



The Hon. David Littleproud MP
Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources

The Hon. Michael Keenan MP
Minister for Human Services and
Digital Transformation

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Tuesday, 16 October 2018

Helping farmers access the farm household allowance

- **Coalition Government has simplified the FHA application form, cutting it by a third.**
- **Centrelink offices in some regions will be open on Saturdays to host information sessions to help farmers with FHA applications.**
- **An additional 1,750 applications for FHA funding have already been received this financial year compared to 2017-18.**

It is now easier for farmers to apply for the fortnightly Farm Household Allowance hardship payment and farmers are being urged to apply.

The FHA application form has been changed and information sessions are being held on Saturdays at some regional Centrelink offices.

Minister for Agriculture David Littleproud said the changes to the application form were also helping farmers to find out sooner if there were eligible.

“The application form has been cut by a third and critical eligibility criteria is at the front so farmers can identify if they are eligible much quicker,” Mr Littleproud said. “No one should be too proud to apply.”

“Farmers should also remember that a Rural Financial Counsellor can help them fill out the form for free. The RFCS currently has around 4,000 active clients, up from the usual 3,000. The government is providing an extra \$5 million to the RFCS to help meet the extra demand.”

Minister for Human Services Michael Keenan said although applications for FHA have more than doubled compared to last financial year, there were still many farmers who were yet to access the support available to them.

“In 2017-18 we received around 1,250 applications for FHA - that has increased to 3,000 applications already this financial year,” Mr Keenan said.

“By opening our regional services centres on Saturday’s, we are giving farmers who haven’t yet applied the chance to access advice and one-on-one assistance from our FHA case officers who can help them complete their claims forms.”

To find out when and where the Centrelink information sessions are being held go to **humanservices.gov.au/farmhouseholdallowance**.

Earlier changes include extending FHA from three to four years, increasing the farm assets test eligibility threshold from \$2.6m to \$5m and paying extra lump sum payments of up to \$12,000.

Minister Littleproud recently announced an independent review of the FHA to make sure it's doing what it should, and the review panel is holding face-to-face consultations across Australia.

To find out more or to make a submission online please go to <https://haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au/fha-review-2018>.

Fast facts:

- **Since the introduction of Farm Household Allowance in 2014, more than 8000 people have received payment.**
- **More than 3000 farmers are in receipt of Farm Household Allowance (FHA) and have received the first instalment of FHA supplement payments.**
- **In the 2017-18 financial year, we received approximately 1250 applications for FHA. In the 2018-19 financial year, there have already been more than 3000 applications.**