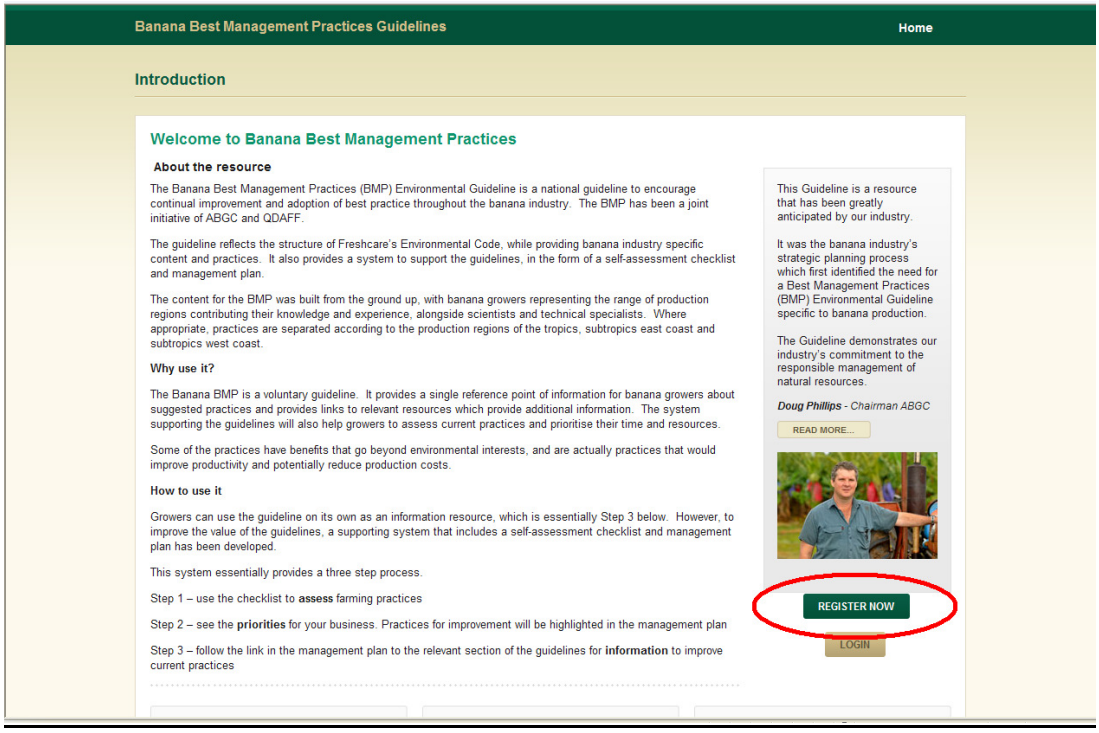
Logging on

1. Open the Australian Banana Growers' Council webpage abgc.org.au

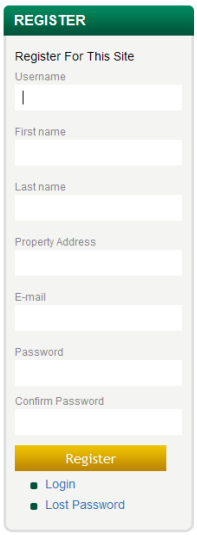
Before you start using the Banana BMP you will need to register your details. It's easy and all done online. After your registration has been approved you will have a user name and password that you can use to log in whenever you want to use the BMP. All the information from your sessions will be stored so you can refer to it the next time you log in.

To register, scroll to the bottom of the ABGC website's home page and select the Banana BMP icon. You will be directed to the home page of the Banana BMP which will provide an overview of the BMP and also a Foreword from ABGC Chairman, Doug Phillips.

2. On the bottom, right hand side of the screen click "REGISTER NOW".

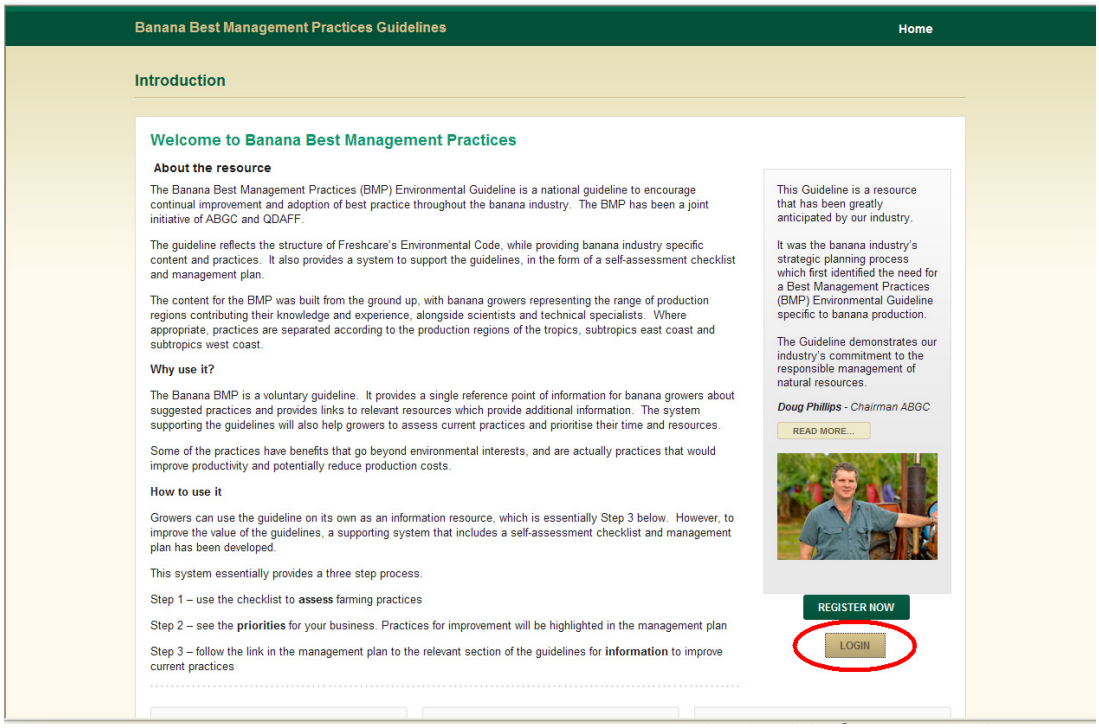


A registration box will appear asking for a username and other details. Your username should be your full name for example, Greg Grower. The format is up to you – your user name can be all lower case or have some capital letters. Your user name can be one word or more. Fill in the other details – your first and last names, property address, email and password. Please note, an email address can only be linked to one username.

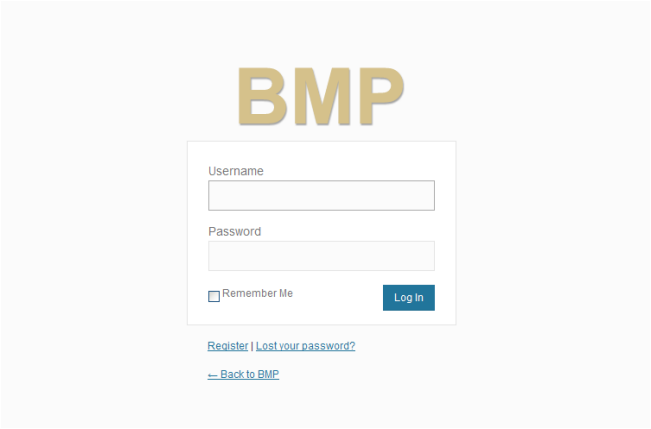


When you submit your registration you will be advised that the registration has been successful but must be approved by an administrator. When approved you will be able to return to the website and start using the BMP site by going to the "LOGIN"

button. The button is on the BMP home page and is located under the “REGISTER NOW” button.



3. On the login page, enter your username and password, then select “Log In”. Please note, both the username and password are case sensitive.

