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INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUALS, FARM FAMILIES &

17 October 2016

There are a number of ongoing measures that farmers can access for support during times of difficulty. This includes:

Initiative	Description	More information
Farm extension services and technical support	Technical information and support is available through Agriculture Victoria.	Visit the Agriculture Victoria website: http://agriculture.vic.gov.au Customer Service Centre 136 186
Rural Financial Counselling Service	Free, independent and confidential support to primary producers, fishers and small rural businesses experiencing financial hardship.	www.rfcs.gov.au Call 1800 686 175
Dedicated Small Business Counsellors in the Rural Financial Counselling Service	Small business financial counsellors are operating in all four Rural Financial Counselling Service regions to support non-agriculture related small businesses.	Wimmera Southwest RFCS Call 1300 735 578 Eastern RFCS Call (03) 5662 2566 North East RFCS Call 1300 834 775 North West RFCS Call 1300 769 489
Australian Government's Farm Household Allowance	Income support payment, available to eligible farmers & their families experiencing financial hardship.	Call 13 23 16 or visit: https://www.humanservices.gov.au/
Australian Government's Drought Concessional Loans	Concessional loans available to eligible farm businesses located in long term rainfall deficient areas	Rural Finance Visit www.ruralfinance.com.au Call: 03 5448 2600
Targeted support is available to dairy farmers and communities		
Dairy Development Grants Program	Dairy Development Grants, which will open soon, will provide eligible dairy farmers with grants to implement farm improvements to support business rebuilding and improvements.	Rural Finance Visit www.ruralfinance.com.au Call: 03 5448 2600
Australian Government's Concessional Dairy Recovery Loans	Concessional loans available to eligible dairy farm businesses for a maximum term of ten years at a variable interest rate commencing at 2.66%. A maximum loan amount of \$1,000,000 (capped at 50% of total eligible farm debt).	Rural Finance Visit www.ruralfinance.com.au Call: 03 5448 2600
Rural Skills Connect program	This program addresses the vital skills gaps in Victoria by utilising the transferable skills in dairy communities to meet rural industry skills shortages. Three 12-month programs are being conducted in each of the GippsDairy, Murray Dairy and West Dairy areas.	Contact the Regional Development Victoria offices in: Shepparton: (03) 5895 4100 Traralgon: (03) 5116 7300 Warrnambool: (03) 5561 4135
Tactics for Tight Times	Delivers programs and information for dairy farmers and service providers with clear messages, information, tools and resources to support key decision making on-farm. This includes: Taking Stock; Seasonal Update Information Sessions; Feed Budgeting & Purchasing Risk Management; DairyBase; and Dairy Discussion Groups	Dairy Australia: (03) 9694 3777 West VicDairy: (03) 5557 1000 Murray Dairy: (03) 5833 5312 GippsDairy: (03) 5624 3900

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Other support		
National Centre for Farmer Health	Workshops to improve the health, safety and well-being of farm men and women, farm workers, their families and communities across Australia.	Call (03) 5551 8533 or visit www.farmerhealth.org.au .
Farm Management Deposits	Assists primary producers to deal more effectively with fluctuations in cash flows.	http://www.agriculture.gov.au
Australian Government Farmer Assistance hotline	Information on the Commonwealth Government's support services available to farmers and rural communities (e.g. Farm Household Allowance).	Farmer Assistance Hotline: 132 316
Farm Debt Mediation	The scheme makes it compulsory for banks & other creditors to offer mediation to farmers before commencing debt recovery proceedings on farm mortgages	Call 136 186 Email: farm.debt@ecodev.vic.gov.au http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/drought
Back to Work	The Back to Work scheme is being extended to make members of a dairy farm household an eligible category of employee. Employers will receive up to \$5000 when they hire someone from a farm household affected by the dairy crisis.	State Revenue Office: 13 21 61 www.backtowork.vic.gov.au
Small Business Workshops	Small businesses in Victoria's dairy regions – including South West Victoria, Northern Victoria and Gippsland – can access expert mentoring and advice from experienced industry specialists to help them make informed business decisions during this financially stressful period.	Small Business Victoria: 13 22 15 www.business.vic.gov.au
Victorian State Concessions	The Victorian Government offers a number of concessions designed to assist & improve the affordability of essential services for low-income Victorian households.	www.dhs.vic.gov.au/concessions
Foodbank Victoria	Foodbank distributes meals to individuals and families across regional, rural and metro areas of Victoria, helping to feed over 100,000 Victorians each month.	Foodbank Victoria www.foodbank.org.au (03) 9362 830
Back to School	Children from disadvantaged families attending Victorian Government schools are provided with uniforms, shoes and other essential items.	Contact your School Principal, Assistant Principal or Welfare Coordinator.
Lifeline	24/7 telephone counselling – Connect with someone who cares.	13 11 14 www.lifeline.org.au
Beyondblue	Information about issues associated with depression & anxiety	1300 224 636 www.beyondblue.org.au
NURSE-ON-CALL	24/7 phone service that provides immediate, expert health advice from a registered nurse.	1300 60 60 24
Mensline Australia	24/7 service for men with relationship & family concerns.	1300 78 99 78
Parentline	Confidential, anonymous & free telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents.	Families can call 13 22 89 (8 am to midnight, 7 days a week)
Kids Help Line	24/7 telephone & online counselling service for young people.	1800 55 1800 www.kidshelpline.com.au
Family Relationship Service	Providing families with access to information about family relationship issues.	1800 050 321 www.familyrelationships.gov.au
Victorian Better Health Channel	Health & medical information that is quality assured, reliable, up to date, easy to understand, regularly reviewed & locally relevant.	www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au
Building Emotional Resilience fact sheet	The fact sheet includes practical ways to help build mental and emotional resilience and signposting to further resources.	Available from www.thepeopleindairy.org.au
Find a mental health service	Mental health consultations	Contact your local GP for a referral www.health.vic.gov.au