2019 Dry Seasons Support Services in Northern and North West Victoria



A guide for individuals, farm families and businesses affected by dry seasonal conditions in Northern and North West Victoria.

Further information and assistance regarding dry seasonal conditions support and services across Victoria is available from Agriculture Victoria on 136 186 or **agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons**

Updated July 2019 to include all the Victorian and Federal Government's Drought Support initiatives.

Regional Coordinator

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
Northern Victoria Dry Seasonal Conditions Coordinator	The coordinator is a key point of coordination at the local level, providing information on drought services, support options, emerging risks and	Farmers, farm workers, businesses, support organisations and individuals residing in the municipalities of Alpine, Benalla, Campaspe, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Greater Shepparton, Indigo, Loddon, Moira, Strathbogie, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga and any other local municipality on a case-by-case basis.	Ongoing	Bianca Stapleton Call: 0436 646 649 Email: bianca.stapleton@agriculture.vic.gov.au
North West Victoria Dry Seasonal Conditions Coordinator	pressures in the region.	Farmers, farm workers, businesses, support organisations and individuals residing in the municipalities of Buloke, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Mildura, Northern Grampians, Swan Hill, Yarriambiack and any other local municipality on a case-by-case basis.	Ongoing	Rob O'Shannessy Call: 0400 821 588 Email: robert.o'shannessy@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Financial and Family Support

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
Rural Financial Counselling Service – North East	Free, independent and confidential financial advice, information, decision support and referral service. Counsellors can travel to clients' residence or business.	Farmers, fishing enterprises, forest growers and harvesters and related small businesses in the municipalities of: Alpine, Benalla, Campaspe, Greater Shepparton, Indigo, Mansfield, Mitchell, Moira, Murrindindi. Strathbogie. Towong, Wangaratta and Wodonga.	Ongoing	North East RFCS Call: 1300 834 775 or (02) 6057 5777 Head office located in Wodonga with counsellors in Shepparton, Nurmurkah, Benalla and Seymour. Visit: www.rfcsvicne.org.au
Rural Financial Counselling Service – North West		Farmers, fishing enterprises, forest growers and harvesters and related small businesses in the municipalities of: Buloke, Central Goldfields, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Hindmarsh, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander, Mildura, Swan Hill and Yarriambiack.	Ongoing	North West RFCS Call: 1300 769 489 or (03) 5022 0799 Head office located in Mildura with counsellors in Bendigo, Donald, Pyramid Hill and Swan Hill. Visit: www.sunrcs.com.au
Rural Financial Counselling Service – Western Region		Farmers, fishing enterprises, forest growers and harvesters and related small businesses in the municipalities of: Ararat, Ballarat, Colac-Otway, Corangamite, Golden Plains, Glenelg, Greater Geelong, Hepburn, Horsham, Hume, Melton, Moorabool, Moyne, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Southern Grampians, Surf Coast, West Wimmera and Wyndham.	Ongoing	Western RFCS Call: 1300 735 578 or (03) 5572 4540 Head office located in Hamilton with counsellors in Ballarat and Horsham. Visit: www.wswrcs.com.au
Australian Government Farmer Assistance Hotline	A phone service for farmers and their partners to talk about and discuss Farm Household Allowance.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 13 23 16 Visit: www.humanservices.gov.au
Farm Household Allowance	A payment to farming families in financial hardship.	Eligible farm families	Ongoing	Call: 13 23 16 Visit: www.humanservices.gov.au
Victorian State Concessions	The Victorian Government offers a number of concessions designed to assist and improve the affordability of essential services for low-income Victorian households.	Eligible Commonwealth Concession Card holders. If you are not a concession card holder, you may still be eligible. Do not self- assess, check with the Department of Health and Human Services.	Ongoing	Call: 1800 658 521 Visit: https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/ concessions-and-benefits

Financial and Family Support Continued

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
Salvation Army	Material or financial assistance for families.	Families	Ongoing	Call: 13 72 58 Visit: www.salvationarmy.org.au
Australian Tax Office	Tax advice for drought affected tax payers.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call: 1800 806 218 Visit: www.ato.gov.au/drought
Foodbank Victoria	Distributes meals to individuals and families across regional, rural and metro areas of Victoria.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call: (03) 9362 8300 Visit: www.foodbank.org.au
State Schools' Relief	Provides new school uniforms, shoes and books for families who are facing hardship.	Families	Ongoing	Contact your child's school in the first instance. Visit: www.eduation.vic.gov.au or https://ssr.net.au/