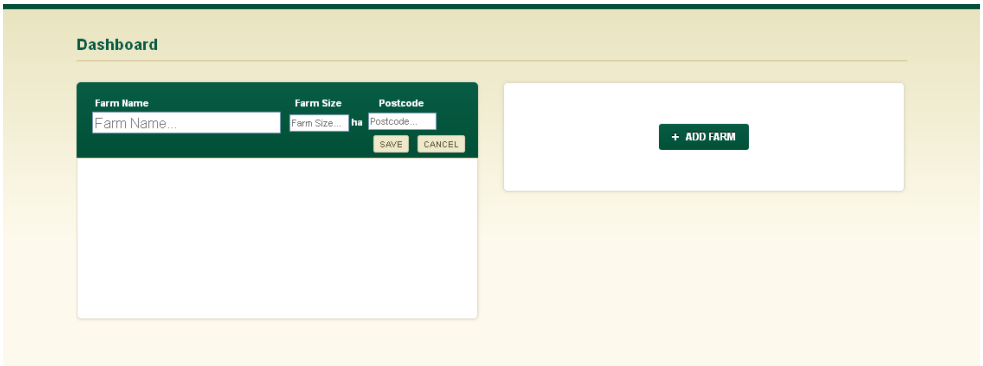


4. **After you login you will see the page below asking you to add details about your farm.**

This page is called the Dashboard. It will become the central place to navigate around the BMP

Start by clicking on the “+ add farm” icon. If you have more than one farm, continue this process for each individual farm.

5. In the first text box - type your farm name



6. In the second text box - your farm size in hectares

7. In the third text box – your farm postcode

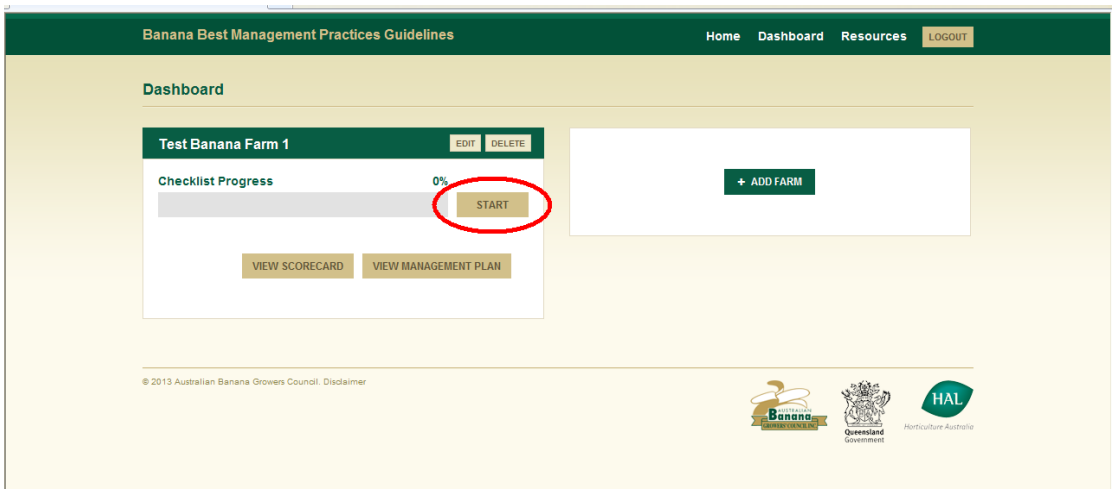
8. Once you have entered these details click "SAVE"

Your farm is now created. If you have more than one farm, continue this process for each individual farm. While most practices may be the same across your farms, differing soil types, climates, water sources and systems will mean some practices may vary. By separating the farms it allows you to assess each individually.

NB. Individual grower information will not be used by the industry and this will remain confidential at all times. The industry will use combined information for the purposes of determining priority areas for industry activities and monitoring practice change at a national and regional level.

STEP 1 – Self-assessment checklist

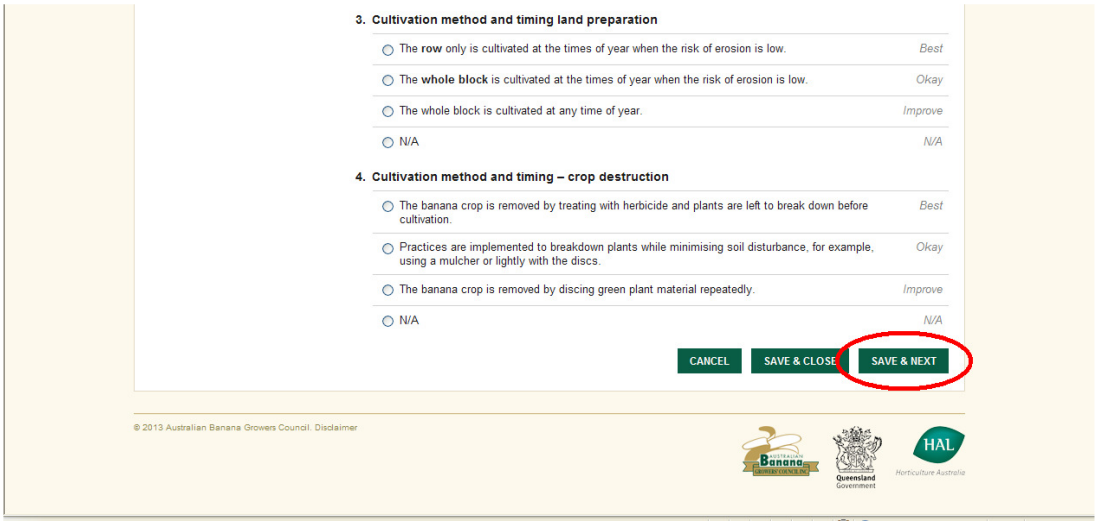
9. Click on the "START" icon and this will direct you to the checklist which is Step 1, of the BMP process



Once you have commenced the checklist you can return to this dashboard at any time and the 'start' icon will now be replaced by a 'continue' icon. This will still take you directly to the checklist. This screen also provides quick access to the scorecard and management plan.

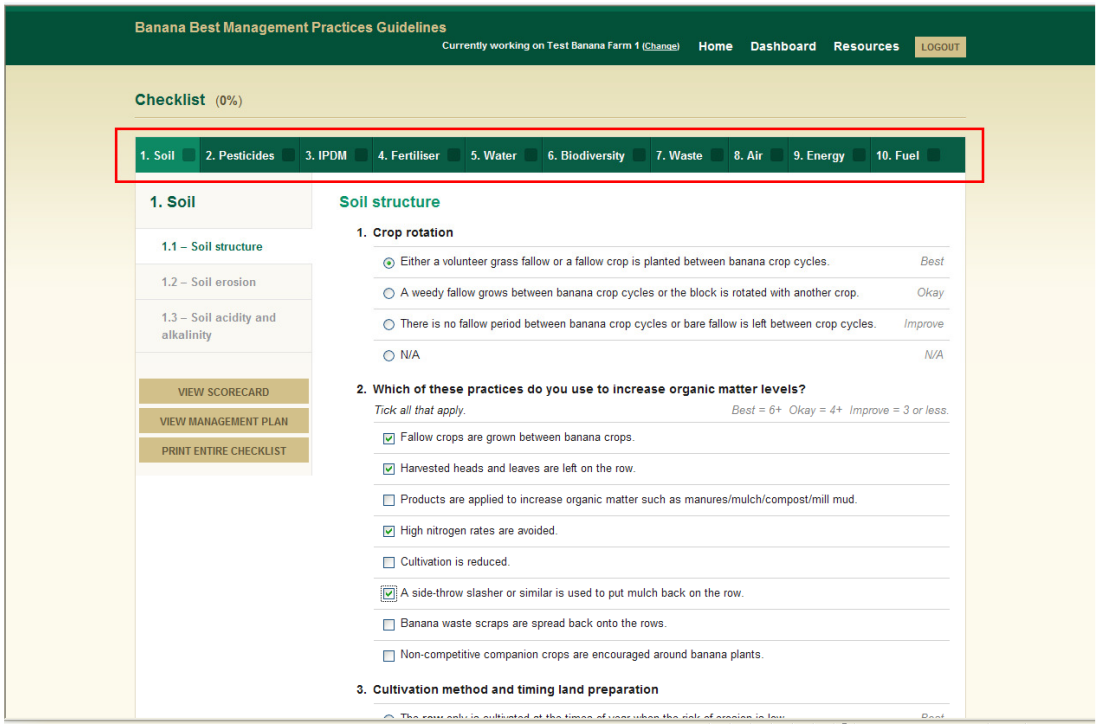
If you have multiple farms, you are able to switch between the farms by returning to the dashboard and selecting a different farm.

