

Department of Agriculture Crisis Assistance

Title of Assistance	Recipients	Assistance Description
Rural Financial Counselling Service	Farmers, fishing enterprises, forest growers and harvesters, and small, related businesses (that directly contribute to production)	<p>The Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS) provides free financial counselling to primary producers, fishers, forest growers and small, related businesses, who are suffering financial hardship and have no alternative sources of impartial assistance.</p> <p>Rural Financial Counselling Service</p>
Farm Household Allowance	Farmers and their partners, including aquaculture, but excluding wild catch fishers	<p>The Farm Household Allowance (FHA) provides fortnightly income support to farmers and their partners up to a maximum of four years while they take action to address their long-term financial security. It is paid at the same rate as Newstart Allowance. This four-year period provides recipients with sufficient time to develop strategies for self-reliance and create an incentive to make significant business decisions where the farm business is unsustainable.</p> <p>https://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/farm-household-allowance</p>
Farm Management Deposits	Primary producers	<p>The FMD Scheme is available to primary producers to help manage their financial risks and meet their business costs in low-income years by building cash reserves in good years. Primary producers can 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. The FMD becomes part of the primary producer's taxable income in the financial year it is withdrawn.</p> <p>https://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought/assistance/fmd</p>
Fees and charges	Farmers / Primary Producers / Exporters	<p>The Department of Agriculture operates a number of cost recovery arrangements across the biosecurity, export certification and other regulatory functions in accordance with the Australian Government Charging Framework.</p> <p>In response to the present crisis, the department has ceased any debt recovery action for fees and charges in affected areas for the moment.</p> <p>Clients can call: 1 800 647 531 or email ARHelpdesk@agriculture.gov.au for further information.</p>
Levy Returns and Payments	Levy collection agents (small, medium and large businesses including traders and agents), some primary producers	<p>Levy compliance activities will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis in disaster-affected regions to allow levy agents affected by crises to focus on their more immediate concerns.</p> <p>Practical actions the department has put in place include ceasing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hard copy and email reminders to collection agents for overdue levy payments • follow up for non-compliance • debt recovery. <p>Requests for additional time to lodge returns will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Clients can email leviestaskforce@agriculture.gov.au</p> <p>http://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/levies</p>