

DROUGHT SUPPORT

WELLINGTON AND EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRES

OCTOBER 2019

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

The Victorian Government provides a range of assistance to support local communities and farm businesses to manage the impact of drought, including information, tools and resources provided by Agriculture Victoria.

For more information drop into an Agriculture Victoria office, call 136 186 or visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons

REGIONAL SUPPORT		
Catchment Management Authority Drought Employment program	This program provides off-farm employment and training for farmers, farm workers and individuals affected by drought and dry seasonal conditions to expand or obtain transferrable employment skills.	Call East Gippsland CMA Reception on (03) 5152 0600 or email egcma@egcma.com.au
Farm Employment Exchange NEW	A new program to facilitate employment opportunities for farmers and farm workers seeking alternative farm work due to drought.	More details will be available soon. To register your interest please email: drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au
Community Priorities Fund NEW	Funding for East Gippsland and Wellington shires to support small community infrastructure projects, community events and initiatives that bring communities together.	More details will be available soon. To register your interest please email drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au
Managing wildlife	An Authority to Control Wildlife permit supports the control of wildlife on private land.	Call 136 186 or visit wildlife.vic.gov.au
Improved access to Emergency Water Supply Points (EWSPs)	Funding to improve access to emergency water supply points (EWSPs) across areas where there is a high incidence of water carting. This will include new EWSPs, new tanks connected to EWSPs, upgrades to existing facilities such as meters and improving road access to EWSPs so water cartage trucks can gain access. The program will be delivered by rural water corporations in partnership with local councils where need has been identified.	Call 136 186 or visit water.vic.gov.au/groundwater/emergency-water-supply-points
Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal	The Tackling Tough Times Together grant program helps communities access the resources they need to support one another through the ongoing effects of the drought. This program is designed to provide flexible funding to support community-based activities that both help to relieve current stressors and symptoms, and most importantly, build capacity and resilience for the future.	Call 1800 170 020 or visit frrr.org.au/grants/tackling_tough_times_together.php
Regional Drought Coordinator	The key point of co-ordination at the local level, providing information on drought services, support options, emerging risks and pressures in their region.	Prue McTaggart, Agriculture Victoria, Bairnsdale, (03) 5152 0600

FINANCIAL SUPPORT		
Local Government Service Support Payment NEW	This payment will provide local governments with flexibility to support dry seasonal conditions and drought affected farming businesses and their communities in 2019-20.	More details will be available soon. To register your interest please email: drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au
Farmers' Drought Fund NEW	This program will deliver additional dry seasonal conditions and drought support for farm families and communities under two components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$3 million to provide household financial relief to farming families affected by drought \$12 million for an on-farm grants program to invest in on-farm drought preparedness and resilience and farm business planning. 	More details will be available soon. To register your interest please email: drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Domestic and Stock Bore License Fee Waiver NEW	<p>The waiver will provide \$235 in fee relief for applicants constructing new domestic and stock bores to provide new water in areas experiencing drought and dry conditions.</p>	<p>More details will be available soon.</p> <p>For more information, visit waterregister.vic.gov.au</p>
Pasture Recovery and Management Grant Program	<p>A grant of up to \$5,000 (ex-GST) is available to assist eligible farm businesses located in East Gippsland and Wellington shires implement pasture restoration and other land management activities that may aid in pasture recovery.</p> <p>Eligible farm businesses are required to provide at least dollar for dollar matching funding co-contribution. The program will accept applications for expenditure incurred on or after 1 January 2019.</p>	<p>Call Rural Finance on 1800 260 425 or visit ruralfinance.com.au</p>
On-Farm Drought Infrastructure Support Grants	<p>Grants of up to \$5,000 (ex-GST) are available to eligible farm businesses in Wellington and East Gippsland shires. Eligible farm businesses are required to provide at least dollar for dollar matching funding co-contribution.</p> <p>The grants program will assist farm businesses implement on-farm infrastructure that improves drought management and preparedness.</p>	<p>Call Rural Finance on 1800 260 425 or visit ruralfinance.com.au</p>
On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme	<p>The scheme is available to assist farmers impacted by drought and dry seasonal conditions invest in urgently-needed on-farm water infrastructure that addresses animal welfare needs.</p> <p>The rebate funding is being made available by the Australian Government.</p>	<p>Call Rural Finance on 1800 260 425 or visit ruralfinance.com.au</p>
Agriculture Energy Investment Plan	<p>On-farm energy grants are available to eligible primary producers until March 2020 or until available funding is exhausted (whichever comes first). Grants will be provided on a "dollar for dollar" cash co-contribution basis. Recipients are required to contribute at least 50 per cent of the total cash costs of the project.</p> <p>You will need an on-farm energy assessment, or an equivalent certified on-farm energy assessment conducted in the past two years, to access one of the grants under the Agriculture Investment Energy Plan (AEIP).</p>	<p>Call the Business Victoria hotline on 13 22 15 or visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/agenergy</p>
Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS)	<p>The RFCS provides free financial counselling to farmers and small related businesses who are in, or at risk of, financial hardship. Counsellors can assist applicants to apply for the Farm Household Allowance (FHA).</p>	<p>Call 1800 686 175 (toll free) or call Eastern RFCS: 1300 045 747 or visit agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/rural-financial-counselling-service</p>
Farm Household Allowance	<p>The Australian Government makes an income support payment available to eligible farmers and their families experiencing financial hardship.</p>	<p>Call 132 316 or visit humanservices.gov.au</p>
Farmer Assistance Hotline (Aust Govt)	<p>Information on the Australian Government's support services available to farmers and rural communities.</p>	<p>Call 132 316 or visit humanservices.gov.au</p>
Regional Investment Corporation Farm Business Concessional Loans (Aust Govt)	<p>The RIC offers two loan products for eligible farm businesses in Victoria: Drought Loans and Farm Investment Loans</p> <p>A new Replanting and Restocking loan will be available in the coming months.</p>	<p>Call 1800 875 675 or visit ric.gov.au/</p>