10. Go through the checklist and answer each question according to the practices you use on your farm. At the end of each page click "SAVE & NEXT"



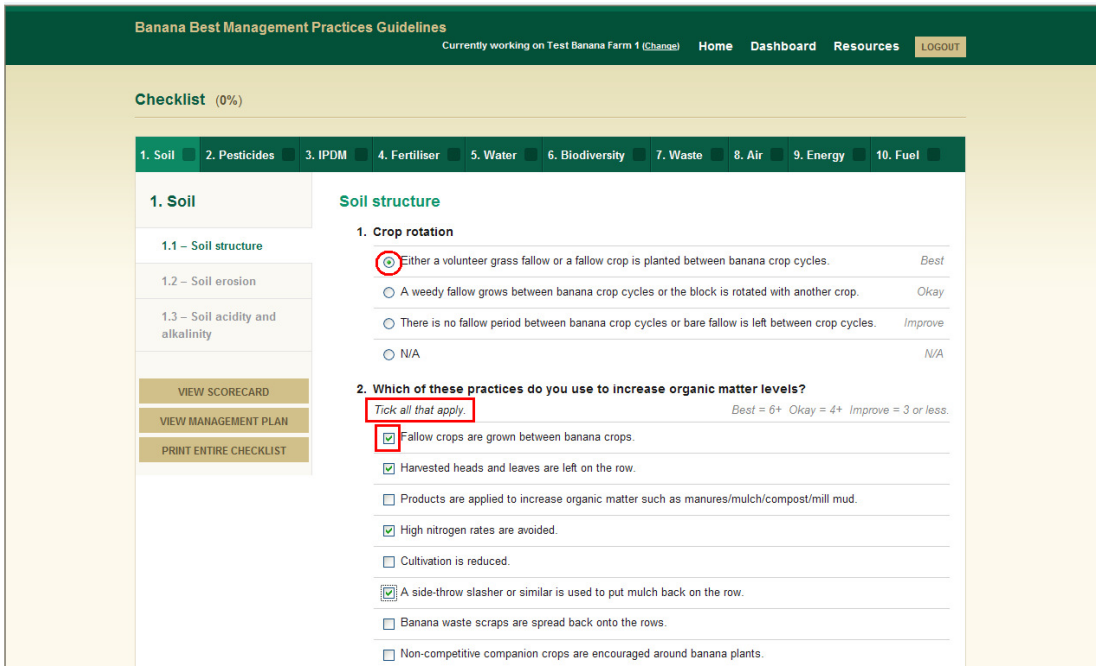
The Banana BMP is made up of 10 modules, largely reflecting the layout of Freshcare's Environmental Code. When you open the checklist, you will see all of the 10 modules along the top. The order you choose to complete the checklist is completely up to the user. If you want to focus on the areas that you think are priorities for your business and region, then you can complete these first.

Once you select a module by clicking on the tab, the sub-modules will become visible. Again it is up to the user to choose which sub-modules to complete. The program default will take the user to the 'Soil' module working in chronological order through the modules and sub-modules.



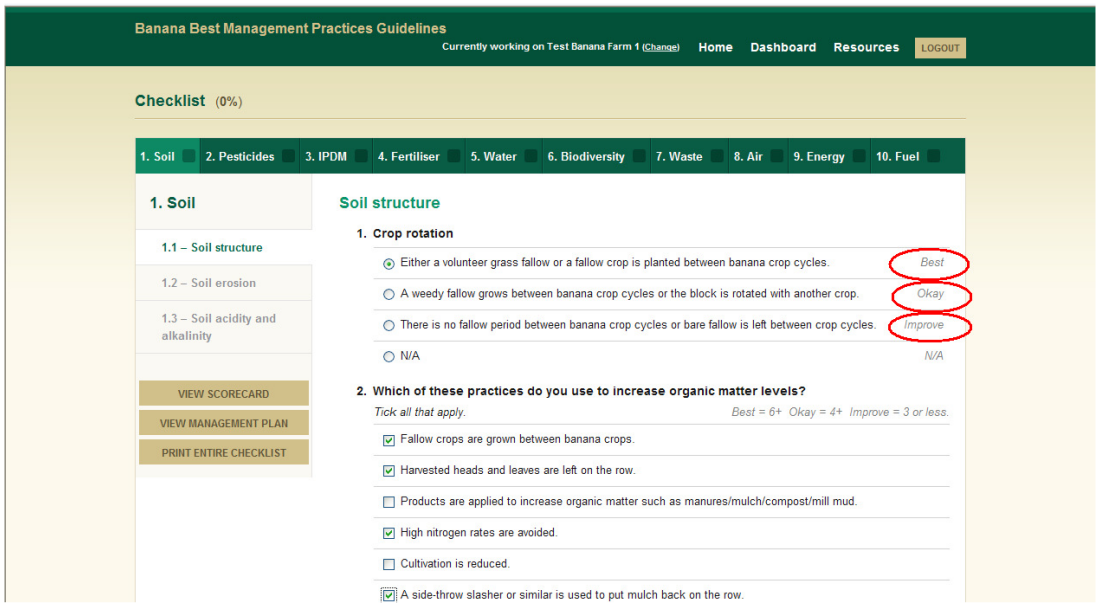
11. There are two types of questions, either single answer or multiple answer questions.

The single answer questions are identifiable by the round character marker. While the multiple answer questions are visible by the phrase 'tick all that apply' and the square character marker. Your overall rating depends on how many practices you select.



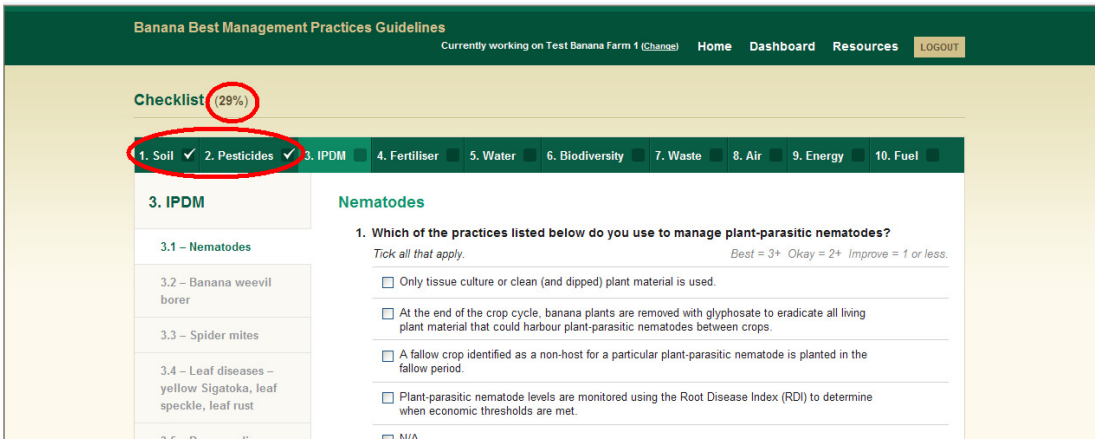
12. When completing the checklist, you will notice on the right-hand-side the practices fall into 3 categories of Best, Okay and Improve.

