# Agricultural Data Rules: Enabling Best Practice

There is an urgent and continuing need to build trust in the way that agricultural data is collected, managed and shared. For trust to be developed, Australian farmers and producers must be confident that their data is being managed in ways that protect their privacy, and be assured about the ethical use, security and safety of data and that risk and liability is allocated appropriately. This requires those who collect, manage and share agricultural data to engage in best practice in relation to that data.

Establishing agricultural data rules is a crucial first step in ensuring the whole of the **Australian Agricultural Industry** develops best practice in the collection, use and sharing of agricultural data while ensuring farmers' legal, ethical and security concerns are addressed.

## What is Best Practice for Agricultural Data? What will Best Practice Achieve?

Agricultural Data rules require the organisation and implementation of policies, procedures, structures, roles and responsibilities that outline rules of engagement for the effective management of agricultural data assets.

**Best Practice Rules** will create an enabling environment in which innovation occurs by:

- Establishing roles and responsibilities to be accountable for decisions related to agricultural data;

- Establishing policies, procedures and institutional arrangements to manage agricultural data;

- Promoting sharing of agricultural data (where possible);

- Building trust in the collection, use and sharing of agricultural data;

- Ensuring appropriate safeguards to protect against risks associated with misuse of agricultural data.

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A potential Data Rules Framework for Australian Agriculture is set out in Figure 1. As you will see, the foundation of best practice data rules are **People, Responsibilities and Structures**. Without the right people – and clarity in their roles and responsibilities -– best practice in the management of agricultural data will not be achieved.

Further, identifying data roles, responsibilities and structures ensures the efficient and effective use of resources in managing data, and provides lines of accountability around data collection, use and sharing.

In addition to **People, Responsibilities and Structures,** there are three (3) crucial pillars to building trust in the way that agricultural data is collected, managed and shared. These are:

1. **Policies & Procedures;**

2. **Capacity & Capability;** and

3. **Risk, Regulation & Compliance.**

While the full details of *Agricultural Data Rules: Enabling Best Practice* can be found at http://acipa.edu.au/growing-a-digital-future-home.html, some of the key points are:

### Pillar 1: Agricultural Data Management Principles and Policy

Data Management Principles and Policies are required to ensure the collection, use and sharing of agricultural data is done in a consistent and effective manner

Matters that should be addressed by **Data Management Principles** are:

- Ownership, control and custody of data;

- Sharing of data; particularly any third-party access;

- Accessibility, usability and interoperability of data;

- Accuracy and suitability of data;

- Safety, security and de-identification; and

- Mechanism for review.

## Pillar 2: Capacity and Capability

Training, education and awareness raising will ensure that best practice will become part of day-to-day work practices.

## Pillar 3: Risk, regulation and compliance

Best Practice Data Rules must consider issues of risk, regulation and compliance.

For example, there are legal obligations, duties and responsibilities around **privacy and confidentiality** aspects of data, particularly when data is shared or released. (See the useful resources about the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and the 13 Australian Privacy Principles)
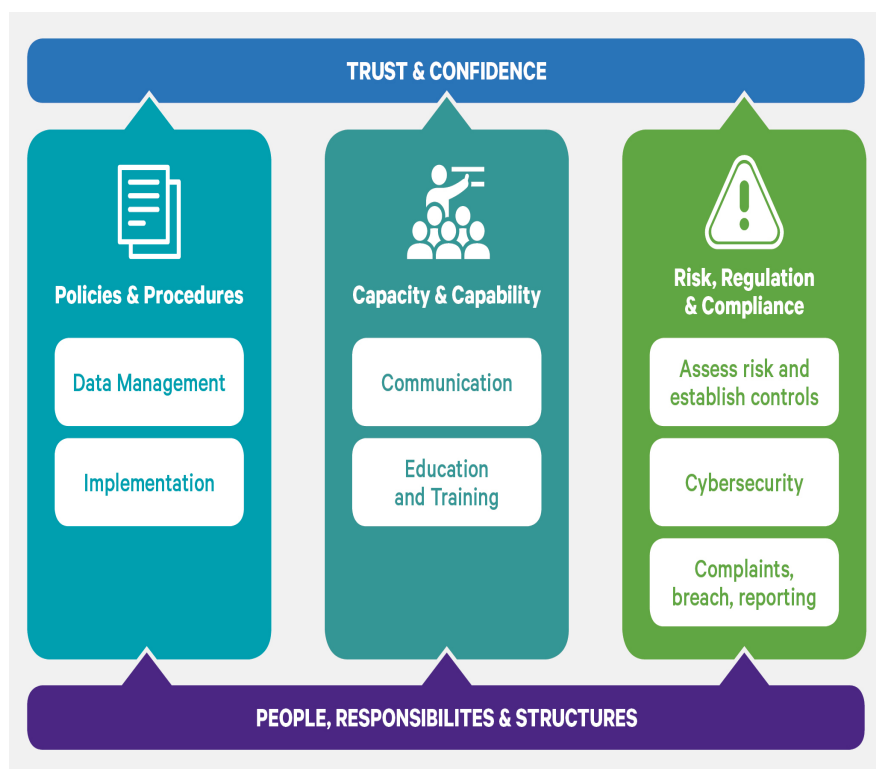


**Figure 1: Data Rules Framework**

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