

# Media Release

Hon Jacinta Allan MP  
Premier



Friday, 4 July 2025

## BACKING OUR FARMERS THROUGH THE DROUGHT

Drought is hitting hard across Victoria, and the Allan Labor Government is making sure support gets to those who need it most.

The Drought Response Taskforce has been listening directly to farmers and regional communities across Victoria – making sure their voices shape the support they need to get through tough times.

Now, the Labor Government is investing an additional \$75 million to help farmers through the drought, bringing the total support package to \$144 million.

We're making sure our state's world-class agriculture industry can get through these difficult times – protecting our farming families, our food supply and the jobs and communities that rely on it.

### Supporting livelihoods in south west Victoria

Farmers in the south west have been feeling the worst of the drought conditions over the past two years. It is impacting their livelihoods, their households and their local communities.

That's why we're investing \$35.8 million to help farming households in the south west manage the pressures they are facing due to prolonged drought.

The Primary Producer Support Payments will provide eligible farmers with the equivalent of a 40 per cent reduction on their property rates.

Providing much needed cash flow relief for farmers in 12 Local Government Areas (LGA) in south-west Victoria, including Ararat, Moyne, Colac Otway, Pyrenees, Corangamite, Southern Grampians, Glenelg, Surf Coast, Golden Plains, Warrnambool, City of Greater Geelong and southern parts of West Wimmera. Local councils will distribute the payments.

To reduce the impact on household budgets we're also supporting the Country Women's Association with \$2 million in support to deliver household payments of up to \$1,000 to struggling families in eligible south west LGAs.

### Supporting farmers and regional communities across the state

Difficult drought conditions continue to impact farmers across Victoria.

That's why we're investing a further \$5.9 million to continue critical technical decision-making support, mental health services, timely farm debt mediation and engagement activities for another 12 months.

We're also reducing the costs of doing businesses for our primary producers with a \$6.3 million fee and duty relief package.

This will free up cash for farmers in need to spend on other parts of their business or put into the household budget.

Agriculture Victoria will also work with the livestock biosecurity compensation fund advisory committees, Dairy Food Safety Victoria and PrimeSafe to explore opportunities to waive biosecurity duties and regulatory fees and charges.

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On top of this, Agriculture Victoria will waive indexation on its 2025-26 biosecurity fees and charges and provide targeted fee relief to assist farmers experiencing cashflow challenges.

### **Boosting access to water now and into the future**

Having a reliable source of water is critical for our farmers – it underpins their ability to grow food, support livestock, and sustain rural communities now and into the future.

That's why the Allan Labor Government will invest \$15 million towards extending the East Grampians Rural Pipeline, also known as the Mininera Rural Pipeline.

Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water will also invest \$15.6 million towards the project and we will continue to work with the Albanese Labor Government to seek a Commonwealth funding contribution to deliver the project in full.

This pipeline expansion will increase access to a reliable and high-quality water supply from Lake Fyans to around 750 additional rural properties, 10 local towns, 34 fire hydrants, and 66 tanks for firefighting in the Ararat Rural City, Northern Grampians, and Pyrenees Shire.

We're also investing \$3 million to expand Victoria's Emergency Supply Point network and install new access points or upgrade existing ones across the state. There is also \$2.5 million to leverage existing groundwater bores to access water for domestic and stock usage in drought affected areas.

To make sure communities in the south west are prepared for future drought conditions we're investing \$3.5 million develop a new Western Region Sustainable Water Strategy. This will look at using alternative water supplies like recycled and storm water and boosting waterway health to help them flow during dry conditions.

We're also investing \$1 million for our Catchment Management Authorities to run Drought Employment Programs, which will help people facing hardship due to the drought access off-farm employment opportunities – providing additional income in times of need.

To view the full range of financial, technical and wellbeing support available to drought impacted farmers visit [agriculture.vic.gov.au/drought](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/drought) or phone 136 186.

### **Quotes attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan**

*"We've been listening to farmers and communities who are doing it tough – this support delivers real help, right now."*

*"This isn't just about dollars – it's about backing the people who feed our state and the regional communities that keep our state strong."*

*"Thank you to the members of the Taskforce – Victorians from different communities, backgrounds and political parties who came together to deliver real relief for farming communities."*

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture and Acting Minister for Water Ros Spence**

*"Cashflow relief was one of the major items raised with the Taskforce, which is why we're helping farmers to create more room in their budgets to deal with the cost pressures they are facing in drought."*

*"Responding to the Taskforce and our regional communities, we are investing in both short-term solutions and legacy infrastructure to improve resilience and water security for farmers and their communities."*