Anything that is selected in the improve category will automatically be added to your management plan.



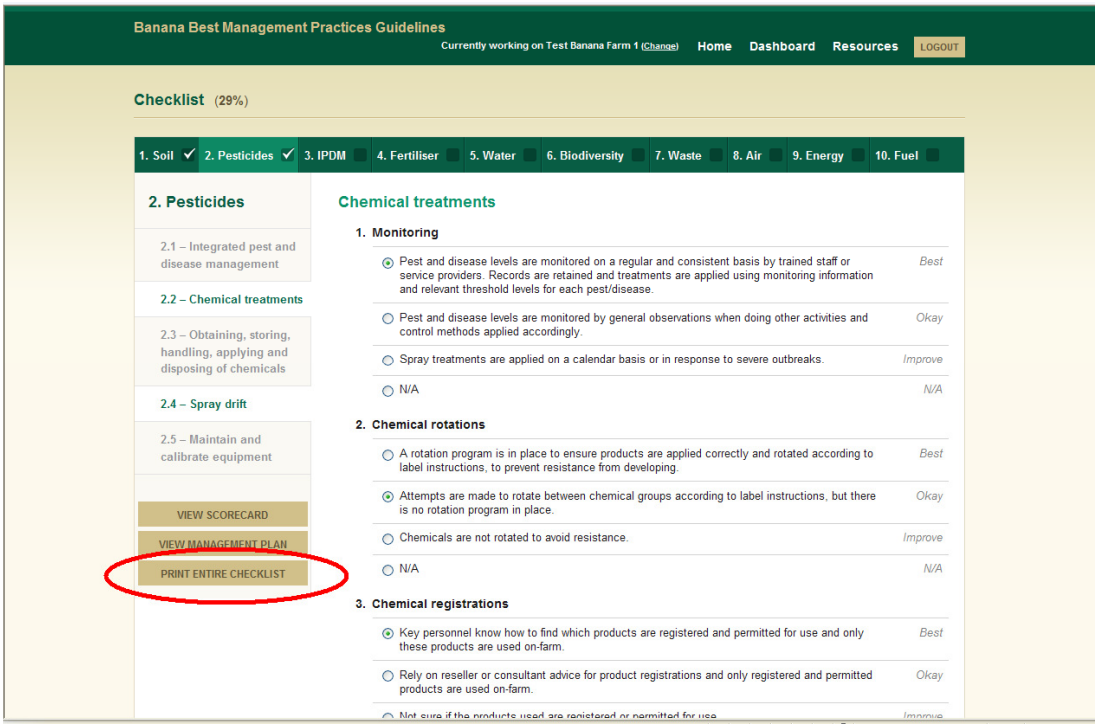
13. You can monitor your progress through the checklist two ways.

You can see how much of the checklist has been completed by looking at the top of the page to the percentage in brackets. This tells you what percentage, of the total number of questions have been answered. Also, once an entire module has been answered, a tick will appear in the small box located next to the module name.

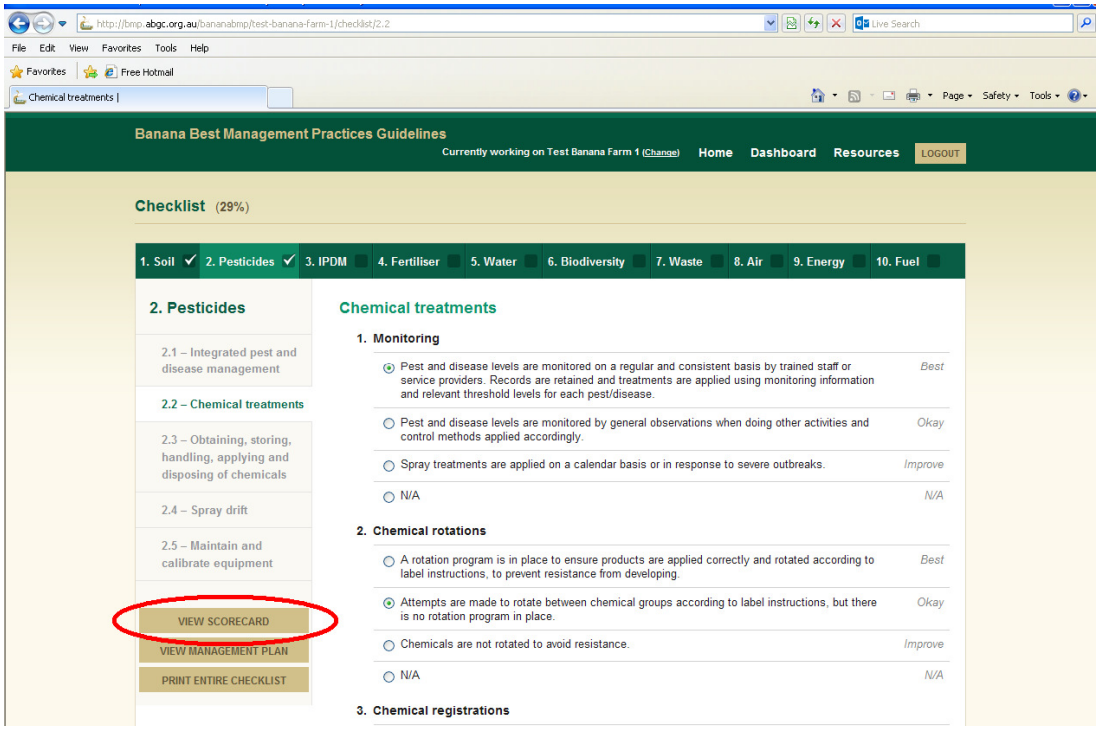


14. **There is also an option to "PRINT ENTIRE CHECKLIST".**

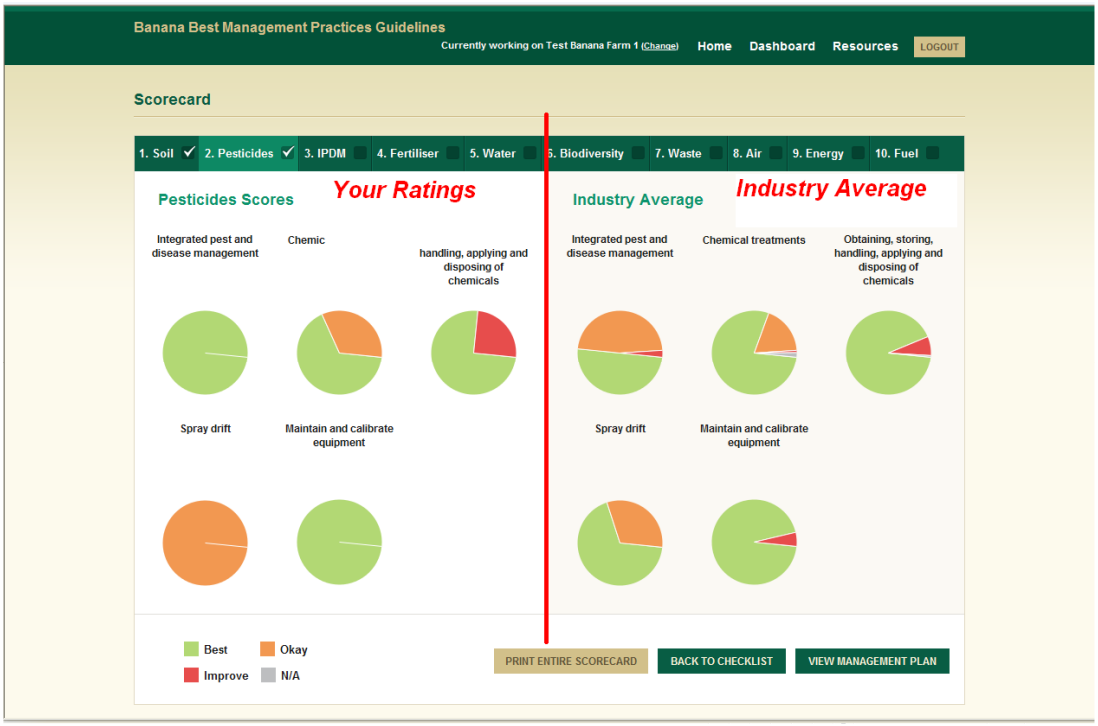
This can be useful if you want to complete the checklist in your own time, away from the computer, and input your answers later.