Farm Business Support

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
One-on-one Consultation Sessions (Dairy)	Agriculture Victoria and dairy industry partners can provide a one-on-one support service for dairy farmers tailored to their individual needs including feed budgeting, feed rations, hay and crop decision making and/or water use and resource management.	Eligible farm businesses in the municipalities of: Alpine, Benalla, Buloke, Campaspe, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Greater Shepparton, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Indigo, Loddon, Mildura, Moira, Northern Grampians, Strathbogie, Swan Hill, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga, Yarriambiack and other municipalities on a case-by-case basis.	Ongoing	Agriculture Victoria Brett Davidson Call: (03) 5833 5206
On-Farm Drought Infrastructure Support Grants	Grants of up to \$5,000 are available to assist farm businesses implement on-farm infrastructure that improves drought management and preparedness.	Eligible farm businesses in the municipalities of: Alpine, Benalla, Buloke, Campaspe, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Greater Shepparton, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Indigo, Loddon, Mildura, Moira, Northern Grampians, Strathbogie, Swan Hill, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga, Yarriambiack.	Until funding expended	Call: 1800 260 425 Visit: www.ruralfinance.com.au
Farm Business Assistance Program	A program to provide a one-off support payment of \$2,500 to eligible farm businesses.	Farm Household Allowance recipients and/or young dairy farmers in the municipalities of: Alpine, Benalla, Buloke, Campaspe, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Greater Shepparton, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Indigo, Loddon, Mildura, Moira, Northern Grampians, Strathbogie, Swan Hill, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga, Yarriambiack.	Until July 31, 2019	Call: 1800 260 425 Visit: www.ruralfinance.com.au
Farm Support Fund	A program to provide a one-off support payment of \$2,500 to eligible farm businesses. Eligible farmers are invited to apply for a one-off payment via the Farm Business Assistance program.	Non-dairy farmers that are Farm Household Allowance recipients in the municipalities of: Alpine, Benalla, Buloke, Campaspe, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Greater Shepparton, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Indigo, Loddon, Mildura, Moira, Northern Grampians, Strathbogie, Swan Hill, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga, Yarriambiack.	Until July 31, 2019	Call: 1800 260 425 Visit: www.ruralfinance.com.au

Farm Business Support Continued

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
On-Farm Emergency Water Rebate Scheme	A program to assist farmers impacted by dry seasonal conditions invest in urgently needed on- farm water infrastructure that addresses animal welfare needs.	Eligible farm businesses in the municipalities of: Alpine, Benalla, Buloke, Campaspe, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Greater Shepparton, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Indigo, Loddon, Mildura, Moira, Northern Grampians, Strathbogie, Swan Hill, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga, Yarriambiack. Farm businesses in other municipalities can apply on a case-by-case basis where they can demonstrate a critical water need for livestock resulting from current seasonal conditions.	Until June 30, 2020 or until funding expended	Call: 1800 260 425 Visit: www.ruralfinance.com.au
Refocused Plan2Farm Program	A program delivered across the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District (GMID) by the North Central CMA to assist and support farmers to make informed decisions about their farming future. One-on-one support is provided by Agriculture Victoria and Murray Dairy and may include consultant services.	Famers with a water use license for the GMID.	Ongoing	North Central CMA Call: (03) 5448 7124 Visit: www.nccma.vic.gov.au Agriculture Victoria Matt Hawken Call: 0418 143 922 or (03) 5450 9528
Emergency Water Supply Point (EWSP) Improvement Program	The Program will improve access to EWSP's across areas where there is a high incidence of water carting.	State-wide	Until December 31, 2019	Call: 136 186 Visit: www.water.vic.gov.au/groundwater
Managing wildlife	An Authority to Control Wildlife Permit is available where wildlife on farming properties is damaging buildings, pasture, crops or other property, posing a risk to human health and safety, or, damaging the environment.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 136 186 Visit: www.wildlife.vic.gov.au
Farm Debt Mediation Scheme	The Scheme makes it compulsory for banks and other creditors to offer mediation to farmers before commencing debt recovery proceedings on farm mortgages. Mediations are provided through the Victorian Small Business Commission.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 136 186 Email: farm.debt@ecodev.vic.gov.au Visit: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/mediation
Farm Management Deposits	The Scheme assists primary producers to deal more effectively with fluctuations in cash flows.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 1800 900 090 Visit: www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/ drought/assistance/fmd
Regional Investment Corporation Farm Business Concessional Loans	The Drought Loans and Farm Investment Loans are low-interest loans that allow farm businesses to access up to \$2 million to improve long-term strength, resilience and profitability.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 1800 875 675 Visit: www.ric.gov.au/

