



2024 Drought Response

Hardship Support Grant

Scheme Guidelines

Background

Many agricultural areas in Western Australia are experiencing drought conditions due to unseasonably low rainfall and higher-than-average daytime temperatures since at least October 2023.

This has resulted in a shortage of on-farm water supplies and concerns about availability of fodder for livestock, particularly in the South West land division. Many farm businesses are incurring additional costs as a result of these drought conditions.

Grant objective

On 26 April 2024, the Minister for Agriculture and Food announced a response package that includes \$2.0 million in hardship grants and \$4.0 million in interest-free loans for farmers impacted by drought conditions.

Farm businesses facing financial hardship due to drought conditions can apply for \$5,000 per business to help cover the cost of stockfeed, water and transportation.

Features

- Administered by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD).
- The Scheme offers a one-off grant of \$5,000 to support eligible primary production businesses directly impacted by the current drought conditions.
- The availability of grants is subject to funds being available. Applications close 30 June 2024 or when funding is fully committed, whichever occurs first.

Information and enquiries

Information for this grant can be found at agric.wa.gov.au/hardship-support-grant.
Information and resources on the current drought conditions can be found at agric.wa.gov.au/dry-seasons-and-drought/season-2024-information-wa-farmers.

Questions regarding this scheme can be directed to DPIRD's Rural Business Development Unit by emailing ruralbusiness.developmentunit@dpiird.wa.gov.au or by phoning 08 9368 3082 before the scheme closing date.

Eligibility criteria: who can apply?

To be eligible for a grant, the applicant must:

- Be operating a farm business on a property within Western Australia. (Note – a farm business is a primary production business that excludes Aquaculture, Forestry and Logging, Fishing, Hunting and Trapping, and Support Services).
- Have a current ABN and be registered for GST.
- Have been operating since at least 1 July 2022.
- Operate as a sole trader, partnership, trust, or private company.
- Have owners or beneficiaries who, collectively, earn more than 50% of their income from primary production in a normal year.
- Have annual turnover of less than \$5 million.
- Be able to demonstrate significant financial hardship due to extended dry conditions.

Documents that need to be provided:

- Rates notice or lease/share farm agreement for the property.
- Most recent business tax return (preferably FY 2023).
- Most recent bank statement that matches applicant details.
- Property Identification Code (PIC) for those with livestock.
- Certification from a financial counsellor (Rural West Rural Financial Counselling Service), agricultural consultant, or accountant that the farm business is in financial hardship and requires this grant to cover the cost of stockfeed, water or transportation.
- Evidence that financial hardship is due to extended dry conditions – for example, additional expenditure incurred on stockfeed, water or transportation, plus farm data showing rainfall, water or soil moisture deficiency, or local government rain decile data.

Eligibility criteria: who cannot apply?

- Applicant entities that are trading insolvent, under external administration or in bankruptcy.
- Applications cannot be completed and submitted by a third party on behalf of the applicant business.

Assessment

- Only one application is permitted per ABN.
- Applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria and the evidence provided in the application.
- During the assessment process, DPIRD may, at its discretion, require further information. This information must be provided within 10 business days, unless otherwise advised.
- Failure to provide requested information within the timeframe may result in the application being deemed as unsuccessful.
- Applicants will be advised via email of the outcome of their application following completion of the assessment process.

Eligible expenditure of the grant

Eligible farm businesses facing financial hardship due to drought conditions can receive a grant of \$5,000 per business to help cover the cost of stockfeed, water and transportation.

Timeframes

No applications will be accepted after the Scheme has closed.

| Description | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Scheme open | 9.00 am Wednesday 08 May 2024 |
| Scheme closes | Midnight Sunday 30 June 2024 or when funding is exhausted |
| Application assessment | In order of receipt of application. Failure to provide additional information may impact assessment and notification timeframes. |
| Application approvals | In order of assessment |
| Application notification | Notification of your grant outcome may take up to four weeks. |
| Payment to successful applicants | Within one week of notification that your application has been successful. |

DPIRD reserves the right to close the program at any time, including when funding has been fully allocated. Should the scheme close earlier than anticipated, a notice of the closure will be published on DPIRD's website www.dpird.wa.gov.au.

Grant payments

Applicants will be asked to provide their bank account details in order to process the grant payment should their application be successful. The bank account must be in the same name as the business that applied for the grant.

Providing incorrect bank account details may result in funds being paid to an incorrect account. These funds will need to be returned to DPIRD before another attempt to make the grant payment. This process may result in significant delays in funds being received. Additionally, we cannot guarantee that funds paid to an incorrect bank account will be returned to us.

If the information provided is found to be false or misleading, the recipient will be required to return all of the funds to DPIRD.

Taxation and financial implications

No Goods and Services Tax (GST) will apply to this grant.

Applicants may wish to seek independent advice about the possible tax implications for receiving the grant under the scheme from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, prior to submitting an application.

Important Disclaimer

The Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the State of Western Australia accept no liability whatsoever by reason of negligence or otherwise arising from the use or release of this information or any part of it.

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