15. At any time during the process you can view your scorecard by clicking on the "VIEW SCORECARD" icon, located just above the 'PRINT ENTIRE CHECKLIST" icon.



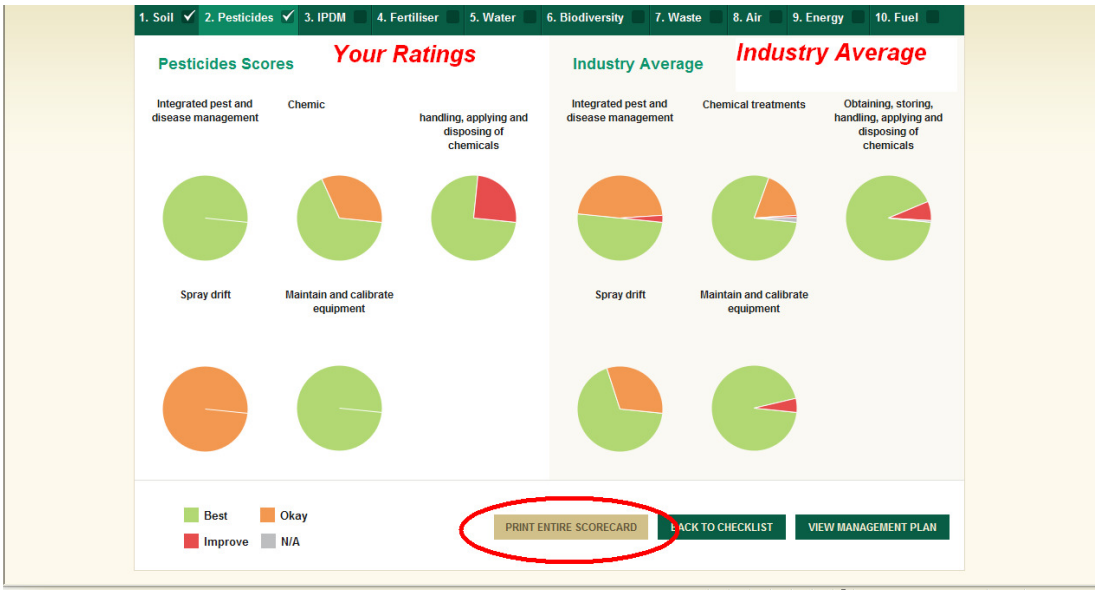
16. The scorecard provides a summary of your practice rating by module and sub-module



The left half of the screen illustrates your practice ratings while the right half of the screen allows you to compare your ratings with the industry average. You can choose the module to view by clicking on the module name along the top of the screen.

NB. These averages are a 12 month moving average across the whole industry.

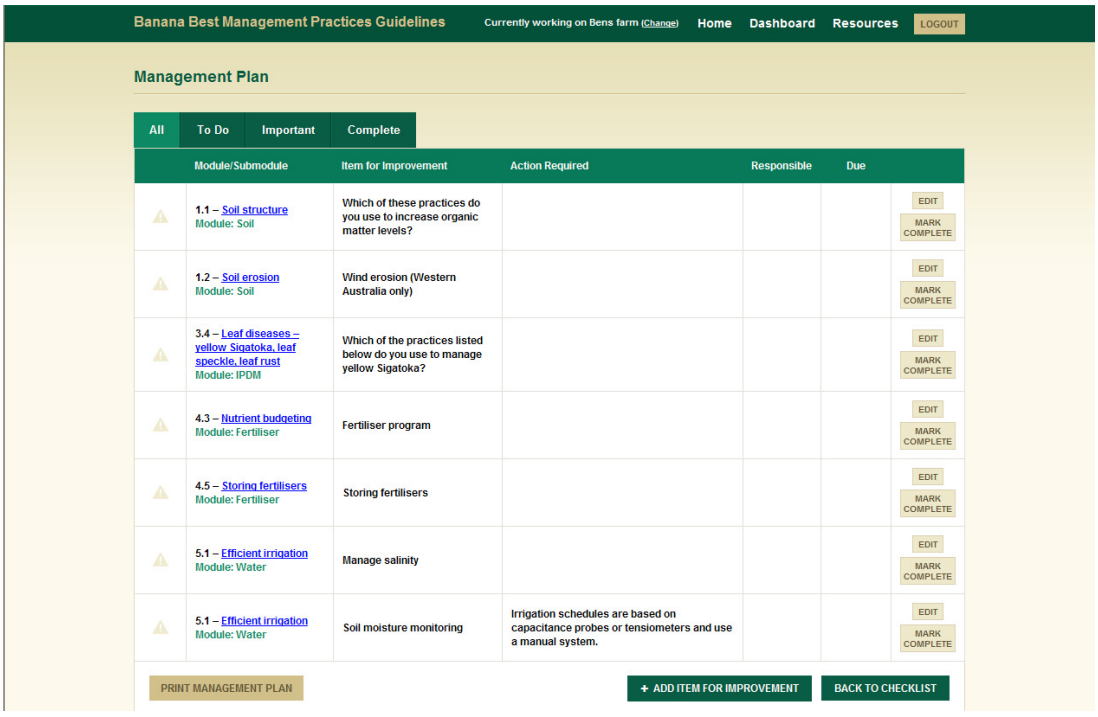
17. It is possible to print your entire scorecard by clicking on the "PRINT ENTIRE SCORECARD" icon at the bottom of the page



STEP 2 – Management plan

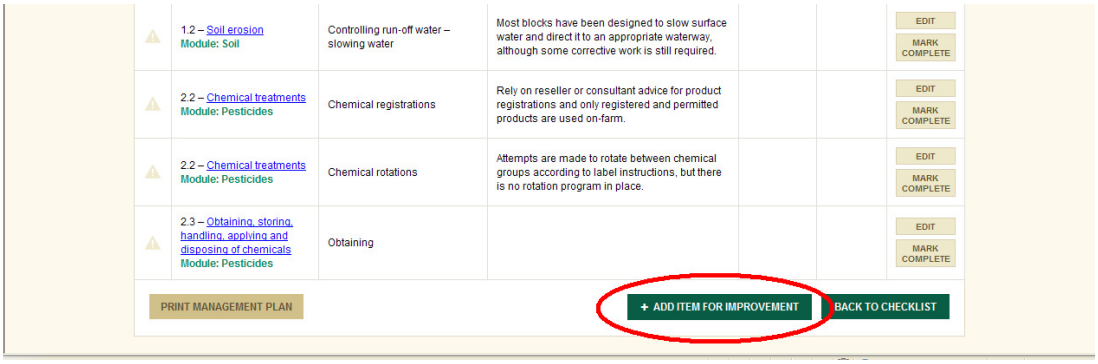
18. You can view your management plan by clicking on the "VIEW MANAGEMENT PLAN" icon. This icon appears on the scorecard, checklist and dashboard pages.

All of the answers from the checklist that were in the "improve" category rating will automatically be added to your management plan.