Farm Decision Making Resources

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
Technical and decision-making support for farm businesses	Workshops for farmers to help them make informed decisions and prepare for dry conditions.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 136 186 Visit: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons
Climate tools and resources	Information, tools and resources to support climate change risk management.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 136 186 Visit: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/ weather-and-climate
Stock Containment Areas	Agriculture Victoria has developed a package of resources to support farmers in designing stock containment areas.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 136 186 Visit: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/ farm-management/drought/preparing- your-farm-for-drought
Feeding beef and sheep	Agriculture Victoria has developed a package of booklets on feeding and managing beef and sheep during dry seasonal conditions.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 136 186 Visit: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons
Farming and drought information	Information to assist farmers affected by dry conditions as well as a broad range of other agricultural issues.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 136 186 Visit: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons
Animal Health and Welfare	Agriculture Victoria staff can provide advice and support for the management of livestock in dry conditions.	Farm businesses	Ongoing	Call: 136 186 Visit: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons
Farm Hub	The Farm Hub aims to provide farmers with a single portal to access information about assistance and advice to manage hardship.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Visit: www.farmhub.org.au

Community Programs

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
Look Over the Farm Gate	A mental health and wellbeing initiative that delivers grants for community events and mental health training.	Individuals, families and community groups in the municipalities of: Alpine, Benalla, Buloke, Campaspe, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Greater Shepparton, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Indigo, Loddon, Mildura, Moira, Northern Grampians, Strathbogie, Swan Hill, Towong, Wangaratta, Wodonga, Yarriambiack.	Until December 31, 2019 or until funding expended	Call: 1300 882 833 Visit: www.lookoverthefarmgate.org.au
National Centre for Farmer Health	The NCFH provides leadership to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of farm owners, workers, families and communities.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call: (03) 5551 8533 Visit: www.farmerhealth.org.au

Health Support

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
Royal Flying Doctor Service	Free, confidential mental health and wellbeing service for people living in rural and remote communities.	Families and individuals	Ongoing	Call: (03) 8412 0480 Visit: www.flyingdoctor.org.au/vic
Mental Health Care Plan	A mental health care plan entitles patients to Medicare rebates for up to 10 individual or 10 group appointments with a psychologist, occupational therapist or social worker in a year.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Contact your local GP for a referral Visit: www.healthdirect.gov.au/mental- health-care-plan
Mental Health Crisis Line - Goulburn		Individuals and families in Greater Shepparton, Strathbogie, Mitchell, Murrindindi and parts of Moira (excluding Yarrawonga).	Ongoing	Call: 1300 369 005
Mental Health Crisis Line – North Eastern Hume		Individuals and families in Towong, Wodonga, Alpine, Indigo, Wangaratta, Benalla, Mansfield and parts of Moira (Yarrawonga)	Ongoing	Call: 1300 881 104 (Wodonga) Call: 1300 783 347 (Wangaratta)
Mental Health Crisis Line – Northern Mallee	Psychiatric triage (information, assessment and referral) 24/7	Individuals and families in Mildura and parts of Swan Hill.	Ongoing	Call: 1300 366 375
Mental Health Crisis Line – Loddon Campaspe / Southern Mallee	(information, assessment and referral) 24/7	Individuals and families in Gannawarra, Buloke, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Loddon, Greater Bendigo, Mount Alexander, Macedon Ranges and parts of Swan Hill.	Ongoing	Call: 1300 363 788
Mental Health Crisis Line - Grampians		Individuals and families in Hindmarsh, West Wimmera, Horsham, Yarriambiack, Northern Grampians, Ararat, Hepburn, Pyrenees, Ballarat and Moorabool.	Ongoing	Call: 1300 661 323

