

# Media Release

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## Flood victim applications due

The NSW Farmers' Association is reminding flood affected primary producers in the Central West and North Coast regions that the deadline to apply for assistance runs out at the end of the month.

The grants of up to \$5000 are available for clean-up and immediate restoration costs including costs associated with damage to farm buildings, crops, livestock, fences equipment and other infrastructure, but are not intended to cover loss of business income, or to replace insurance.

NSW Farmers' Association President Jock Laurie says the storms and heavy rain in late 2007 and early 2008 across the Central West and North Coast regions of NSW caused significant damage and losses to fences, sheds, silos, livestock, machinery and roads.

"Farmers should take advantage of the flood assistance being made available, but they must get their applications in to the Rural Assistance Authority by 31 March 2008," Mr Laurie said.

"Following a recent announcement, farmers are now able to apply for assistance using estimates for repair work to fencing and earthworks, rather than actual cost," he said.

Eligible farmers may also apply for assistance under the Natural Disaster Relief Scheme which provides a loan of up to \$130 000 at a concessional interest rate of 2.85% which is fixed for the term of the loan.

"The Government has recognised that people are carrying a lot of debt after years of drought, and that flood damage is an additional cost that many can't afford," Mr Laurie said.

"Whilst we are concerned that a grant of up to \$5000 might not be enough, we are urging farmers to seek the help available to them," Mr Laurie concluded.

Farmers should contact the NSW Rural Assistance Authority. Phone 1800 678 593 for further information regarding the flood grants or the concessional loans.

**Contact: Ellen McNamara (Media Officer) 0429 990 218**

*Fast Fact: Goat meat is the most widely consumed meat in the world*