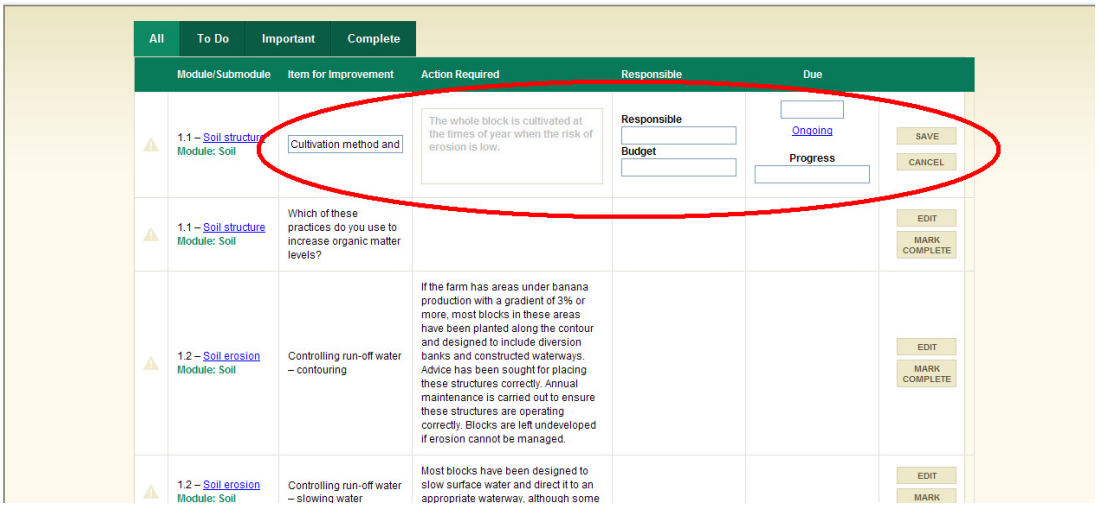


19. You can manually add items to your management plan by clicking "+ ADD ITEM FOR IMPROVEMENT"

This allows you to add items that may have been Okay but you would like to improve further, or actions not covered by the BMP to maintain a single management plan for the business

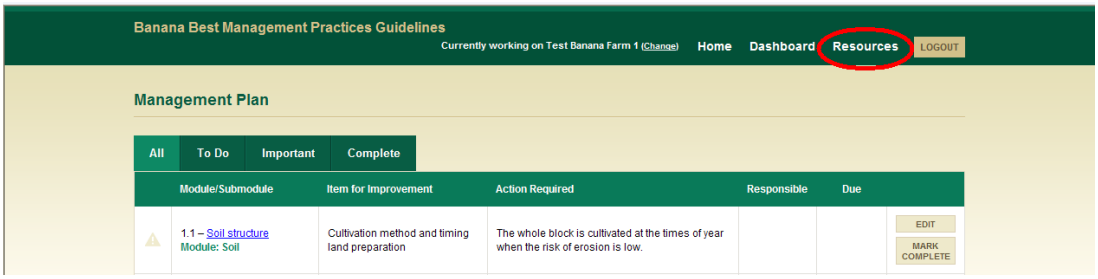


20. By selecting the "EDIT" icon on an individual item line, you can add additional information such as: item for improvement, action required, person responsible and a due date. Then click "SAVE"



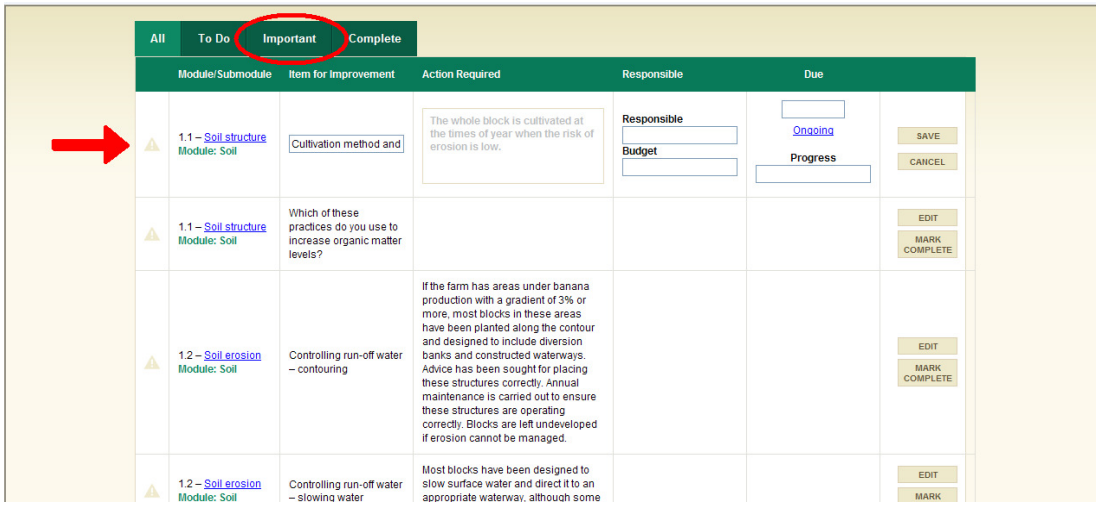
By populating the text boxes in this management plan, your business will have developed a list of action items for the business. This is a valuable tool for management decisions and also useful to show to external auditors if you are accredited under an Environmental Standard.

If you are unsure of how to correct a practice or what best practice is, refer to the resource material. Step 24 of these training instructions explains how to do this, or alternatively you can click on the "resources" tab at the top-right of screen to be taken to the resource section.