TECHNICAL SUPPORT		
Farm Business Management and Planning Support	<p>Agriculture Victoria delivers communication, technical and decision-making support services to assist farm businesses manage dry seasonal conditions. Working with our industry partners the department provide services across industries including beef, sheep, dairy, grains, horticulture and irrigation.</p> <p>Agriculture Victoria also has technical information, videos and tools on topics such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock containment areas • Feeding and managing livestock during dry seasonal conditions • Resources to support climate change and risk management • Business management information and support for young farmers. 	<p>Call 136 186 or visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons or email drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au</p> <p>For information on workshops and events, visit: agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/farm-management/farmer-workshops</p>
One-on-one consultation sessions	<p>Agriculture Victoria is continuing to provide Wellington and East Gippsland producers with the opportunity to engage in one-on-one consultation sessions to assist them to manage current seasonal conditions and access support services.</p> <p>These consultations cover a range of topics including feed budgeting, feed rations, partial budgets, hay and crop decision making, water use and resource management, in addition to signposting other services such as Rural Financial Counsellors, Farm Household Allowance and concessional loans programs.</p> <p>For dairy farmers, Agriculture Victoria is providing this service in collaboration with GippsDairy.</p>	<p>Contact Agriculture Victoria:</p> <p>Livestock: Darren Hickey, Bairnsdale (03) 5152 0496 Dairy: Maria Rose, Maffra or David Shambrook, Leongatha (03) 5147 0843 Irrigation - Janice Dowe, Maffra (03) 5662 9913 (03) 5147 0854</p>
Stock Containment Areas	<p>Agriculture Victoria has developed a package of resources to support farmers in designing and managing stock containment areas. Stock containment areas are a valuable tool to manage livestock and to protect soil and pasture resources during adverse seasonal conditions.</p>	<p>Call 136 186 or visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons or contact your local Agriculture Victoria office for more information.</p>

PERSONAL AND FAMILY SUPPORT		
Mental Health Support	<p>The Mental Health Support package includes additional counselling and coordination and psychological first aid training.</p> <p>If you need immediate assistance with your mental health and wellbeing, call Lifeline on 13 11 14.</p> <p>If you need emergency assistance, call 000.</p>	<p>Outer Gippsland Drought Package Coordinator</p> <p>Regina Kalb, DHHS Regina.kalb@dhhs.vic.gov.au</p>
Lifeline	24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services.	Call 131 114 or visit lifeline.org.au
Beyondblue	24/7 telephone information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health.	Call 1300 224 636 or visit beyondblue.org.au
National Centre for Farmer Health	The National Centre for Farmer Health provides ongoing leadership to improve the health wellbeing and safety of farm men and women, farm workers, families and communities.	Call (03) 5551 8533 or visit farmerhealth.org.au
Look Over the Farm Gate Program	Look Over the Farm Gate provides funding for communities to deliver health and wellbeing support through community awareness and social and emotional wellbeing workshops and events.	Call 1300 882 833 or visit lookoverthefarmgate.org.au
MensLine Australia	24/7 service for men with relationship and family concerns.	Call 1300 78 99 78 or visit mensline.org.au
Kids Help Line	24/7 telephone and online counselling service for people aged 5 - 25.	Call 1800 55 1800 or visit kidshelpline.com.au
Family Relationship Service	Providing families with access to information about family relationship issues.	Call 1800 050 321 or visit familyrelationships.gov.au
Farm Hub	Farm Hub aims to provide farmers with a single portal through which they can access information about assistance and advice to manage hardship.	Visit farmhub.org.au

Victorian Better Health Channel	Health and medical information that is quality assured, reliable, up to date and easy to understand.	Visit betterhealth.vic.gov.au
Kindergarten Support	The subsidy provides support for all children in the year before school attending kindergarten in drought affected areas, and all children who live in drought affected areas that attend the year before school kindergarten in other areas. Kindergarten services will receive the subsidy on behalf of families through normal kindergarten funding processes. Kindergartens can also apply for a one-off grant to support their continued operation. All community-based kindergarten providers in Central and East Gippsland will be invited to apply for the financial hardship grant by the Department of Education and Training in early 2019.	Contact the Department of Education and Training by email kindergarten.funding@edumail.vic.gov.au
State Schools Relief	Provides new school uniforms, shoes and books for families who are facing hardship.	Contact your child's school or visit education.vic.gov.au or https://ssr.net.au/
Royal Flying Doctor Service	Free, confidential mental health and wellbeing service for people living in rural and remote communities.	Call (03) 8412 0480 or visit flyingdoctor.org.au/vic
Mental Health Care Plan	A mental health care plan provides Medicare rebates for up to 10 individual or 10 group appointments with a psychologist, occupational therapist or social worker in a year.	Contact your local GP for a referral healthdirect.gov.au/mental-health-care-plan
Community Health Care providers	Community Health services provide a range of primary health care services that could include: acute hospital care, medical center, home and community care, district nursing, women's health, allied health services (podiatry, occupational therapy etc.), counselling, pharmacy, referrals.	Contact your local Community Health service to confirm their services.

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