

# Available drought assistance in NSW



Updated: 27 November 2018

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## Drought Financial Assistance

The NSW Government has a wide range of measures to support farmers impacted by drought conditions. Visit [Frequently Asked Questions \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq) for an overview of the Emergency Drought Relief Package, announced on 30 July 2018.

### Loans

#### Drought Assistance Fund

The NSW Government is offering a one-off \$50,000 interest-free loan to transport stock, fodder and water, genetic banking of breeding herds and installing on-farm fodder and water infrastructure. The loans term is seven years and there are no repayments required in the first two years:

- [check your eligibility \(PDF, 116.37 KB\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/817853/Drought-Assistance-Fund-Guidelines.pdf)
- [download an application form \(https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/rebate-on-road-transport\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/rebate-on-road-transport) or,
- [apply online \(https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/drought-assistance-fund/application-form\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/drought-assistance-fund/application-form)

#### Farm Innovation Fund

The NSW Government is offering a loan scheme for capital works up to a value of \$250K for infrastructure works (eg sheds, silos, water storage) to prepare for dry conditions, to build resilience and improve on-farm efficiency. For [details of eligibility \(PDF, 131.98 KB\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/493009/Farm-Innovation-Fund-Guidelines.pdf) ([https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/493009/Farm-Innovation-Fund-Guidelines.pdf](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/493009/Farm-Innovation-Fund-Guidelines.pdf)) and [how to apply \(PDF, 350.86 KB\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/493082/Farm-Innovation-Fund.pdf) ([https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/493082/Farm-Innovation-Fund.pdf](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/493082/Farm-Innovation-Fund.pdf)) visit the [Rural Assistance Authority \(https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/farm-innovation-fund\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/farm-innovation-fund) or call [1800 678 593 \(tel:1800678593\)](tel:1800678593)

#### Regional Investment Corporation Low Interest Loans

The Australian Government is offering low interest loans to help farmers prepare for, manage through and recover from drought. Download their [Loans at a Glance](http://www.ric.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/loans-at-glance.pdf) (<http://www.ric.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/loans-at-glance.pdf>) or visit the [Rural Investment Corporation \(http://www.ric.gov.au\)](http://www.ric.gov.au) for more details on eligibility and loan terms.

## Subsidies

### Animal Welfare Transport Subsidy

The NSW Government is subsidising 50% of eligible costs for the permanent transport of stock off a farm which is facing financial hardship and where livestock are at fat score 2 or below (dairy cattle 3 or below), to a maximum of \$20,000 per financial year. Visit the [Rural Assistance Authority \(https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/rebate-on-road-transport\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/rebate-on-road-transport) to apply or check eligibility or call [1800 678 593 \(tel:1800678593\)](tel:1800678593).

### Donated Fodder Transport

The NSW Government is covering the cost of transporting donated fodder when transport providers are acting in conjunction with community groups and taking fodder from within NSW to drought-affected properties. One hundred percent of the costs will be covered up to a maximum of \$5 per km and up to 1500 km. For more information, contact the [Rural Assistance Authority \(https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/rebate-on-road-transport\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/rebate-on-road-transport) on [1800 678 593 \(tel:1800678593\)](tel:1800678593).

### Drought Transport Subsidy

The NSW Government is offering a transport subsidy of up to \$20,000 per year for eligible farm business. Over the 18 month transport subsidy period of 1 January 2018 - 30 June 2019, the maximum available subsidy is \$30,000.

The subsidy can be applied for the cost of transporting fodder, water to a property for stock or domestic use, stock to and from agistment, and stock to sale or slaughter.

The subsidy covers 50% of the full cost of freight up to a maximum of \$5 per kilometre and 1,500 kilometres per journey.

Click below for:

- [Frequently Asked Questions \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#dts\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#dts) on the Drought Transport Subsidy
- [Online and manual application forms \(https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/emergency-drought-relief\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/emergency-drought-relief)
- [Check your eligibility \(PDF, 144.48 KB\) \(https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/826324/Transport-Subsidy-Emergency-Drought-Relief-Guidelines-V3.0.pdf\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/826324/Transport-Subsidy-Emergency-Drought-Relief-Guidelines-V3.0.pdf)
- Find a person near you who can [assist you with lodging the forms \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me)

### Farm Business Skills Professional Development Program

The NSW Government will subsidise up to 50% of eligible costs for an approved course or activity, with a maximum reimbursement of \$5,000 per farmer and \$9,000 per farm business. Visit the [Rural Assistance Authority \(https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/professional-development-program\)](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance/professional-development-program) or call [1800 678 593 \(tel:1800678593\)](tel:1800678593).

