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NSW farmers lending support to bushfire victims

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie has thanked the many Members who have contacted the Association over the last few days regarding offers of support for their Victorian counterparts devastated by the Victorian bushfires.

The NSW Farmers' Association has been working with the Victorian Farmers' Federation (VFF) and the NSW State Government to ascertain what assistance is needed to help farmers rebuild their lives, in both the short and long term.

"It's very important that we continue to work together to help our fellow farmers south of the border, and the Association will continue to do what it can to keep our Members updated on how they can assist," Mr Laurie said.

"It will be months, if not years until many farmers in Victoria are back on their feet, and we want them to know NSW farmers are willing to help them do that in any way they can," Mr Laurie said.

"We encourage anyone who feels they can help, to put their hand up to assist in this time of crisis," Mr Laurie said.

"Many farmers have contacted the Association offering fodder to farmers in Victoria. The Association is informing Members that there are several ways they can help," Mr Laurie said.

The NSW Farmers' Association is encouraging those farmers to contact the VFF on **1300 882 833** or download the VFF's Bushfire Fodder/Agistment Donation form and return via fax to **(03) 9207 5500** or email vff@vff.org.au

"In lodging details with the VFF it will enable them to coordinate the donations that have been pledged and to get them to the areas that need them as the need arises," Mr Laurie said.

"Farmers should recognise that while this may not mean donations are called up on immediately, they might be called upon in the future," Mr Laurie concluded.

Farmers are also encouraged to contact the NSW Government Hotline on **1800 227 228** if they would like information on how to support their Victorian counterparts in their recovery efforts.

The NSW Farmers' Association is also advising its Members that cash assistance can also be directed to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund, through the Red Cross by calling **1800 811 700**.

NSW Farmers' Association staff will also be donating blood this week at the Australian Red Cross in Sydney.

**Note for Radio: An audio grab is available from www.nswfarmers.org.au/media_centre/audio_grabs*

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