

Introduction

NSW is the second largest dairy producing state in Australia, with approximately 565 dairy farms producing an estimated 1 billion litres of milk (~12% of national production). The dairy industry supports an estimated 6,500 jobs on-farm and in manufacturing in regional NSW. Many fires were concentrated in major dairy regions, particularly the Bega Valley Shire and South-East regions of the state. Stock losses have occurred in fire affected regions and over 50 farmers have been directly impacted, with losses of key infrastructure such as internal fences and sheds, fodder reserves, stock and pasture.

The bushfires have exacerbated the already difficult conditions faced by the dairy industry, with drought conditions greatly increasing fodder costs and the reliance on bought in feed. Farm gate milk prices have been insufficient to offset the cost of feed and many farms have recorded losses in recent years.

The eligible activities and costs have been determined through the development of the Agriculture Recovery Plan available on the Bushfire Industry Recovery Package website.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Applicants

Dairy farming businesses that:

- have an ABN;
- have a Food Authority licence number; and
- had property and/or herds that were directly impacted by bushfires since August 2019

Eligible Projects

Eligible projects include activities that support dairy farm recovery following the impacts of bushfires including:

- re-establishing pastures
- purchasing and/or replacing lost fodder
- accessing technical and business advice
- repair and installation of critical infrastructure (including internal fencing)
- clearing fire damaged paddocks including trees and other debris
- herd rebuilding
- veterinary supplies / service for fire-affected herds
- replacing or repairing damaged non-insured or under-insured equipment

Eligible Costs

Capital and other costs directly related to the delivery of eligible projects. This includes eligible project costs that have already been incurred.

Costs already claimed under the Rural Assistance Authority Special Disaster Grant – Bushfires, or other NSW or Commonwealth grant or insurance will not be eligible.

Eligible Amounts and Limits

Grants up to a maximum of \$200,000 per dairy farm business are available.

Co-contribution

Given the compounding issues faced by dairy farming businesses over several years including drought and longer-term industry pressures, co-contributions are not required to access this funding.

Application Process

All applications will be completed online. The form is available at www.nsw.gov.au/bushfire-industry-recovery-package. Applicants will be required to provide the following information:

- Business details including location and ABN
- Food Authority licence number
- Evidence of damage and impact from the fires
- Costings for activities proposed to be funded by the grant

The NSW Rural Assistance Authority will assess your application against the eligibility criteria and may request additional information from you or your nominated financial advisor or accountant. The RAA has the right to refuse an application if you cannot demonstrate that you meet the eligibility criteria. The RAA can also refuse an application if you do not provide the information requested, in order to undertake an assessment.

Getting Support

Support can be accessed from the Rural Assistance Authority at www.raa.nsw.gov.au, rural.assist@raa.nsw.gov.au and 1300 678 593.

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