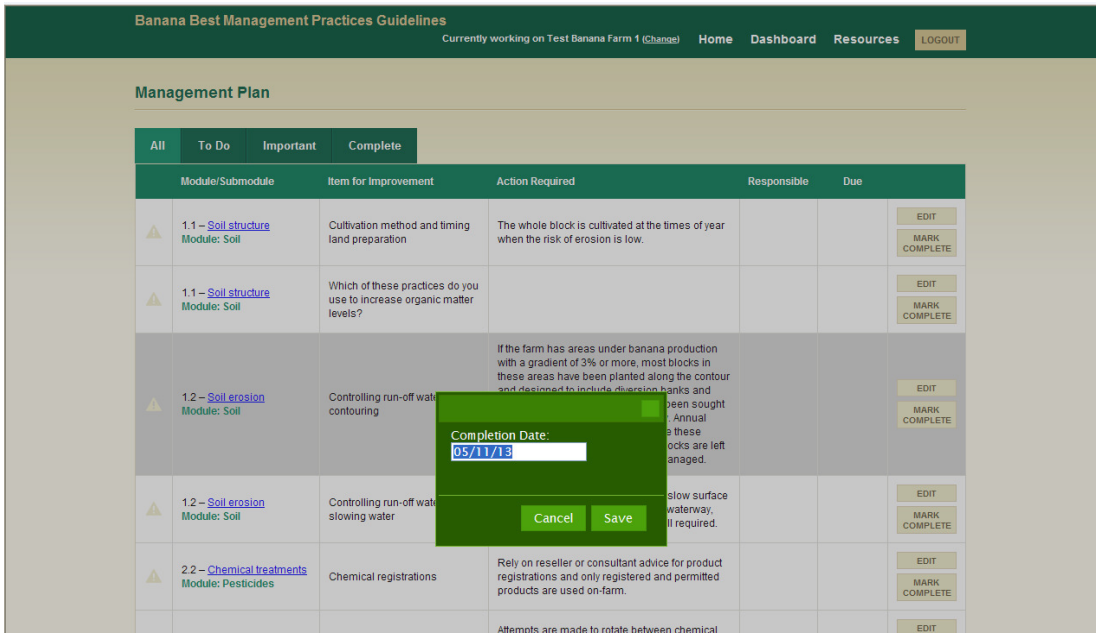


21. To make an action item a high priority, click the faded exclamation mark in the triangle in the far left column.

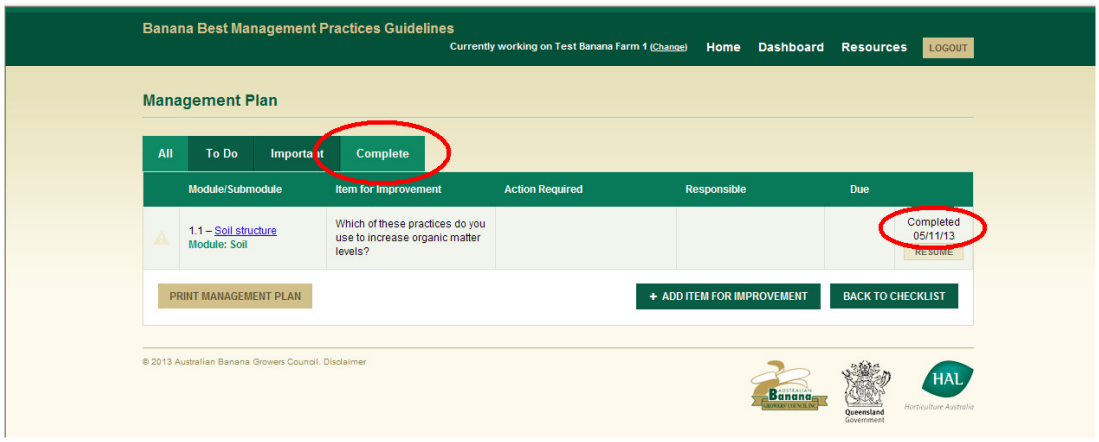
This action item will now appear under the "important" tab, which is the third tab along the top, out of a total of four tabs. This helps the business to keep track of their 'high' priority actions. When you return to the "all" tab (the first of the four tabs along the top) this item will also appear at the top of the list to help highlight the actions with higher priority ratings.



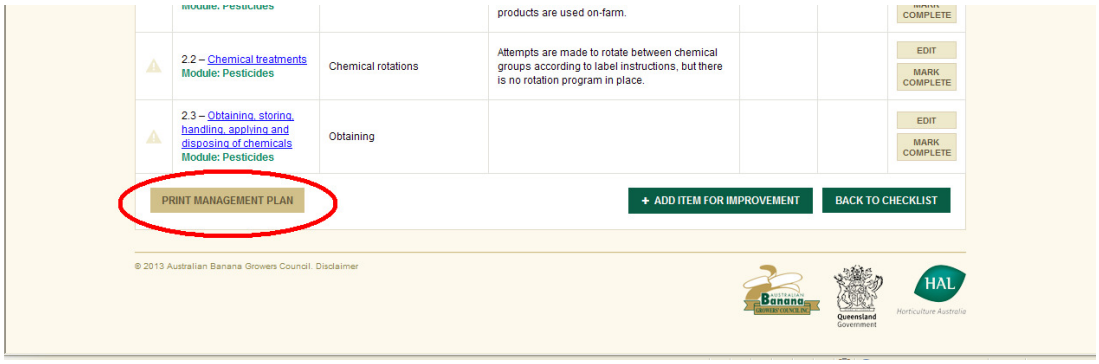
22. When an action item is complete, click on the "MARK COMPLETE" icon in the right hand column and enter the appropriate date, then click "SAVE"



This completed action item will now appear under the “complete” tab which is the fourth and final tab along the top. This helps the user to easily identify all of the completed projects. When you return to the “all” tab (the first of the four tabs along the top), this action item will be ‘greyed out’ and moved to the bottom of the list. An item marked as ‘complete’ can be resumed at any time to reactivate it.



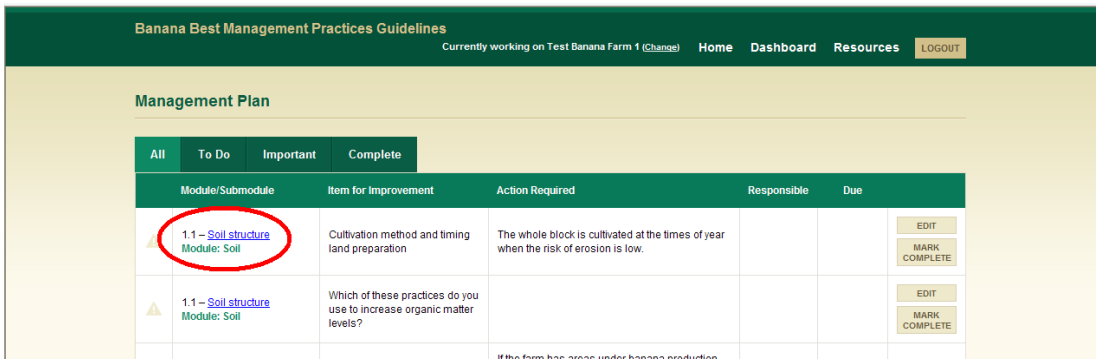
23. The management plan can be printed by clicking the “PRINT MANAGEMENT PLAN” icon appearing on the lower left side of the page.



STEP 3 – Resource material

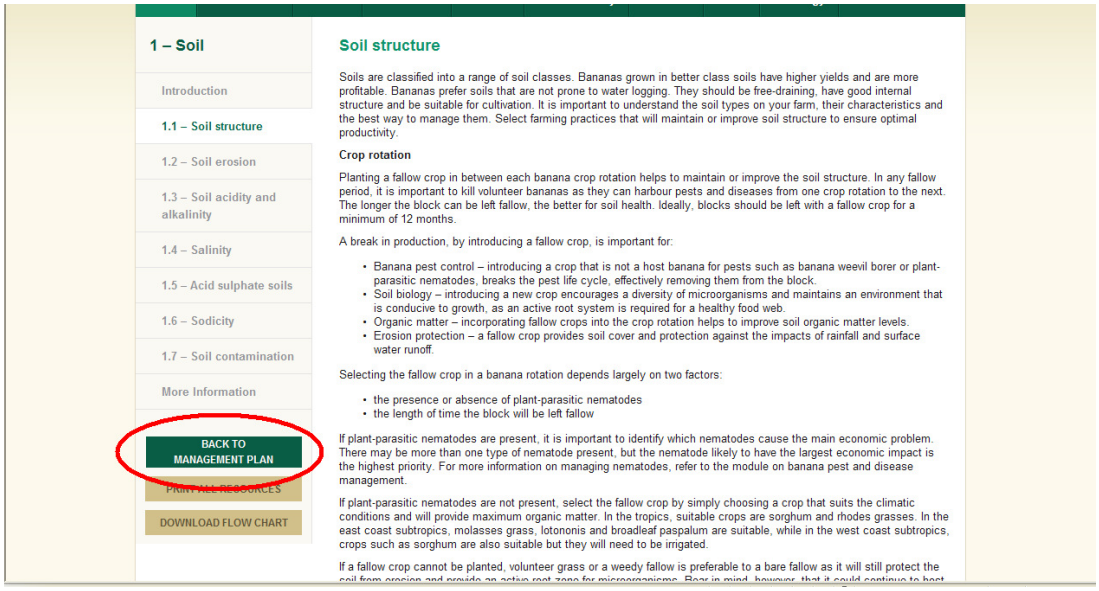
24. For information about best practice for a particular action item, click on the blue hyperlink (second column).

This will take you directly to the relevant section in the resource document for further information.

