

Hunter and Manning Great Lakes Drought Support

August 2018

Connecting landholders with help

Drought has a major impact on farms, farming families and communities. It is important for landholders to connect with services and support agencies that can help them manage their property, livestock and most importantly their own health and wellbeing and financials during tough times. Good management and planning can help reduce the impact of drought.

Drought support has changed in NSW. Landholders are encouraged to visit the DPI Droughthub (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub>) for information on the services and support available during drought conditions. The key message is please don't self assess. Here is a list of local contacts that can help you and your family:

NSW Emergency Drought Relief Package

The NSW Government has announced a \$500 million Emergency Drought Relief Package to help farmers manage the effects of the current drought.

The three major elements of the \$500 million Emergency Drought Relief Package are:

- * \$190 million for Drought Transport Subsidies;
- * \$100 million to cut the cost of farming by waiving fees and charges; and,
- * \$150 million to bolster the Farm Innovation Fund (FIF) infrastructure program.

The package also includes funding for:

- * Counselling and mental health;
- * Critical services in regional communities including transporting water and drought related road upgrades and repairs; and,
- * Animal welfare and stock disposal.

Drought Transport Subsidies

The NSW Government will offer a transport subsidy of up to \$20,000 per eligible farm business.

The transport subsidy of \$20,000 per eligible farm business per year equates up to \$30,000 over 18 months from 1 January 2018 to 30 June 2019.

The subsidy is back-dated so farmers can apply it for freight expenses incurred since 1 January 2018.

It covers 50% of the full cost of freight up to a maximum of \$5 per kilometre and 1,500 kilometres per journey.

The subsidy can be applied for the cost of transporting fodder, water to a property for stock, stock to and from agistment, and stock to sale or slaughter.

The subsidy will be back-dated so farmers can access subsidies for freight expenses incurred since 1 January 2018.

Applications available online or contact the NSW RAA for more information.

Rural Assistance Authority

Phone: 1800 678 593

The NSW Rural Assistance Authority provides assistance to rural producers and small business in regional NSW through programs that encourage self-reliance and adaptation to change.

Commonwealth Farm Household Allowance

Farmers Hotline: 13 23 16

The Farm Household Allowance is a payment for farming families in financial hardship that lasts for three years. It can help with your household bills and financial circumstances

Eligibility basics:

- › a farmer who spends a major part of your time and capital working on the farm, or the partner of a farmer who does
- › is not over the income and assets test limits
- › meets mutual obligation requirements

For more information and the full guidelines please visit:

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centre-link/farm-household-allowance>

Rural Financial Counselling Service

www.raa.nsw.gov.au/rfc

Phone: 1800 940 404

The NSW Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS) is a free and confidential service which provides information and assistance on financial position, budgets and submitting applications.

Upper Hunter:

Angela Hayes (02)6545 3544

Taree:

Michael Ramstadius.....(02)6651 5879

Total:

Fiona Taylor.....0439 956 165

Regional Investment Corporation

www.ric.gov.au

Drought Loans

For farm business owners affected by drought, or who want to prepare for drought.

*3.58% variable interest rate

*Up to \$1 million

*Apply anytime

Farm Investment Loans

For Farm businesses

* 3.58% variable interest rate

* Up to \$1 million

* Apply anytime



Rural Resilience Program

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rural-support/rural-resilience-program>

Exploring the crucial relationship between the personal, business and productive aspects of farming is central to the work of the Rural Resilience Program.

The team works proactively in partnership with farming communities and service providers across NSW to strengthen networks, exchange information and deliver relevant initiatives that build personal and business resilience skills and knowledge, enabling people to move forward in a positive direction.

Caroline Hayes

Rural Resilience Program Coordinator 0407 971 675

Upper Hunter: Karen Sowter 0400 869 136

Taree and Lower Hunter: Peter Brown 0437 671 459

Mental Health Support Services:

We acknowledge being in drought is a highly stressful and emotional situation. It can be hard to prioritise your own wellbeing, as you manage competing demands on the farm and at home. Talking to someone could help ease some of your concerns.

Please consider talking to your GP, or utilise one of these free services, who will be able to provide you with strategies to help you cope.

If you're concerned about your own or someone else's mental health, you can call the **NSW Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511** for advice.

Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP)

Hunter Valley office: 63 638 444

www.ramhp.com.au

Lifeline: 13 11 14

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

National Centre for Farmer Health

<http://www.farmerhealth.org.au/>

Combined Drought Indicator

<https://edis.dpi.nsw.gov.au>

The Combined Drought Indicator (CDI) - the most detailed conditions information available for NSW primary producers.

This interactive tool provides more detailed seasonal conditions information than ever before. This data will be used to inform policy and Government responses to changing seasonal conditions, including drought.

Hunter Local Land Services

Hunter Local Land Services can help with 'boots on the ground' services during times of drought. Our staff can assist producers with livestock and pasture advice, animal health issues, pest animal problems and applying for roadside grazing permits and available Traveling Stock Routes.

Here is a list of important staff contacts.

District Veterinarians:

Paterson: Jim Kerr 0439 185 275

Maitland: Kylie Greentree 0428 498 687

Singleton: Kristi Arnot 0409 758 823

Wingham: Lyndell Stone 0429 532 855

Scone: Jane Bennett 0427 322 311

Hunter Local Land Services Agriculture Extension staff:

Pastures: Justine Baird 0428 107 206

Agronomy: Peter Beale 0427 007 468

Livestock: Kirstin Bisley 0438 593 875

Scone: Sarah Giblin 0409 785 172

Paterson: Col Freeman 0428 043 427

Taree: Albert Mullen 0428 670 524

Biosecurity Officers:

Team Leader Luke Booth 0408 681 576

Paterson: Kyra O'Brien 0427 492 958

Singleton: Matt Kennedy 0428 686 178

Scone: Richard Ali 0429 722 944

Scone: Jonathon Randle 0429 342 995

Wingham: Peter Fotheringham 0409 034 557

Wingham: Laurie Mullen 0407 785 007

Traveling Stock Routes

A list of currently available Traveling Stock Routes can be found on our website:

<https://hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au/livestock/stock-routes/using-tsrs>

Roadside Grazing Permits

To organise a roadside grazing permit please contact our offices at:

Scone 6540 2400

Merriwa 6548 2175

You must also be approved by your local council before placing stock on roads.

Hunter Local Land Services regularly publishes newsletters for landholders containing seasonal information and producer updates. To subscribe please visit:
<https://hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au/resource-hub/newsletters>

© State of New South Wales through Local Land Services 2018. The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing February 2018. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Local Land Services or the user's independent adviser.

For updates go to www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au



Local Land Services
www.lls.nsw.gov.au

We help secure the future of agriculture and the environment for NSW communities