

Drought Assistance Available to Farming Businesses & Families (NSW) 2007

Federal Government Drought Assistance

ASSISTANCE TYPE	DETAILS OF ASSISTANCE	FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payments (administered by Centrelink)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortnightly payment for farmers. Must have current 'EC Certificate' available by directly applying to Centrelink. Income and assets tested with farm assets exempt. Income test assessed on estimate of current years net farm income and other income. Last completed tax return also required. Receive a health care card that entitles you to a range of other concessions. If you receive this payment the Parental Income, Family Assets and Family Actual Means tests are waived. This means that your dependent children may be entitled to receive the maximum rate of Youth Allowance. This support is available to eligible producers, contractors and small businesses in drought declared areas. 	<p><u>Drought Assistance Hotline</u> 13 23 16</p> <p>Applications are available at http://www.centrelink.gov.au/inter/net/internet.nsf/payments/ecrp.htm</p>
Exceptional Circumstances Interest Subsidy Support (via NSW Rural Adjustment Authority, RAA.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For farmers who would normally be considered profitable in the long term, but due to drought are in financial difficulty and in need of assistance. Up to 80% of the interest payable on eligible farm debt (limit of \$100,000 in 12 months, & \$500,000 over 5 years). Now being assessed on estimate season 2006/07. Contact RAA for information on eligibility criteria, time lines, assessment and forms. Net essential off-farm assets allowable is \$750 000 (excluding Super and Life Insurance). 	<p><u>RAA:</u></p> <p>1800 678 593</p> <p>Application also available from www.raa.nsw.gov.au and follow the Drought Assistance links</p>
Exceptional Circumstances - small business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EC income support and interest rate subsidies to all small businesses in towns of up to 10,000 population that have a significant reliance on farmers for their income, and have suffered a downturn due to the drought (\$143 million). Small business owners who receive 70 percent of their income from farm businesses in EC declared areas and have up to 100 full time employees are still eligible to apply for income support and interest rate subsidies. 	<p><u>Drought Assistance Hotline</u> 13 23 16, or visit www.daff.gov.au/droughtassist</p>
Exceptional Circumstances – Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for both government and non-government schools in Exceptional Circumstances declared areas under the <i>Realising Our Potential</i> package. 	<p><u>Drought Assistance Hotline</u> 13 23 16, or visit www.daff.gov.au/droughtassist</p>
Assistance for Isolated children (AIC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>AIC Boarding Allowance</i> of \$6396 per annum with an additional \$1140 per annum subject to parental income. An additional \$1000 was announced recently by the Government. <i>AIC Distance Education Allowance</i> of \$3198. An additional \$1000 announced recently by the Government. Please contact Centrelink for the eligibility criteria on 13 23 16 or visit the Centerlink website: Homepage-click "Individuals" on the toolbar, then click "About Payments (read more)" then click "Studying and Training" then click Payments while you are studying and training", then click "Assistance for Isolated Children". 	<p><u>Drought Assistance Hotline</u> 13 23 16, www.centrelink.gov.au or visit www.daff.gov.au/droughtassist</p>
Farm management deposits (FMDs) (Early access without losing Tax benefits)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deposit ceiling lifted to \$400,000 and non-primary income test now \$65000. Must hold a current 'EC Certificate' to access FMD (3 month wait period). Contact your financial institution or adviser. Locate a financial counsellor 1800 686 175 or www.rfcs.gov.au 	<p>Contact ATO for additional Tax advice 13 11 42 (option 3) or 13 28 66 (option 4, then 1).</p>

