

HEARTBREAK TO RENEWED CONFIDENCE

**Power of taking
control from
devastating
circumstances**

I have been a beef farmer in East Gippsland for over 60 years. I contacted RFCS Gippsland in 2019 after suffering the worst 3 years of my life trying to survive the drought and the death of my beloved husband the previous year.

I was struggling to function, living day by day and relying on whatever available grant there was. I knew how to manage the farm, but my husband was the business manager and I was really lacking in confidence to make any big decisions.

During my last grant application to help with some farm safety issues, the officer at RFCS Gippsland asked me "What are your plans when there are no more grants?"

That question really hit home and was the trigger to become proactive again and turn things around. It was time to plan my future beyond just surviving.

RFCS Gippsland supported me to work out what my goals are and develop the action plan to achieve them.

I remembered how much I enjoyed running our farm hospitality business which was in hiatus after my husband died. My optimism and confidence were renewed, and I gave myself 2 years to get this business fully functioning again with additional infrastructure and service offerings.

RFCS also helped me develop the budget and cash flow to ensure I could afford the additional investments and costs whilst I slowly build up my livestock numbers again to a more manageable yet productive carrying capacity. Thank goodness I could use vouchers from the Farm Household Allowance to afford a farm consultant to help develop a farm plan.

By creating additional income, engaging a support network and making plans for the future when I can no longer manage everything myself, I feel like I'm in control again and can now pledge to do all the things I've always wanted to do, including holidays with my family.

I am really appreciative of the help from RFCS Gippsland. They have been so patient and have made everything so much easier to understand, especially when I'm not really very good with computers. They make me feel quite relaxed and working with them becomes easier as they get to know me.