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## **Funding blow for farmers: Exceptional Circumstances funding cut**

The NSW Farmers' Association has expressed disappointment that funding for three Exceptional Circumstances (EC) areas in NSW will not be extended following today's announcement by the Federal Government.

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie says Members in the Bourke, Central North North-West Northern New England Revision and Northern Tablelands Small Areas Revised areas will not be eligible for EC funding past 15 June 2009 when their current declaration expires.

"While we recognise the end of EC funding for some farmers means that the situation in their area has improved, for others the end of funding is a severe blow," Mr Laurie said.

"The drought situation in NSW is relentless, with some 60 per cent of the State still in drought. This figure is unfortunately once again on the increase, which shows that this drought is not going to be broken easily.

"Concerned Members in these affected areas need to be aware that there is only a limited time frame to question the termination of funding, before it comes into effect.

"The Government has indicated that once the deadline for the EC period has lapsed, any reconsideration will have to be in the form of a new application.

"For this reason, we are encouraging all concerned Members from these areas to contact the Association now so that we can ensure their concerns are passed on to the Government in time," Mr Laurie said.

This latest announcement by the Federal Government follows the decision last week not to extend EC funding for ten areas in NSW. The Association had lobbied the Government to review their decision on these areas that had expired in March and April 2009; however the Government did not extend funding on the advice of the National Rural Advisory Council (NRAC).

Members in the Bourke, Central North North-West Northern New England Revision and Northern Tablelands Small Areas Revised areas who are concerned about today's EC funding cut announcement are asked to contact the Association on 1300 794 000 by Friday 5 June.

### **Contact:**

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