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Drought support still needed

The NSW Farmers' Association says the State Government continues to stand by farmers, extending the drought transport subsidies and funding for drought support workers beyond their end of year deadlines.

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie says the unfortunate reality is that farmers in NSW are still in the strong grip of the worst drought on record, and assistance is still very necessary.

"Measures like the transport subsidies and the role of drought support workers cannot be underestimated with the drought reaching this unprecedented scale," Mr Laurie said.

"Both of these programs are very necessary as they both provide vital assistance to farmers and their families in assisting them to manage the pressures of drought," he said.

"We are particularly pleased to see the employment of the drought support workers extended by 12 months, giving them some real scope to plan ahead on events like family farm gatherings."

The drought transport subsidies have been extended by 3 months until February 2008. The government will also defer the 2008 Pest Insect levy, and waive the Wild Dog Destruction Board Rate in the Western Division for 2008.

"The Association thanks the community and the Government for understanding how serious the situation is and recognising assistance is a safety net for farming families and their communities," Mr Laurie concluded.

Contact: Ellen McNamara (Media Officer) 0429 990 218

Fast fact: Over the last two decades Australian farming families have become increasingly dependent on off-farm income to maintain their standard of living