

Media Release

The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Resources



Thursday, 20 August 2020

FARMERS URGED TO APPLY FOR SUPPORT TO MANAGE DROUGHTS

Farmers affected by drought and dry seasonal conditions are being urged to find out if they're eligible for any support from the Victorian Government to build resilience for future seasons.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes today encouraged farmers to apply for assistance through three grant programs before they close on 28 August.

Since October, the Government has delivered grant support for drought-affected farmers under the following three programs:

- The On-Farm Drought Resilience Grant, providing up to \$5,000 for farm business planning activities and an additional \$5,000 for drought infrastructure investments. This can include new eligible technologies to improve mobile phone connectivity, and items such as soil moisture probes
- The Farm Machinery Improvement Grant, offering up to \$10,000 to businesses in the Millewa region to maintain essential on-farm machinery and equipment for the 2020 season; and
- Household Financial Relief, a \$3,000 payment to assist farming families, farm workers and contractors with household expenses

The grants are administered by Rural Finance (for the On-Farm Drought Resilience Grant), the Victorian Farmers Federation (for the Farm Machinery Improvement Grant), and the Country Women's Association (for Household Financial Relief).

Farmers are encouraged to contact the Rural Financial Counselling Service to discuss the support available, and for help with applications on 1300 045 747.

Along with these grants, the Victorian Government continues to offer information and advice to help with on-farm decision making through webinars and one-to-one discussions on seasonal updates, animal health, pasture management and business planning.

Some regions across the state, particularly in East Gippsland and the far North West, have experienced consecutive years of drought conditions, and the Government is working with farmers to develop innovative ways to deal with these conditions in the long-term.

For more information about drought and dry seasonal conditions support and advice, visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons or call 136 186.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes

"This support will help farmers develop innovative, resilient businesses capable of dealing with more frequent and severe dry conditions in years to come."

"We know there is continued financial pressure on farmers dealing with the impact of drought and dry conditions, and other challenges of recent years. I encourage farmers not to rule themselves out, and to contact Agriculture Victoria to see if there's help available."

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