

# Drought support

November 2019

## Introduction

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

**Drought support has changed in NSW.** Landholders are encouraged to visit the DPI DroughtHub: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/drougthub> for up to date information on the services and support available during drought.

**The key message is please don't self assess.** These contacts may be of use to you, your family or someone you know:

## Rural Assistance Authority

**Phone: 1800 678 593**

<https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/>

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.

- **Emergency Drought Transport Subsidy**

From 1 July 2019, eligible farm business' will be entitled to receive up to \$40,000 for period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020. The subsidy can be applied for the cost of transporting fodder, water to a property for stock or domestic use, stock to and from agistment, and stock to sale or slaughter as well as transporting of farm chemicals, fertiliser and seed to farms. The subsidy covers up to 50% of the full cost of freight. You can claim up to \$7.50 per kilometre (+GST). This \$7.50 applies to B-double or larger. A \$5 maximum per kilometre (+GST) applies to all other vehicle type. There is no distance rule. Journeys must have been completed between 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020.

- **Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme**

The Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate scheme is available to eligible primary producers who can claim rebates of up to \$25,000 on new purchases and installation costs of water infrastructure projects. This includes the installation of pipes, water storage and water pumps, de-silting dams and associated power supplies such as generators. This Rebate scheme can be applied to costs incurred from 1st July 2018. For invoices dated from 1 July 2019, the program is also open to horticulturalists with permanent plantings who can apply to install new bores or desilt dams. The maximum that can be claimed is \$25,000 per farm enterprise. The availability of rebates is subject to funds being available. No rebates will be offered beyond the allocated funding.

- **Animal Welfare Transport Subsidy**

A subsidy on the transport of stock at risk is permanently available to primary producers.

This subsidy covers up to 50% of the total freight cost to a maximum of \$20,000 per farm business and is available where:

- animals are at significant risk
- there is little or no feed and/or water available, including both pasture and stored fodder
- animals leave the farming enterprise permanently and
- the enterprise demonstrates a significant financial need

- **Donated Fodder Transport Subsidy**

A subsidy is available for the cost of transporting donated fodder organised by community groups or other organisations within NSW to a central location for distribution to properties affected by drought and other emergencies.

This subsidy will pay for 100% of the costs of transporting donated fodder from within NSW up to a maximum of \$5 per kilometre (plus GST) to a maximum eligible distance of 1,500 kilometres.

- **Farm innovation Fund**

The Farm Innovation Fund is a long term, low interest rate loan for permanent on-farm infrastructure. From 1 July 2019, farmers can borrow up to a maximum of \$1 million per project, with a total of \$1,000,000 outstanding at any one time to build on-farm infrastructure, including stock containment areas.

- **Drought Assistance Fund**

The NSW Government is offering \$50,000 interest-free loans to primary producers to implement systems and management practices that enhance the sustainability of their farm business. The loan term is seven years and there are no repayments required in the first two years. This loan will fund the transport of stock, fodder and water, genetic banking of breeding herds, installation of on-farm fodder and water infrastructure and activities that promote profitability and resilience as a result of the on-farm investment.



**Local Land Services**

Want to know more? Visit [www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hunter.lls.nsw.gov.au)

## Rural Financial Counselling Service

<http://rfcsnr.org.au/>

**Phone: 1800 940 404**

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

Scone .....(02) 6545 3544

Taree .....(02) 6651 5879

Total .....(02) 4939 8942

## Rural Resilience Program

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

The rural resilience 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.

Scone: Karen Sowter.....0400 869 136

Taree: 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. If you are concerned about your own or someone else's mental health, please contact your local GP or any of the services below for advice and support:

**NSW Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511**

**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/>

**Rural Adversity Mental Health Program**

Find your local coordinator: <http://www.ramhp.com.au/?d=21#map>

## Commonwealth Farm Household Allowance

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.

For more information and the full guidelines please visit: <https://www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/farm-household-allowance>

**Farmers Hotline: 13 23 16**

## Combined Drought Indicator

The Combined Drought Indicator provides the most detailed conditions information for NSW farmers. The data informs government responses to changing seasonal conditions, including drought and includes a rainfall index, soil water index, plant growth index and drought direction index.

You can find it at: <https://edis.dpi.nsw.gov.au/>

## Farm Tracker

Farm Tracker is a simple tool farmers can use to record seasonal conditions, taking the hassle out of record keeping. Farm Tracker allows you to complete a simple crop, pasture or animal survey, keep and manage a photo diary of your farm, and monitor the same paddock over many years.

Reports can be completed in a few minutes and they are synchronised with a personal database as well as the statewide database when within mobile or wi-fi range. Visit the App Store or Google Play and search for 'DPINSW Farm Tracker'. Its free to download and to use.

## Hunter Local Land Services

**1300 795 299**

We 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, applying for roadside grazing permits and available Travelling Stock Routes.

### Drought Support:

Hunter Local Land Services has a Regional Drought Support Officer, Maria Cameron, assisting landholders and communities with drought inquiries and events and working with other organisations such as the DPI's Rural Resilience Program to support local landholders. You can contact Maria via **(02) 6548 2175 or directly on 0409 636 765.**

Hunter Local Land Services also has a dedicated Drought Administration Officer, Anne Lantry, available to help you lodge applications with the NSW Rural Assistance Authority, including claiming Drought Transport Subsidies.

You can discuss your application with Anne Lantry by calling **0428 394 668** or email: [anne.lantry@lils.nsw.gov.au](mailto:anne.lantry@lils.nsw.gov.au)

### District Veterinarians:

Total: Jim Kerr.....0439 185 275

Maitland: Kylie Greentree.....0428 498 687

Singleton: Kristi Arnot.....0409 758 823

Scone: Jane Bennett.....0427 322 311

Wingham: Lyndell Stone.....0429 532 855

### Agricultural Extension Officers:

Simon Turpin (Team Leader).....0427 496 549

Agronomy: Peter Beale.....0427 007 468

Total: Col Freeman.....0428 043 427

Scone: Sarah Giblin.....0409 785 172

Taree: Albert Mullen.....0428 670 524

Livestock Officer: Teresa Hogan.....0417 352 694

Pasture Officer: David Deane.....0411 108 961

### Biosecurity Officers:

Luke Booth (Team Leader).....0408 681 576

Total: Kyra O'Brien.....0427 492 958

Singleton: Matt Kennedy.....0428 686 178

Scone: Richard Ali.....0429 722 944

Scone: Jonathan Randle.....0429 342 995

Wingham: Laurie Mullen.....0407 785 007

Wingham: Kirstin Bisley.....0438 593 875