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NewStart & Youth Allowance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you are a farm hand, small business owner, contractor or other worker who loses work or income due to the drought you now have easier access to income support such as Newstart and Youth Allowance. 	Drought Assistance Hotline: 13 23 16 www.centrelink.gov.au
Farm Help – Income support and Re-establishment grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Includes an income support payment at the same rate as Newstart Allowance (cannot receive E.C. income support at same time), and an Advice and Training grant (can be received while you are on E.C. income support). - Also includes a re-establishment grant for farmers exiting farming. Income and assets tested (farm assets exempt). - Note: Need to apply BEFORE you sell your farm assets and exit farming. Contact Centrelink or a Rural Financial Counsellor for information on eligibility criteria, time lines, assessment and forms. - Sharefarmers and leases may be eligible to apply. 	Drought Assistance Hotline: 13 23 16 www.centrelink.gov.au
Professional Advice & Planning Grant (administered through Centrelink)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immediate access to Professional Advice and Planning Grants of up to \$5,500 (GST inclusive) are now available to eligible farm business located in <i>all</i> Exceptional Circumstances declared areas, irrespective of the length of the declaration. In addition, eligible farm businesses can now access these grants for up to 12 months after the Exceptional Circumstances declaration has expired. 	Drought Assistance Hotline: 13 23 16 Application also available from www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/forms/su613.htm
AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE		
Tax Relief & Rebates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) can help people who are finding it difficult to pay their tax due to the impact of the drought. Assistance is available to farmers and other taxpayers whose income is derived from drought affected areas. There are two forms of assistance available: - More time to pay tax debts without interest charges, or - Payment by instalment without interest charges. - The ATO also has a number of special taxation measures for drought affected farmers. These measures include ways to manage profit from the forced disposal or death of livestock, and deductions for expenses on water facilities. 	If you are experiencing difficulty paying your tax due to the drought, you can contact the ATO on 13 11 42 and select option 3 to discuss your circumstances, or visit the ATO website: http://www.ato.gov.au
IRRIGATION ASSISTANCE		
Water Management and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grants of up to \$20000 (GST exclusive) to irrigators in the Murray Darling Basin to implement water management strategies in response to significantly reduced allocations. The grants will be paid on a reimbursement basis. - Irrigators with a current business plan will be able to use the grant to meet the costs of implementing on-farm practices which aim to enhance water use efficiency and improve the productivity of their enterprise. 	Murray Darling Basin Information and Referral Line 1800 050 015
Information Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information Workshops to assist irrigators manage their farm business with reduced water allocations. 	Murray Darling Basin Information and Referral Line 1800 050 015
EXIT ASSISTANCE		
Exit Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An exit grant of up to \$150,000 for farmers who have decided to leave the land, and an increase in the assets limit to access this grant, to \$350,000. 	Drought Assistance Hotline 13 23 16
Advice and re-training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - \$10,000 is available to those who take up advice and re-training, and up to \$10,000 for relocation expenses is also available to those who take up the advice and re-training grant. 	Drought Assistance Hotline 13 23 16

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DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES		
Transport Subsidies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transport subsidies are administered by the NSW Department of Primary Industries, providing a rebate for 50% of travel costs for the movement of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Water for domestic use o Water and fodder for stock o Stock to / from agistment o Stock from slaughter - Subsidies are capped at \$20,000 per calendar year. - Subsidies apply for the transport of stock to the nearest regional saleyard or abattoir. - Applications have to be lodged within three months of the date of transport. 	<p>DPI: 1800 814 647</p> <p>More information and claim forms can be found at: http://www.agric.nsw.gov.au/reader/drought-subsidy</p> <p>or through your local RLPB board.</p>
DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND REGIONAL SERVICES		
Small Business Improvement and Recovery Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only available to small businesses and contractors in drought affected areas, not primary producers. - Small regional businesses will be able to apply for a grant of up to \$3,000 to directly implement business improvement and recovery strategies or engage external expertise to help sustain their operations during and beyond the drought - Small businesses can also obtain professional advice on developing a financial position assessment (cash flow, balance sheet, assets and liabilities) and mini diagnostic looking at the topics of turnover, cost structures, collection procedures, basic ratios and trends. - Key Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Primarily service or draw supplies from farmers OR; o Any small business located in a farm-dependent community with a population under 15,000. 	<p>Dept. of State and Regional Development: 02 9338 6713</p> <p>Paul Mathews: Regional Development Division 02 9338 6713</p> <p>http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/business/drought/</p>
Payroll Tax Relief (06/07)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Payroll tax relief will be provided to small / medium sized businesses that can show a decrease of 50% (or expected decrease) in Annual Sales or Earnings Before Interest and Taxation (EBIT) over the period 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2007, compared to the base period 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002. - Key Criteria include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o That the business is reliant on farmers for its income; o Employ no more that 200 full-time employees; o Have employed at least 85% of its full-time equivalent employees for at least 18 months; o Retain at least 85% of its full-time equivalent employees during the period 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006; o Undertake to retain these employees beyond the period of assistance. 	<p>Dept. of State and Regional Development: 02 9338 6713</p> <p>Paul Mathews: Regional Development Division 02 9338 6713</p> <p>http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/business/drought/</p>
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES (DoCS)		
Drought Household Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to \$2000 to help pay household bills (no farm bills). - Both producers and non farming households that have been severely impacted by drought can apply - DoCS prefers that you go through a Drought Support Worker or a Rural Financial Counsellor (see links below) to gain access to this assistance. 	<p>DoCS: 1800 018 444.</p> <p>http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/html/disaster/drought.htm</p>