## Waivers

### Bee Site Permit

The NSW Government is waiving annual fees for existing public bee site permits. Those beekeepers who have already paid or have been invoiced for their fees will either receive a refund or will be provided with a credit for the 2019/20 financial year. If you are a beekeeper with existing permits in NSW please read the [Frequently Asked Questions \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq).

## **Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle Registration**

The NSW Government is waiving the registration fees that apply to new registrations and renewals of Class 1 agricultural vehicles that are oversize and/or overmass. Visit [Service NSW](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/heavy-vehicles/registration/drought-relief/index.html) (<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/heavy-vehicles/registration/drought-relief/index.html>) for more details or call Service NSW on [13 22 13 \(tel:132213\)](tel:132213).

Read the [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#wavers) (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#wavers>) for more information.

## **Farm Innovation Fund Interest Charges**

All existing Farm Innovation Fund customers, and all applicants who submitted on or before 30 July 2018, will have applicable interest charges for the 2017/18 financial year refunded and waived. You do not need to apply for this waiver as it will be automatically applied to FIF customers. For more information contact the Rural Assistance Authority on [1800 678 593 \(tel:1800678593\)](tel:1800678593).

Read the [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#wavers) (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#wavers>) for more information.

## **Grazing permit waiver**

Grazing permit waiver for existing permit holders in the Riverina

## **Heavy Vehicle Access Permits**

The NSW Government is supporting access for heavy vehicles carrying larger loads, to safely and efficiently move feed, water, and stock in response to drought conditions. The changes allow for an increase in hay capacity of 21 percent compared to the current general access vehicles.

Read the [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq) (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq>) for more information or visit the [Roads and Maritime Service page](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/heavy-vehicles/freight-to-drought-affected-areas.html) (<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/heavy-vehicles/freight-to-drought-affected-areas.html>) or call them on 13 22 13.

## **NSW Local Land Services Rates**

The NSW Government are waiving all Local Land Service rates for 2019, including general rates and rates for animal health and pests, the meat industry levy and costs for routine stock moving permit and stock identification. You do not need to apply for this waiver as it will be automatically applied to landholders.

Read the [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#wavers) (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#wavers>) for more information.

## **Water Licences**

The NSW Government is providing financial assistance of up to \$4000 to all general water security licence holders (and supplementary water access licence holders) in rural and regional NSW across surface and groundwater systems, and to customers of Irrigation Corporation Districts (ICDs) for water entitlement costs incurred. You do not need to apply for this waiver as it will be automatically applied to landholders. Visit [WaterNSW](https://www.waternsw.com.au/about/contact) (<https://www.waternsw.com.au/about/contact>) or call on [1300 662 077 \(tel:1300662077\)](tel:1300662077) for more information.

Read the [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq) (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq>) for more information or visit [WaterNSW](https://www.waternsw.com.au/) (<https://www.waternsw.com.au/>) or call 1300 662 077.

## **Wild Dog Fence**

The NSW Government will pay the annual Border Fence Maintenance, known as 'dog rates', which cover the NSW Border Fence for 2019. The rates that would have been due on 1 January 2019 will be waived. This rate would usually impact 1,300 landholders along the Queensland and South Australia borders. You do not need to apply for this waiver as it will be automatically applied to the eligible landholders.

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## Other drought initiatives

The Australian Government offer a range of measures (<http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance>) to support farmers and rural communities.

### Drought Communities Program

The Australian Government is contributing \$75 million to support 60 drought-stricken areas to invest in local community infrastructure and other projects such as emergency water supply. For more information, go to [Drought Communities Program \(http://regional.gov.au/regional/programs/drought-communities.aspx\)](http://regional.gov.au/regional/programs/drought-communities.aspx) or call 13 28 46 (tel:132846).

### Farm Household Allowance

Farm Household Allowance (FHA) is an Australian Government support package that's available to eligible farmers and their partners experiencing hardship (including drought) for up to four cumulative years (1,460 days). FHA gives farmers breathing space to implement plans and seek training to become financially self-sufficient, so they are better placed to sustain their farming businesses. For more information call 132 316 or visit [Farm Household Allowance \(http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/farm-household-allowance\)](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/farm-household-allowance).

### Farm Management Deposits

The Australian Government's Farm Management Deposit scheme assists primary producers to manage their financial risk and meet their business costs in low-income years by building up cash reserves. The scheme allows eligible primary producers to set aside pre-tax income from primary production in years of high income, which they can draw on in future years when they need it, such as for restocking or replanting when conditions start to improve. Visit [Farm Management Deposits \(http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/fmd\)](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/fmd) for more information.

