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## Depression and stress – NSW farmers learn the early warning signs

The NSW Farmers' Association is once again urging Members across the State to attend free Mental Health Information Sessions this month in an attempt to address the mental toll of drought.

The 21 sessions, to be run by the NSW Farmers' Mental Health Network and funded by NSW Health, will take place from Narrabri in the north to Deniliquin in the south, and from Bourke in the far west to Casino on the coast to help local residents adapt to the pressures of the ninth consecutive year of drought.

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie says the free three-hour sessions will aim to help farmers, rural service providers and rural communities understand the warning signs of too much stress, depression and anxiety.

"With a variety of challenges and uncertainty facing those living in the bush, many farming families are experiencing significant ongoing financial, psychological and emotional pressures," Mr Laurie said.

"Stress has become part and parcel of farming, with many areas facing the grim reality of yet another failed crop," Mr Laurie said.

The workshops will help farmers and residents of local communities gain an understanding of depression and anxiety, their signs and symptoms and the early warning signs that a person needs professional assistance.

"It's very important during tough times that we look out for our family, friends and neighbours, and it's essential that people know what help is available and how it can be accessed," Mr Laurie said.

The workshops are being run by Dr Leanne Craze and will be held at Coonamble, Gilgandra, Nyngan, Bourke, Brewarrina, Walgett, Cobar, Lightning Ridge, Wee Waa, Narrabri, Gunnedah, Casino, Trundle, Lake Cargelligo, Weethalle, West Wyalong, Hillston, Deniliquin, Finley, Leeton and Lockhart.

Workshops will run at a range of times, including mornings, lunch and evenings, to cater for the busy lives of farmers and rural communities.

For information on the workshops, including dates, times and locations, please visit the Craze Lateral Solutions website: [www.crazelateralsolutions.com](http://www.crazelateralsolutions.com). To book at place, contact Dr Craze at on (02) 6238 1549.

*\*Note for Radio: Audio grabs from NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie are available from the NSW Farmers' Association website ([www.nswfarmers.org.au/media\\_centre/audio\\_grabs](http://www.nswfarmers.org.au/media_centre/audio_grabs)). However, if you would prefer to conduct your own interview, please contact Ruth Redfern on the number listed below.*

### Contact:

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