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
Northern Victoria Communi	ty Health Services			
Alpine Shire Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Alpine.	Ongoing	<i>Alpine Health Community Health Centre</i> Call: (03) 5755 0123 Visit: www.alpinehealth.org.au
Benalla Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Benalla.	Ongoing	Benalla Community Health Service Call: (03) 5761 4500 Visit: www.benallahealth.org.au
Campaspe Shire Community Health Services	Community Health ServicesCommunity Health services provide a range of primary health care services that could include: • Acute hospital care • Medical centre • Home and community careGannawarra Shire Community Health Services • Counselling • Pharmacy • Referrals.	Individuals and families in the municipality of Campaspe.	Ongoing	Echuca Regional Health Call: (03) 5485 5000 Visit: www.erh.org.au Kyabram and District Health Services Call: (03) 5857 0243 Visit: www.kyhealth.org.au
Gannawarra Shire Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Gannawarra.	Ongoing	<i>Northern District Community Health Service</i> Call: (03) 5451 0200 Visit: www.ndchs.org.au
Greater Bendigo Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Greater Bendigo.	Ongoing	Bendigo Health Call: (03) 5454 6000 Visit: www.bendigohealth.org.au Bendigo Community Health Services Call: (03) 5434 4300 Visit: www.bchs.com.au
				<i>Heathcote Health</i> Call: (03) 5431 0900 Visit: www.heathcotehealth.org
Goulburn Valley Health		Individuals and families in the municipality of Greater Shepparton.	Ongoing	Goulburn Valley Health Call: (03) 5832 2322 Visit: www.gvhealth.org.au
				<i>Primary Care Connect</i> Call: (03) 5823 3200 Visit: www.primarycareconnect.com.au

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information		
Northern Victoria Communi	Northern Victoria Community Health Services Continued					
Indigo Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Indigo.	Ongoing	Beechworth Health Service Call: (03) 5728 0200 Visit: www.beechworthhealthservice.com.au Indigo North Health Call: (02) 6033 6271 Visit: www.inh.org.au		
Loddon Community Health Services	Community Health services provide a range of primary health care services that could include: Acute hospital care Medical centre Home and community care District nursing Women's health Allied health services Counselling Pharmacy Referrals. Please contact your local Community Health service to confirm their services.	Individuals and families in the municipality of Loddon.	Ongoing	Inglewood and District Health Service Call: (03) 5431 7000 Visit: www.idhs.vic.gov.au Northern District Community Health Service Call: (03) 5451 0200 Visit: www.ndchs.org.au		
Moira Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Moira.	Ongoing	Cobram District Hospital Call: (03) 5871 0900 Visit: www.cobramdistricthospital.org.au Numurkah District Health Service Call: (03) 5862 0555 Visit: www.ndhs.org.au Yarrawonga District Health Service Call: (03) 5743 8111 Visit: www.yh.org.au		
Strathbogie Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Strathbogie.	Ongoing	Nagambie Health Care Call: (03) 5736 2900 Visit: www.nagambiehc.org.au		

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
Northern Victoria Communi	ty Health Services Continued			
Towong Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Towong.	Ongoing	<i>Tallangatta Health Service</i> Call: (02) 6071 5200 Visit: www.tallangattahealthservice.com.au
	Community Health services provide a range of primary health care services that could include: Acute hospital care Medical centre Home and community care District nursing Women's health Allied health services Counselling Pharmacy			Walwa Bush Nursing Centre Call: (02) 6037 1220 Visit: www.walwabushnursing.com
Wangaratta Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Wangaratta.	Ongoing	Gateway Health - Wangaratta Call: (03) 5723 2000 Visit: gatewayhealth.org.au North East Health Wangaratta Call: (03) 5722 5111
	Referrals.			Visit: nhw.hume.org.au
Wodonga Community Health Services	Please contact your local Community Health service to confirm their services.	Individuals and families in the municipality of Wodonga.	Ongoing	<i>Albury Wodonga Health</i> Call: (02) 6051 7111 Visit: www.awh.org.au
				Gateway Health - Wodonga Call: (02) 6022 8888 Visit: www.gatewayhealth.org.au

