



DROUGHT ASSISTANCE SUPPLEMENT

Financial Assistance

FARM INNOVATION FUND

A low interest loan scheme for capital works (eg sheds, silos, water storage) to a value of \$250,000 per project (maximum \$500,000 per enterprise) for infrastructure works to prepare for dry conditions, to be more resilient and improve on-farm efficiency. Interest rate is fixed at 2.5% and loan is for a maximum 20 year period.

All existing Farm Innovation Fund customers, and all applicants who submitted an application on or before 30 July 2018, will have applicable interest charges for the 2017/18 financial year and 2018/19 financial year refunded and waived.

www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/farm-innovation-fund

FARM INVESTMENT LOAN/DROUGHT LOAN

A loan of up to \$2 million at a 3.58% variable interest rate to prepare farm businesses for drought, refinance existing debt, prepare for, manage and recover from drought and access new debt for operating expenses and capital.

At least 50% of total debt must stay with existing lenders. The loan term is a maximum of 10 years, with the first 5 years interest only.

<http://www.ric.gov.au/farmers>

DROUGHT ASSISTANCE FUND

A one-off \$50,000 interest free loan to transport stock, fodder and water; genetic banking of breeding herds and fodder and water infrastructure. Seven year interest free repayment terms. No repayment required in first two years.

www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/drought-assistance-fund

DROUGHT TRANSPORT SUBSIDY

Transport subsidy of 50% of the cost of transporting fodder, water, stock to and from agistment and stock to sale or slaughter. Subsidy of up to \$20,000 per business per year equating to up to \$30,000 for the 18 month period from 1 January 2018 to 30 June 2019. The subsidy is back-dated for freight expenses incurred since 1 January 2018.

www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/emergency-drought-relief

TRANSPORT OF DONATED FODDER

100% of the cost of transporting donated fodder is available to transport providers acting in conjunction with community groups taking donated fodder to drought-affected properties within NSW - up to a maximum of \$5 per kilometre and a maximum eligible distance of 1500km. Pre-approval is required.

www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/rebate-on-road-transport

FARM HOUSEHOLD ALLOWANCE (FHA)

Fortnightly income support for eligible farmers for up to four years, as well as planning and training for long-term financial improvements, including: Income support allowance, dedicated case management to help develop a plan for the future and address challenges facing the business and household, up to \$1,500 to carry out a financial assessment of the farm enterprise, up to \$4,000 activity supplement to develop skills, access training and pay for advice, and ongoing support from the Rural Financial Counselling Service. Recent changes to the FHA include two lump sum supplementary payments of up to \$12,000 per household and a temporary increase to the assets threshold to \$5 million.

www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/farm-household-allowance

ANIMAL WELFARE TRANSPORT SUBSIDY

A subsidy of up to 50% of eligible costs for the permanent transport of stock off a farm which is facing financial hardship and where livestock are at fat score 2 or below (dairy cattle 3 or below), to a maximum of \$20,000 per financial year.

www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/rebate-on-road-transport

FARM BUSINESS SKILLS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

A subsidy of up to 50% of eligible costs for an approved course or activity, with a maximum reimbursement of \$5,000 per farmer and \$9,000 per farm business.

www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/professional-development-program

The NSW Department of Primary Industries has a comprehensive up-to-date summary of government initiatives and links to detailed information on their special drought assistance web page:
www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub



DROUGHT ASSISTANCE SUPPLEMENT

FARM DEBT MEDIATION

A structured negotiation process where an accredited, independent mediator helps farmers and their creditors to negotiate and reach agreements about farm business debt. Farmers can negotiate their farm business debt with their lender at any time and don't have to be in default or hardship. New farm debt mediation videos provide valuable information on the mediation process and aim to empower farmers to negotiate more effectively, in a fair and efficient way.

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

WAIVER OF NSW LOCAL LAND SERVICES RATES

All LLS rates, including General Rates and Rates for Animal Health and Pests, the Meat Industry Levy, and costs of Routine Stock Moving Permit and Stock Identification will be waived for 2019. The waiver of LLS rates will be automatically applied.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK INSURANCE DUTY EXEMPTION

From 1 January 2018 crop and livestock insurance (Type C general insurance) will be exempt from insurance duty. The only thing that has changed in relation to crop and livestock insurance is the rate of duty, which has gone from 2.5% to 0%. The definitions of crop and livestock insurance have not changed.

WAIVER OF CLASS 1 AGRICULTURAL VEHICLE REGISTRATION

Class 1 agricultural vehicles that are registered for agricultural use are exempt from the next annual registration charge for registrations after 30 July 2018. A Drought Relief Declaration must be completed.

www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/heavy-vehicles/registration/drought-relief/class-1-agricultural.html

REBATE ON FIXED CHARGES FOR WATER LICENCES

A rebate of up to \$4,000 per licence will apply to the fixed component of bills for general security licence holders (and supplementary water access licence holders) in rural and regional NSW across surface and ground water systems, and to customers of Irrigation Corporation Districts (ICDs) for water entitlement costs incurred. The waiver of fixed charges for water licences will be automatically applied to all eligible licence holders.

PRIMARY PRODUCER HEAVY VEHICLE REFUNDS AND REGISTRATION REBATE

Primary Producers who register or renew their heavy vehicle (>4.5 tonnes) from 1 July 2018 up to 30 June 2020 will receive a rebate. The rebate covers some registration costs but does not include compulsory third party insurance, heavy vehicle inspection fees (if applicable), stamp duty (if applicable) and number plate fee (if applicable).

<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/heavy-vehicles/registration/drought-relief/pp-hv-refunds-rebates.html>

Primary producers may also be able to claim a refund on some past heavy vehicle registration charges paid from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018. Affected primary producers will be contacted by mail and notified of the process to claim their refund.

INTEREST RELIEF OFFERED BY BANKS

Many of the banks have announced interest rate relief for farmers impacted by the drought. These include reducing variable interest rates, suspending loan repayments for a period of time, waiving fees associated with restructuring business loans, offering discounted loans, not applying penalty interest to overdue payments and allowing early withdrawal of Farm Management Deposits without penalty. Contact your bank manager for more information.

CASH GRANTS/VOUCHERS ARE AVAILABLE TO FARMING BUSINESSES FROM THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONS:

Salvation Army – www.salvos.org.au/about-us/news-and-stories/disasters-other-appeals/2018-droughts/access-drought-assistance

CWA – up to \$3,000 per family to meet household expenses. Expenses can include grocery bills, vehicle maintenance, electricity, rates, telephone, dental and medical. Farming dependent contractors are also eligible to apply - www.cwaofnsw.org.au/droughtaid

Rural Aid – one off \$1500 per household - www.buyabale.com.au/can-we-help-you

Drought Angels – assistance includes fodder and financial support through pre-paid visas - www.droughtangels.org.au/apply-for-assistance