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COMMUNITY- BASED ASSISTANCE		
Salvation Army	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial assistance and support for farming families to pay bills (non-farm and farm). The Salvos Drought Appeal will focus on strengthening the capacity of families. The initiative will concentrate on those who are most at risk providing them with; drinking water supplies, counsel/pastoral care and emotional support, financial assistant with household bills, social activities in townships that bring the community together. 	Salvation Army: 136 123 and ask for your local branch contact details
CWA Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The additional \$8 million provided to the Country Women's Association (CWA) 1 July 2007 to distribute emergency grants for farming families and community organisations has now been fully allocated. 	NSW Country Womens Assoc: 02 9358 2923 www.cwaofnsw.org.au Email: info@cwaofnsw.org.au
St. Vincent De Paul Society Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endeavour to respond to any request for financial assistance (non-farm) 	Contact local St Vincent de Paul Society Centre
PERSONAL ASSISTANCE		
Rural Financial Counsellors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These Counsellors located across the State provide a free and independent financial counselling service for farming families and small rural businesses faced with difficult financial decisions. They can also advise and offer assistance when applying for the various types of support available, including Exceptional Circumstance payments and DoCS grants. 	RAA: 1800 331 126 for details. The DAFF website has a comprehensive lists of individual contact details – www.daff.gov.au or www.rfcs.gov.au
Drought Support Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drought Support Workers provide immediate personal support, information on assistance available and referral to other appropriate services. <p>Bourke Lyn Leigo: 02 6872 2077 Corowa Don Burrowes: 02 6033 4245 Dubbo Pip Brown: 02 6881 1266 Goulbourn Dick Kearins: 02 4828 6600 Gunnedah Jenny Croft: 02 6741 8336 Hay Danny Byrnes: 02 6993 1608 Parkes Jan Bruce: 02 6862 1000 Scone Tania Chesworth: 02 6545 1800 Wagga Lloyd Kingham: 02 6938 1987 or Caroline Long: 02 6545 1800</p>	DPI: Drought Support Line: 1800 814 647
Rural Mental Health Support Line	If you are concerned about your neighbour, one of your mates, a family member or even yourself, this free, confidential 24 / 7 assistance line is specifically designed for people facing the unique pressures of living in rural areas.	1800 201 123
OTHER DROUGHT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS		
Mental Health First Aid Training	- Free mental Health First Aid Training Sessions are available to farmers and people living in rural areas. These two day accredited courses are currently being run across the State and provide participants the skills required to deal with a mental help emergency until professional help can be sought.	Contact Julie Greig for more information on (02) 6360 7823
Electricity Bill Assistance	- Contact Country Energy 13 23 56 and enquire about Country Support.	Country Energy 13 23 56
Telstra Bill Assistance	- Contact local welfare organisations including Anglicare, Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul, Smith Family	
Mortgage Duty Relief	- Provided for those producers eligible for Exceptional Circumstances assistance	

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