

December 2019

- Farmers' Drought Fund
- CWA Drought Relief
- Domestic and stock water bore license fee waiver
- CMA Drought Employment Program
- Farm Employment Exchange
- Local Government Services Support
- Mental health support
- Farm Business Management and Planning support



Drought support Wellington and East Gippsland shires

The Victorian Government provides a range of assistance to support farming families, communities and small businesses to manage the impact of drought as well as technical information, tools and resources.

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

Financial and Employment Support		
Farmers' Drought Fund On-Farm Drought Resilience Grant Program NEW	A grant of up to \$5000 is available to eligible drought impacted farm businesses for investment in on-farm drought preparedness and resilience, pasture management and recovery and farm business planning.	Call Rural Finance on 1800 260 425 or visit ruralfinance.com.au
Farmers' Drought Fund Country Women's Association of Victoria (CWA) Drought Relief NEW	The Country Women's Association (CWA) of Victoria is providing household relief up to a maximum of \$3,000 per individual applicant and/or household and is available for farming families, farm workers and contractors that are drought-affected and reliant on farming as their primary source of income.	Visit cwaofvic.org.au/drought-relief or call Agriculture Victoria on 136 186
Domestic and Stock Bore License Fee Waiver NEW	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.	For more information, visit https://waterregister.vic.gov.au/water-trading/my-water#Online_BCLs or https://waterregister.vic.gov.au/about/news/281-victorian-government-announces-d-s-bore-construction-fee-waiver
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
Farm Employment Exchange NEW	A new program to be delivered by the VFF to facilitate employment opportunities for farmers and farm workers seeking alternative farm work dur to drought.	More details will be available soon. To register your interest please email: drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au

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Financial and Employment 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
On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme (Aust Govt)	A grant of up to \$25,000 is available to assist farmers impacted by drought and dry seasonal conditions invest in on-farm water infrastructure that addresses animal welfare needs or for permanent horticultural plantings. Farm businesses across Victoria can make an application if they can demonstrate a critical water need resulting from current seasonal conditions. These applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.	Call Rural Finance on 1800 260 425 or visit ruralfinance.com.au
Agriculture Energy Investment Plan	On-farm energy grants are available to eligible primary producers until March 2020 or until available funding is exhausted. Grants will be provided on a "dollar for dollar" cash co-contribution basis. The streamlined grant program for dairy farmers is now available to enable dairy farmers to receive up to \$50,000 for energy saving equipment. Under the streamlined program, dairy farmers can apply for a grant for certain energy saving equipment without needing to first complete an on-farm energy assessment.	Call the Business Victoria hotline on 13 22 15 or visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/energy
Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS)	The RFCS provides free financial counselling to farmers and small businesses who are in, or at risk of, financial hardship. Counsellors can assist applicants to apply for the Farm Household Allowance (FHA).	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
Farm Household Allowance	The Australian Government makes an income support payment available to eligible farmers and their families experiencing financial hardship.	Call 132 316 or visit humanservices.gov.au (search for Farm Household Allowance on the homepage)
Victorian State Concessions	The Victorian Government offers a number of concessions designed to assist and improve the affordability of essential services for low-income Victorian households.	Call 1300 650 172 or visit services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/concessions-and-benefits
Australian Tax Office – Drought help	Tax advice for drought affected tax payers.	Call 1800 806 218 or visit ato.gov.au/drought
Farm Household Allowance (FHA)	The Australian Government makes an income support payment available to eligible farmers and their families experiencing financial hardship.	Call 132 316 or visit humanservices.gov.au
Farmer Assistance Hotline (Aust Govt)	Information on the Australian Government's support services available to farmers and rural communities.	Call 132 316 or visit humanservices.gov.au (search for Farmer Assistance Hotline on the homepage)
Regional Investment Corporation (RIC) Farm Business Concessional Loans (Aust Govt)	The RIC offers two loan products for eligible farm businesses in Victoria: Drought Loans and Farm Investment Loans A new Replanting and Restocking loan will be available in the coming months.	Call 1800 875 675 or visit ric.gov.au/

Technical support		
Farm Business Management and Planning Support	Agriculture Victoria delivers technical and decision-making support services to assist farm businesses manage dry seasonal conditions. Working with our industry partners, the department provides services across industries including beef, sheep, dairy, grains, horticulture and irrigation. Agriculture Victoria also has technical information, videos and tools on topics such as: 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.	Call 136 186 or visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons or email drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au For information on workshops and events, visit: agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/farm-management/farmer-workshops
One-on-one consultation sessions	Free one-on-one consultation sessions are available to assist farmers to manage current seasonal conditions and access support services. Consultations can 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	Contact Agriculture Victoria: Livestock: Darren Hickey, Bairnsdale (03) 5152 0496

