

June 2020

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



Dry Seasonal Conditions support Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID)

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

For more information call 136 186 or visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons

Financial and Employment Support

Farmers' Drought Fund

On-Farm Drought Resilience Grant Program

The maximum value of the On-Farm Drought Resilience Grants has increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000 to boost farmers' access to professional services while still enabling farmers to invest in drought preparedness infrastructure. Eligible farm businesses can now apply for:

- Up to \$5,000 for business decision making activities (with no-contribution required)
- Up to \$5,000 for infrastructure investments (with at least 50 per cent co-contribution required).

Call Rural Finance on 1800 260 425 or visit ruralfinance.com.au

Farmers' Drought Fund

Country Women's Association of Victoria (CWA) Drought Relief

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/
Anyone seeking a copy of the application form or requiring assistance to complete the application can contact Agriculture Victoria on 136 186 or email the CWA on drought@cwaofvic.org.au

Domestic and Stock Bore License Fee Waiver

The waiver provides \$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 waterregister.vic.gov.au/water-trading/my-water#Online_BCLs or waterregister.vic.gov.au/about/news/281-victorian-government-announces-d-s-bore-construction-fee-waiver

Farm Employment Exchange

The Farm Employment Exchange Pilot Project aims to facilitate connections and employment exchange between farmers looking for additional work due to drought, and potential employers.

Call the Victorian Farmers Federation on 1300 882 833 or visit farmemploymentexchange.org.au/

Rural Skills Connect

A partnership between Regional Development Victoria and Murray Dairy to re-establish the Rural Skills Connect program to support dairy farming families and farm workers seeking off-farm income to develop new skills and use their existing expertise to gain new employment.

Call Linda Kelly at Murray Dairy on 0487 446 808

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 Goulburn Broken CMA on (03) 5822 7700, email reception@gbcma.vic.gov.au or visit gbcma.vic.gov.au/news_events/current-issues/drought-employment-program.html
Agriculture Energy Investment Plan	On-farm energy grants are available to eligible primary producers until June 2020 or until available funding is exhausted. Grants will be provided on a "dollar for dollar" cash co-contribution basis. A 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/agenergy
Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS)	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).	Call 1800 686 175 (toll free) or call North Eastern RFCS: 1300 834 775 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 taxpayers.	Call 1800 806 218 or visit ato.gov.au/drought
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) Drought Loan (Aust Gov)	The Australian Government has established the Regional Investment Corporation (RIC). The RIC offers a Drought Loan of up to \$2 million to assist farmers to prepare for, manage and recover from the effects of drought.	Call 1800 875 675 or visit ric.gov.au/
Drought Community Support Initiative (Aust Govt)	A one-off payment of \$3000 for eligible farmers, farm workers, farm suppliers or contractors in areas impacted by drought or dry seasonal conditions. Vinnies is providing support for residents of Swan Hill shire. The Salvation Army is providing support for residents of Greater Shepparton, Gannawarra and Moira shires.	Call 1300 846 643 or visit vinnies.org.au/page/Find_Help/drought_assistance/ Call 1300 551 030 or visit salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/rural-support/drought-community-support-initiative/

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
Plan2Farm Program	Delivered across the GMID and coordinated by the North Central Catchment Management Authority, this program assists and supports farmers to make informed decisions about their farming future. The program includes managing current seasonal conditions, optimising investment, farm productivity, irrigation decisions and succession planning. Plan2Farm involves one-on-one support from either an Agriculture Victoria or Murray Dairy staff member and may include the services of a consultant.	Contact North Central Catchment Management Authority (03) 5448 7124 or nccma.vic.gov.au/

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One-on-one consultation sessions (Dairy)	Agriculture Victoria, in collaboration with Dairy Australia, provides one-on-one consultation services to provide Victorian dairy farmers with support and information tailored to their individual needs. This includes feed budgeting, feed rations, partial budgets, hay and crop decision making, water use and resource management.	Call 136 186 or visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons or email drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au
Stock containment areas	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.	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.
Farm Hub (Aust Govt)	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

Personal and Family Support

Mental Health Support	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.	Goulburn Drought Package Coordinator Neil Duggan, DHHS Neil.Duggan@dhhs.vic.gov.au Ovens Murray Drought Package Coordinator Stephen Carroll, DHHS Stephen.Carroll@dhhs.vic.gov.au Loddon Drought Package Coordinator Michael Farrell, DHHS Michael.Farrell@dhhs.vic.gov.au
Rural Aid	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.	Call 1300 327 624 or visit ruralaid.org.au
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 (NCFH)	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.	Call (03) 5551 8533 or visit farmerhealth.org.au
Look Over the Farm Gate program	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.	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
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 Nurse on call 1300 606 024
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 (search state schools' relief) 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 0400 or visit flyingdoctor.org.au/vic

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Mental Health Care Plan

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.

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 centre, 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.

Regional Support

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 frrr.org.au/

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.

Michael Bretherton, Agriculture Victoria
(03) 5733 1221

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