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information		
North West Victoria Community Health Services						
Buloke Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Buloke.	Ongoing	<i>Northern District Community Health Service</i> Call: (03) 5451 0200 Visit: www.ndchs.org.au		
Hindmarsh Community Health Services		Individuals and families in the municipality of Hindmarsh.	Ongoing	West Wimmera Health Service Call: (03) 5391 4222 Visit: www.wwhs.net.au		
Horsham Community Health Services	-	Individuals and families in the municipality of Horsham.	Ongoing	Wimmera Health Care Group Call: (03) 5381 9111 Visit: www.whcg.org.au		
Mildura Community Health Services	Community Health services provide a range of primary health care services that could include: • Acute hospital care	Individuals and families in the municipality of Mildura.	Ongoing	<i>Sunraysia Community Health Services</i> Call: (03) 5022 5444 Visit: www.schs.com.au		
Northern Grampians Community Health Services	 Medical centre Medical centre Home and community care District nursing Women's health Allied health services Counselling Pharmacy Referrals. 	 Home and community care District nursing Women's health Allied health services Counselling Pharmacy Referrals. Please contact your local Community Health service	Individuals and families in the municipality of Northern Grampians.	Ongoing	East Wimmera Health Service Call: (03) 5495 2100 Visit: www.ewhs.org.au Grampians Community Health Call: (03) 5358 7400 Visit: www.grampianscommunityhealth.org.au Stawell Regional Health Call: (03) 5358 8500	
Swan Hill Community	to confirm their services.	Individuals and families in the municipality	Ongoing	Visit: www.srh.org.au Swan Hill District Hospital		
Health Services		of Swan Hill.	ongoing	Call: (03) 5033 9300 Visit: www.shdh.org.au		
Yarriambiack Community Health Services	-	Individuals and families in the municipality of Yarriambiack.	Ongoing	<i>Dunmunkle Health Services</i> Call: (03) 5363 1200 Visit: www.dunmunkle.com.au		
				<i>Rural Northwest Health</i> Call: (03) 5396 1200 Visit: www.rnh.net.au		

24 Hour Support

Initiative / Service	Description	Eligibility / Available to	Timeframe	Contact information
Lifeline	24/7 telephone crisis support and counselling.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call: 13 11 14 Visit: www.lifeline.org.au
Beyondblue	24/7 telephone information and support for mental health concerns.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call: 1300 224 636 Visit: www.beyondblue.org.au
Mensline Australia	24/7 service for men with relationship and family concerns.	Men and anyone who is working with, or is worried about, men in their personal or professional life.	Ongoing	Call: 1300 789 978 Visit: www.mensline.org.au
Kids Help Line	24/7 telephone and online counselling service for young people aged 5-25.	Children and young people	Ongoing	Call: 1800 551 800 Visit: www.kidshelpline.com.au
NURSE-ON-CALL	24/7 phone service that provides immediate, expert health advice from a registered nurse.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call: 1300 60 60 24 Visit: www.health.vic.gov.au/nurseoncall
1800RESPECT	24/7 phone service that provides counselling for sexual assault, domestic and family violence.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call: 1800 737 732 Visit: www.1800respect.org.au
Family Relationships Online	Providing families with access to information about family relationship issues.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Call: 1800 050 321 Visit: www.familyrelationships.gov.au
Victorian Better Health Channel	Health and medical information that is quality assured, reliable, up to date, easy to understand, regularly reviewed and locally relevant.	Individuals and families	Ongoing	Visit: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au
Parentline	A confidential, anonymous and free telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents.	Parents and carers with children from birth to school age	Ongoing	Call: 1800 30 1300 (8am to midnight, 7 days a week) Visit: www.parentline.com.au
Maternal and Child Health Line	24/7 state-wide telephone service, which works alongside the Maternal and Child Health Service and is staffed by qualified maternal and child health nurses.	Victorian families with children from birth to school age	Ongoing	Call: 13 22 29 Visit: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ childhood/parents/support/Pages/ mchline.aspx

General information on any dry seasonal conditions service or assistance is available from Agriculture Victoria on 136 186 or at **agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons**.

Each of the services or assistance programs in this guide has some accompanying contact details listed and this should be the first point of contact.

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The information within this guide may be subject to change. Updates of this document can be accessed at agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons or if you do not have access to the internet, please call Agriculture Victoria on 136 186.

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Drought related information is available in languages other than English. Anyone requiring help in understanding information in this guide should contact Agriculture Victoria on 136 186.

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agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons