

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Deputy Leader of the Government in the  
Legislative Council  
Minister for Regional Development  
Minister for Agriculture  
Minister for Resources



**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Friday, 22 February 2019

## **MORE SUPPORT FOR DROUGHT AFFECTED FARMERS**

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering a cash injection to farmers who have been hit hardest by drought and dry conditions.

Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes was in Giffard today to announce an additional \$13 million to help ease the financial burden of the unprecedented conditions.

The relief package is in addition to the \$29.69 million announced late last year for farmers and communities in Central and East Gippsland and in Northern and North West Victoria.

The Labor Government will provide \$5.6 million for Drought Hardship Support Payments of up to \$3,500 for young farmers and farmers receiving the Farm Household Allowance experiencing drought in Central and East Gippsland.

All other farmers in Central and East Gippsland will be eligible for payments of \$2,500.

Northern and North West Victoria are also experiencing ongoing dry seasonal conditions following significantly below average rainfall throughout 2018, with dairy farmers particularly impacted by high temporary water and feed prices.

The Labor Government will provide payments of up to \$2,500 available to young dairy farmers or dairy farmers who receive the Farm Household Allowance now available in Northern Victoria.

An additional \$1 million will be provided for a Drought Hardship Fund, which will provide additional payments to farmers who are struggling but don't qualify for a Drought Hardship Support Payment

The Labor Government will also provide \$5 million to extend the On-Farm Drought Infrastructure Grants program.

This program has already provided almost 2,500 farmers across Gippsland and Northern Victoria with grants of up to \$5000 for on-farm infrastructure to improve drought preparedness and management.

To help save farmers time and stress, an additional \$1 million will be provided across the state to improve water supply access for stock and domestic water users, making it easier for farmers who are currently water carting.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaclyn Symes**

*"This package will deliver support as quickly as possible to those who need help now - \$3,500 dollars that farmers can use however they choose, because they know their business better than anyone else."*

*"This puts cash in farmers pockets that can be used to pay rates, invest on-farm or bring in feed – it's about delivering the support they need most."*

*"Keeping young farmers on the land is crucial for the future of the industry – that's why we're targeting this immediate relief to support young farmers to get through these really tough times."*

**Media contact:** Tom Whitty 0488 084 717 | [jobsmedia@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:jobsmedia@minstaff.vic.gov.au)