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Page 1 of 1

AgForce takeover plea for under-used colleges

FARMING sector organisation AgForce is pushing for the State Government to hand over two agricultural colleges that are struggling so badly they are slated for shutdown.

AgForce argues that it could “lead” an industry move to overhaul the state-backed Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges at Longreach and Emerald.

“We can certainly provide more relevant training and we can broaden what’s (offered),” AgForce general president Georgie Somerset told *The Courier-Mail*.

The State Government last week said the two colleges, which had 73 full-time stu-

dents starting in 2018, had been slated for closure at 2019’s end.

Ms Somerset maintained that the colleges were too important to be axed, and he was speaking with organisations and community groups about ways to save them.

Questions about funding, including any government backing, were still being considered, she said.

Agricultural Industry Development Minister Mark Furner’s office said it would work with local communities to determine the best use of the facilities, adding this “could include partnerships with industry and education providers”.

LIAM WALSH