### Heavy Vehicle Access Grants

Drought relief activity is increasing heavy vehicle use on local roads, and the NSW Government is investing \$15 million towards road maintenance, such as shoulder and road surface repairs and signage. Councils are encouraged to apply for grants up to \$300,000 for repairs in their area. Visit [RMS \(http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/heavy-vehicles/drought-relief-heavy-vehicle-access-program.html\)](http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/business-industry/heavy-vehicles/drought-relief-heavy-vehicle-access-program.html) for guidelines and eligibility and how to apply or call the heavy vehicle customer service hotline 1300 364 847.

### Household Water Supply

With drought conditions affecting NSW, some council areas are opening water filling points for households to collect water for domestic and stock use.

Visit the [FAQ page \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#householdwater\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#householdwater) to check availability in your area, download guidelines for professional water carters and links to known participating councils.

### Preschool drought funding

The NSW Government is committed to ensuring that drought-affected preschools continue to offer early childhood education during adverse conditions, such as drought. Eligible community preschool were notified of their allocation in October 2018. Read the [funding announcement \(https://www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/the-premier/media-releases-from-the-premier/support-for-drought-affected-preschools/\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/the-premier/media-releases-from-the-premier/support-for-drought-affected-preschools/).

### Taxation Measures

The Australian Government is allowing primary producers to immediately deduct (rather than depreciate over three years) the cost of fodder storage assets, such as silos and hay sheds used to store grains and other animal feed storage, making it easier for farmers to invest in and stockpile fodder. Visit [Taxation Measures \(http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/tax-relief\)](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/tax-relief) for more information or call the Taxation office on 13 28 66.

## Water Infrastructure Development Fund

The Australian Government is investing \$72 million under the National Water Assistance Development Fund for water infrastructure in drought-affected areas. Read more about the [Water Infrastructure Development Fund](https://infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure/water-infrastructure/nwi-development-fund) (<https://infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure/water-infrastructure/nwi-development-fund>).

## Weather and Climate Guides

The Australian Government has committed \$2.7 million to develop a new finer scale regional weather and climate guides, helping farmers make informed decisions about crop planting and stocking levels. Visit the [Bureau of Meteorology](http://www.bom.gov.au/wat/about-weather-and-climate/risk/index.shtml) (<http://www.bom.gov.au/wat/about-weather-and-climate/risk/index.shtml>) for more information.

# Drought Support and Tools

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## Support

### Business Connect - Support for Farm and Non-Farm Businesses

Business Connect provides tailored, trusted advice for your small farm or non-farm business. [Register online](https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/business-and-industry-in-nsw/businessconnect) (<https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/business-and-industry-in-nsw/businessconnect>) or call 1300 134 359 to connect with your local Business Connect advisor.

Business Connect advisors are experienced and accredited professionals who provide confidential advice independently from the NSW Government. Advisors can advise on a range of business matters such as business planning, looking at opportunities to diversify, marketing, digital marketing and HR.

Need advice to come to you? The Business Bus provides mobile business support. Upcoming dates include Nyngan on 3 December, Cobar on 4 December, Bourke on 5 December, Brewarrina on 6 December and Walgett on 7 December.

- [Find out when the bus is in your area](https://www.gobookings.com/au/clients/05031795927071) (<https://www.gobookings.com/au/clients/05031795927071>) or call 1300 134 359 for more information.
- Read the [Frequently Asked Questions](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#services) (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#services>) for more information.

### Farm Debt Mediation

The NSW Government service offering farm debt mediation service to provide a structured negotiation process where an accredited, independent mediator helps the farmers and their creditors to negotiate and reach agreements about farm business debt. Visit RAA's [Farm Debt mediation page](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/fdm) (<https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/fdm>) for more information and links to accredited mediators in your area.

### Local Land Services

Local Land Services staff are technical experts who can provide farmers with on the ground support and advice on agricultural production, biosecurity, animal nutrition, pasture management and livestock health. Visit [Local Land Services](https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au) (<https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au>) for more information or visit the [Assistance Near You map](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me) (<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me>) to find an office near you.