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	<p>services such as Rural Financial Counsellors, Farm Household Allowance and concessional loans programs. For dairy farmers, Agriculture Victoria is providing this service in collaboration with GippsDairy.</p>	<p>Dairy: Maria Rose, Maffra or (03) 5147 0843 David Shambrook, Leongatha (03) 5662 9913 Irrigation - Janice Dowe, Maffra (03) 5147 0854</p>
Stock containment areas	<p>Agriculture Victoria has developed 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 http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/emergencies/recovery/livestock-after-an-emergency/stock-containment-areas or contact your local Agriculture Victoria office for more information.</p>
Farm Hub (Aust Government)	<p>Farm Hub aims to provide farmers with a single portal through which they can access information about assistance and advice to manage hardship.</p>	<p>Visit farmhub.org.au</p>

Personal and Family Support		
Mental Health Support	<p>The Mental Health Support package includes additional counselling and co-ordination and psychological first aid training. If you need immediate assistance with your mental health and wellbeing, call Lifeline on 13 11 14. If you need emergency assistance, call 000.</p>	<p>Outer Gippsland Drought Package Coordinator Regina Kalb, DHHS Regina.kalb@dhs.vic.gov.au</p>
Rural Aid	<p>Rural Aid provides support for farmers including a one-off \$1,500 cash payment for bill expenses (applicants need to meet eligibility requirements and register online). Farmers can also register for fodder, fuel and food vouchers and domestic water deliveries.</p>	<p>Call 1300 327 624 or visit ruralaid.org.au</p>
Lifeline	<p>24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services.</p>	<p>Call 131 114 or visit lifeline.org.au</p>
Beyondblue	<p>24/7 telephone information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health.</p>	<p>Call 1300 224 636 or visit beyondblue.org.au</p>
National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH)	<p>The NCFH provides health and safety education and advice to farmers and their families. The NCFH is also available to attend events and field days to undertake farmer health checks and can provide education and support materials as required.</p>	<p>Call (03) 5551 8533 or visit farmerhealth.org.au</p>
Look Over the Farm Gate program	<p>The Look Over the Farm Gate program is delivered by the VFF and provides funding for community events and other activities that promote the message of looking after each other and our mental health.</p>	<p>Call 1300 882 833 or visit lookoverthefarmgate.org.au</p>
MensLine Australia	<p>24/7 service for men with relationship and family concerns.</p>	<p>Call 1300 78 99 78 or visit mensline.org.au</p>
Kids Help Line	<p>24/7 telephone and online counselling service for people aged 5 - 25.</p>	<p>Call 1800 55 1800 or visit kidshelpline.com.au</p>
Family Relationship Service	<p>Providing families with access to information about family relationship issues.</p>	<p>Call 1800 050 321 or visit familyrelationships.gov.au</p>
Victorian Better Health Channel	<p>Health and medical information that is quality assured, reliable, up to date and easy to understand.</p>	<p>Visit betterhealth.vic.gov.au Nurse on call 1300 606 024</p>
State Schools Relief	<p>Provides new school uniforms, shoes and books for families who are facing hardship.</p>	<p>Contact your child's school or visit education.vic.gov.au (search state schools' relief) or https://ssr.net.au/</p>
Royal Flying Doctor Service	<p>Free, confidential mental health and wellbeing service for people living in rural and remote communities.</p>	<p>Call (03) 8412 0400 or visit flyingdoctor.org.au/vic</p>
Mental Health Care Plan	<p>A mental health care plan provides Medicare rebates for up to 10 individual or 10 group appointments per year with a psychologist, occupational therapist or social worker.</p>	<p>Contact your local GP for a referral healthdirect.gov.au/mental-health-care-plan</p>
Community Health Care providers	<p>Community health services provide a range of primary health care services that could include: acute hospital care, medical centre, home and community care, district nursing, women's health, allied health services (podiatry, occupational therapy etc.), counselling, pharmacy, referrals.</p>	<p>Contact your local Community Health service to confirm their services.</p>

Regional Support		
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 on private land	Permits are available for the control wildlife on private land.	Contact DELWP on 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 where there is a high incidence of water carting. The program will be delivered by rural water corporations in partnership with local councils where need has been identified.	Contact DELWP on 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. Grants are available for a broad range of grassroots, community-led initiatives that directly and clearly benefit local communities.	Call 1800 170 020 or visit https://www.frrr.org.au/
A/Regional Drought Coordinator	The key point of coordination at the local level, providing information on drought services, support options, emerging risks and pressures in the region.	Aimee McCutcheon, Agriculture Victoria (03) 5833 5308

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