

Updated 30 May 2024

Funding and support information for WA primary producers

This document provides some useful resources and information on loans, programs and support services to assist growers, pastoralists and industry experiencing hardship in challenging times.

Season information

Season 2024: information for WA farmers and pastoralists - seasonally relevant information and management options in broadacre and south-west agricultural areas and the Southern Rangelands of Western Australia.

Options to investigate

Grants, Loans and programs

- Hardship Grants. Western Australian Government has announced a package that includes \$2 million in hardship grants. Eligible Farm businesses facing financial hardship due to drought conditions can apply for a one-off grant of \$5,000 per business to help cover the cost of stockfeed, water and transportation. The availability of grants is subject to funds being available. The grant scheme is administered by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and applications close 30 June 2024 or when funding is fully committed (whichever occurs first).
- Interest-free loans opening soon. Primary producers will be able to apply for up to \$25,000 per business to cover the costs of stockfeed, water and transportation. This is part of a \$4 million package provided by the Western Australian Government. The funds can also be used to establish feed silos, water tanks and improved irrigation systems or any other infrastructure that supports drought resilience. The loan is repayable over five years with no repayments for the first two years.
- Drought Loans for eligible farm businesses are available from the Australian Government farm business lender, RIC (Regional Investment Corporation). RIC provides low-interest Drought Loans for farm businesses to help them prepare for, manage through and recover from drought. Farm business loans of up to \$2 million are available. Farm businesses are encouraged to learn more about eligibility and lending criteria before applying.
- AgBiz Drought Loans for eligible small businesses directly linked to the farming sector are available from the Australian Government farm business lender, RIC (Regional Investment Corporation). Low interest loans of up to \$500,000 may help eligible farm-related businesses in drought affected areas manage their business during a drought. Eligibility and lending criteria apply to all RIC loans.
- The Australian Government's Farm Management Deposits (FMD) Scheme is a risk management and drought preparedness measure which allows eligible primary producers to set aside pre-tax income which can be drawn upon when required. Income deposited into an FMD is tax deductible in the financial year the deposit is made. It becomes taxable income in the financial year in which it is withdrawn. FMDs are held by authorised deposit taking institutions and attract market rates of interest. Primary producers can access previously lodged FMDs to supplement business cash flow. This may include accessing deposits held for less than 12 months, for eligible drought affected properties (without penalty).
- The Farm Household Allowance Program provides farming families experiencing financial hardship with access to the Centrelink income support system. Eligibility criteria includes thresholds to ensure

a farm has a commercial purpose and the proprietor contributes a significant portion of their labour and capital to the farm enterprise. The farm business must commit to improved planning and training for long-term financial management of the business.

Farm Debt Mediation Scheme

- Available to assist farm and pastoral businesses resolve commercial debt disputes regarding loan agreements with their financial institution. Mediation is conducted by an independent mediator in an impartial and safe environment. For more information visit the [website](#), email ruralbusiness.developmentunit@dpiird.wa.gov.au or call 1300 374 731.

Support services

- [The Regional Mens Health Initiative \(RMHI\)](#) is a wellbeing and health education project aimed at improving outcomes for men and communities in regional, Western Australia. RMHI enables individuals, groups and communities to be self-sustaining and self-managing of wellbeing challenges. Phone: (08) 6314 1436
- [Rural West](#) provides free financial counselling to all primary producers and aims to transition clients through a financial crisis, improve their financial well-being and resilience, and improve business profitability or facilitate a dignified exit. Phone: 1800 612 004
- [Rural aid](#) provides critical support to farmers affected by natural disaster through financial, wellbeing and fodder assistance.
- Other rural support services are available, here is a [comprehensive list](#).
- [Drought, disaster and rural support – Australian Government \(agriculture.gov.au\)](#) - provides a list of programs and services to help prepare for, manage and recover from droughts, floods, pests and diseases, and other market disruptions.

Natural disaster assistance

The WA Government [website](#) lists support during emergencies caused by floods, cyclones or major bushfires or other natural disasters.

- [Prepare warnings & incidents, recovery - Department of Fire and Emergency Services](#) - provides simple advice and directs you to resources where you can find practical actions to prepare for and cope during a bushfire.
- [Farm recovery after fire](#) information and support services for recovery after fire.
- [Animal welfare in emergencies](#) - links to animal welfare during bushfires and recovery.
- Disaster recovery funding for WA is listed [here](#) when a natural disaster has been declared.
- Disaster Assist lists some arrangements to help with relief and recovery costs such as:
 - [Disaster Recovery Payment](#) may be provided as a one-off recovery payment to assist individuals and families that have been significantly affected by a major disaster.
 - [Disaster Recovery Allowance](#) a short-term income support payment to assist individuals who can demonstrate that their income has been affected as a direct result of a disaster.

More information

DPIRD's Dry season 2024 Hotline: 1300 489 832

For information and resources to assist this season, visit the Season 2024 webpage at agric.wa.gov.au/Season2024