### NSW Rural Assistance Authority

The Rural Assistance Authority administers a wide range of assistance measures to the rural sector, both state and Commonwealth funded. To apply for a Drought Transport Subsidy, Drought Assistance Fund, Farm Debt Mediation, Animal Welfare Transport Subsidy or to see the full range of assistance measures administered by RAA, visit [NSW RAA](https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance) (<https://www.raa.nsw.gov.au/assistance>) or call 1800 678 593

## Revenue NSW

Revenue NSW is offering assistance to any individuals and businesses affected by the drought, including farmers receiving government drought relief assistance. Anyone experiencing difficulties meeting obligations is invited to contact the relevant business area at [Revenue NSW \(https://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au/contact\)](https://www.revenue.nsw.gov.au/contact) to discuss their individual circumstances and which assistance measures are available.

## Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP)

The NSW Government is funding the state-wide RAMHP program to help link people in regional and remote areas of NSW with mental health support. Visit [RAMHP \(http://www.ramhp.com.au/about-us/\)](http://www.ramhp.com.au/about-us/) for more information on services, training and the location of a counsellor near you.

## Rural Financial Counselling Service

The Rural Financial Counselling service is jointly funded by the state and Commonwealth governments and the counsellors help farmers who are dealing with, or are at risk of, financial hardship. Rural financial counsellors can help identify options, develop action plans and access the Farm Household Allowance (FHA). Rural Financial Counsellors are also available to assist farmers to lodge Drought Transport Subsidy forms. Search the [Assistance Near You map \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me) to find a Counsellor near you or visit [RFCS \(http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/rural-financial-counselling-service\)](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/rural-financial-counselling-service) for more information.

## Rural Resilience Program

The Rural Resilience team are dedicated to building the personal and business resilience of farming communities. The team works proactively in partnership with farming communities and service providers across NSW to strengthen networks, exchange information and deliver relevant initiatives that build personal and business resilience skills and knowledge, enabling people to move forward in a positive direction.

To find a Rural Resilience Officers and Rural Support Workers near you, search the [Assistance Near You map \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me) or visit [Rural Resilience Program \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rural-support/RRP\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rural-support/RRP) for more information.

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## Tools

### Assistance Near You Map

The NSW Government has staff available to help farmers lodge transport subsidy forms across the state. Search our [interactive map \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/drought-assistance/assistance-near-me) for an office or service centre near you.

### Drought Feed Calculator App

The NSW Government have developed a free mobile app to help farmers make informed decisions about [animal welfare in dry times \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-during-dry-times\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/animal-welfare/animal-welfare-during-dry-times). The Drought Feed Calculator app will help farmers save money by determining the minimum feed requirement for different livestock, and compare the value of different feeds or a mixed ration. The app covers 71 different feeds and calculates:

- The amount of feed needed per head,
- the cost per head,
- the cost for a period,
- the amount of feed needed for a mob/herd, and
- the total cost for a mob/herd.

Free to download from the [iOS App Store \(https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/drought-feed-calculator/id921986324?mt=8\)](https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/drought-feed-calculator/id921986324?mt=8) or [Android Google Play \(https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.gov.nsw.agriculture.droughtfeedcalculator\)](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.gov.nsw.agriculture.droughtfeedcalculator).

## Drought Hub Website

The [Drought Hub website \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub) is a central source of information for NSW Government drought assistance and support services for drought affected primary producers, their families and communities. Visit [Drought Hub \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub) for more information, news and updates.

## Farm Tracker App

The Farm Tracker App is a simple tool that can help farmers to record seasonal conditions on their property, such as conducting a crop, pasture or animal survey, keep a photo diary or monitor a paddock over many years. Reports can be completed quickly and easily, with data being saved in a personal database. Learn more about the [Farm Tracker App \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/cdi/edis-self-reporting\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/cdi/edis-self-reporting) or download the app for free from the [iOS App Store \(https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/nswdpi-farm-tracker/id1392850032?mt=8\)](https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/nswdpi-farm-tracker/id1392850032?mt=8) or [Android Google Play \(https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.appiwork.farmertracker\)](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.appiwork.farmertracker).

Read the [Frequently Asked Questions \(https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#services\)](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/droughthub/faq#services) for more information.

## Freight Watch

The NSW Government has appointed a State Drought Transport Subsidy Integrity Advisor to monitor freight prices. Members of the public are invited to report concerns about the cost of freight and fodder during the drought. Reports can be made by email [freightwatch@dpi.nsw.gov.au \(mailto:freightwatch@dpi.nsw.gov.au\)](mailto:freightwatch@dpi.nsw.gov.au) or submitted online below.

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### Freight Watch online submission:

So we can get back in contact your **phone** and **email** are compulsory fields.

Your name:

Phone:

Email:

Comments:

Submit

### Privacy Statement

Your privacy is protected under the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*. Visit the [Privacy Policy \(http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/privacy\)](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/privacy) for more information about how the Department manages your personal information.