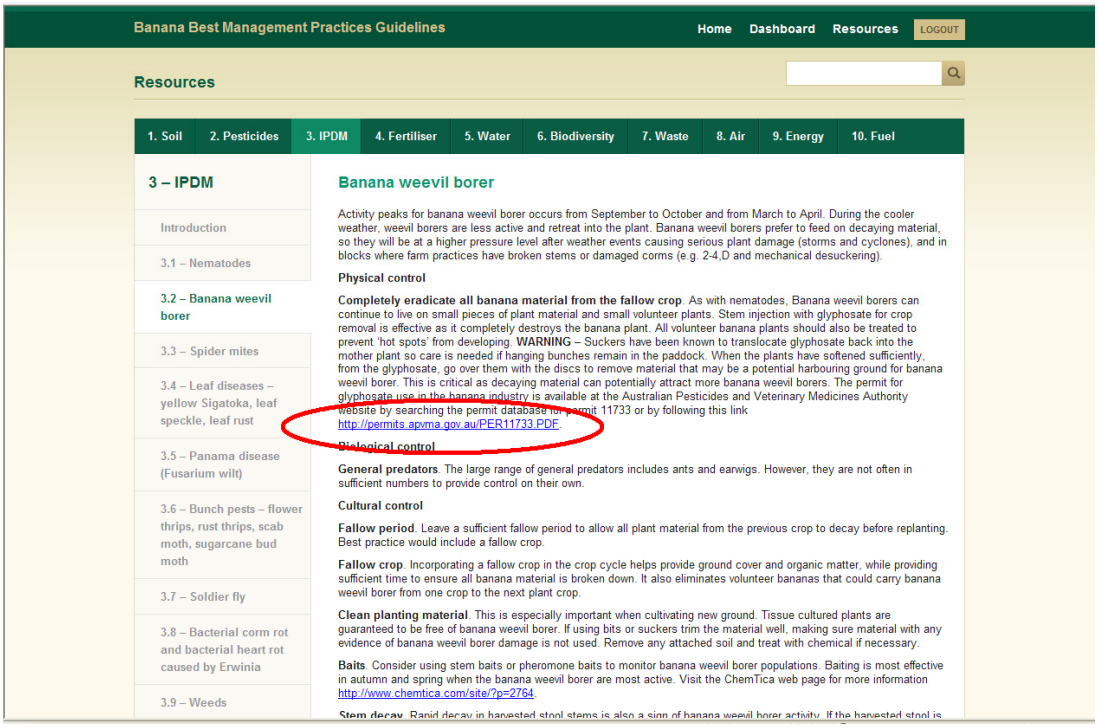


25. Similar to the checklist and scorecard, you can use the module names along the top to navigate around the resource material. Once a module has been selected you can choose the appropriate sub-module from the list on the left.

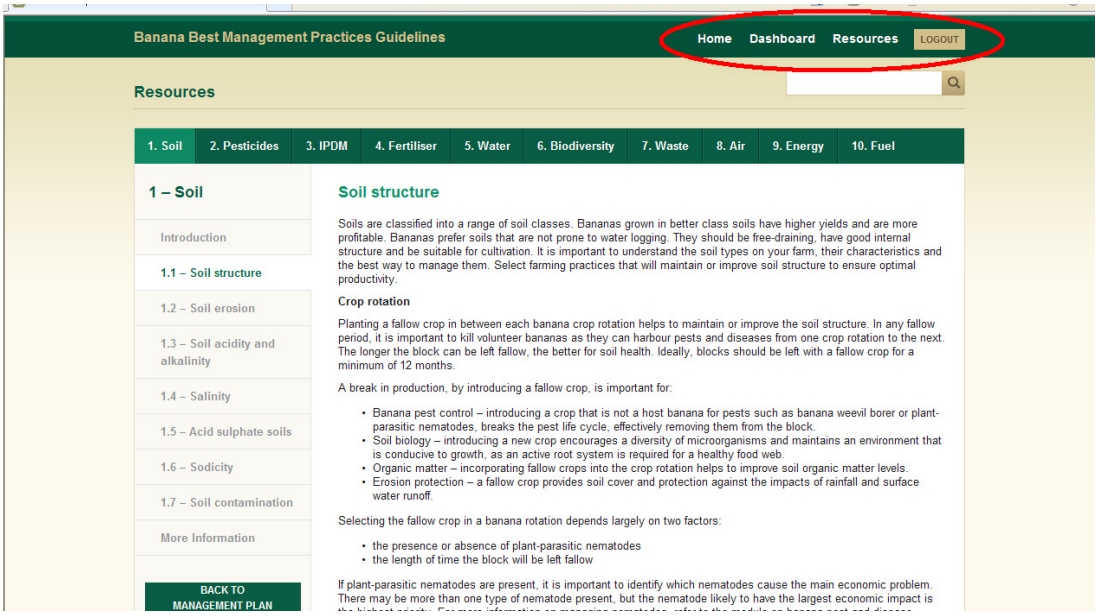
To return to the management plan click on the green "BACK TO MANAGEMENT PLAN" icon on the lower, left-hand side of the screen.



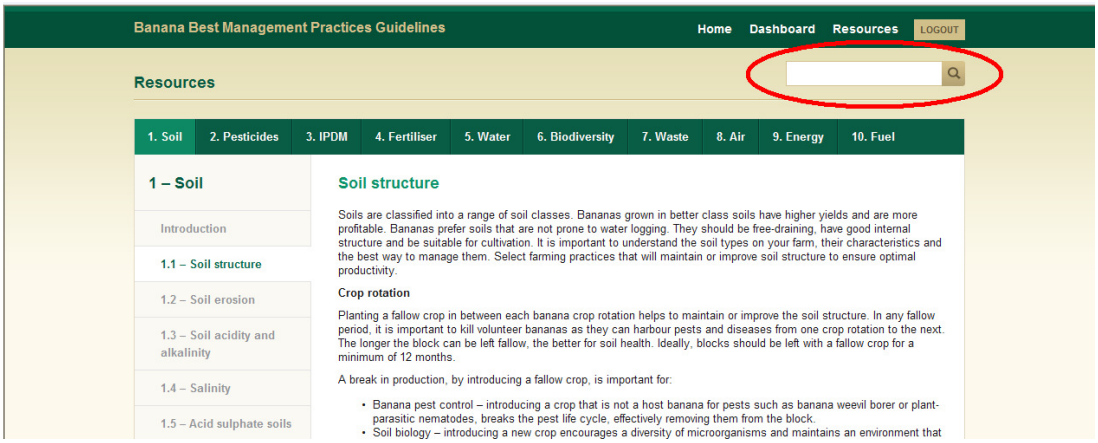
26. Where more information is available on other websites, a blue hyperlink will be included in the text. Click on the link and it will take you directly to the relevant website.



27. At any time the home page, dashboard and resources sections are available at the top right of screen near the "LOGOUT" icon.



28. There is also a search function that helps to find where a specific topic or issue is mentioned in the resource material



General

It is recommended that you re-visit the Banana BMP at least annually. Farming practices will change over time and items on your management plan will be completed. Therefore you should take the time to regularly review the checklist and management plan. Users of the online version will automatically be sent a reminder, 12 months from when they first register, to re-assess their practices.

If you have any questions about the Banana BMP please refer to the **"Online Banana BMP Training Instructions"** available at abgc.org.au or contact Naomi King on 0459 846 053.

Acknowledgements

This project was lead by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (Queensland). The project was funded as part of *Reef*ocus Extension, a Queensland Government Reef Plan initiative, working with growers to increase farm productivity and profitability and improve water quality in the Great Barrier Reef. The project was also funded by Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) using the banana levy and matched funds from the Australian Government. This was funded as project BA11006, Developing a best management practices guideline for the Australian banana industry.

A Banana Reference Group was established to develop the Banana BMP, consisting of 13 banana growers who generously gave their time, knowledge and advice as part of the project.

- Paul Johnston, Tully, Queensland
- Adrian Crema, Tully, Queensland
- Caleb Mathews, Tully, Queensland
- Gavin Devaney, Innisfail, Queensland
- Dean Sinton, Innisfail, Queensland
- Steven Lizzio, Innisfail, Queensland
- Marc Darveniza, Innisfail, Queensland
- Brett Gaia, Innisfail, Queensland
- Gavin Eilers, Innisfail, Queensland
- Fabian Della Bosca, Walkamin, Queensland
- Peter Molenaar, Murwillumbah, New South Wales
- Stephen Spears, Via Macksville, New South Wales
- Michael Nixon, Carnarvon, Western Australia