



27 September 2019

Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Drought relief for Tasmanian farmers

The Hodgman majority Liberal Government is committed to continuing to work closely with farmers and rural communities in drought affected areas.

We are mindful that Tasmania is a state of two halves, while some areas have a promising season ahead, others are continuing to manage drought conditions.

Having consulted and listened, the Government is delivering \$400,000 in targeted drought support to complement the existing assistance programs, including;

- \$150,000 to the Rural Relief Fund to assist those in hardship with direct household and farm business expenses, and expanded to include assistance with freight costs for fodder and water, utilities bills and vehicle registrations, for example.
- \$20,000 for the TFGA to upgrade the Tasmanian Fodder Register to include agistment and to deliver drought community support events.
- \$80,000 for Rural Alive and Well to extend outreach services to drought affected communities.
- \$150,000 for the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture to assist drought affected farmers with in-drought grazing, pasture and livestock management strategies, as well as farm planning and practical tools for post-drought rebuilding of farm productivity in a changing climate.
- Targeted drought weed management support from the \$5 million Tasmanian Weed Action Fund.
- DPIPW workshops and practical support with on-farm and catchment-wide water management strategies.

Farmers experiencing financial hardship due to drought are also encouraged to apply for Federal drought assistance, which includes:

- The **Regional Investment Corporation** can provide low-interest Drought Loans of up to \$2 million to farmers in need of financial help. These 10-year loans can be used to help farms prepare for, manage and recover from the effects of drought, including refinancing.
- The **Farm Household Allowance** is available to help with household expenses by providing fortnightly payments, and potentially up to \$1,500 for a financial assessment of the farm business, and up to \$4,000 to pay for professional advice and training.

- The **On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme** can fund a quarter of the cost of new on-farm infrastructure to provide water for livestock and de-silt dams, up to a maximum rebate of \$25,000 per applicant.
- The **Drought Communities Programme** provided \$1 million each to the Break O'Day and Glamorgan-Spring Bay councils for local infrastructure projects and other drought-relief activities that will boost local employment and procurement, and address social and community needs.

The drought support package is a sensible and balanced approach that proactively recognises the current concerns in Tasmanian regions and the need to prepare for farm productivity rebuilding post-drought.

Further information is available from the FarmPoint Website: [FarmPoint.tas.gov.au](https://farmpoint.tas.gov.au), or the FarmPoint hotline 1300 292292 or by email: fampoint@dpipwe.tas.gov.au