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The Queensland Government recently announced the **opening of the new drought grant programs**, which focus on greater drought preparedness.

The new drought assistance has expanded to include eligible primary producers **across all industries**. Under the new guidelines, producers will **no longer need a drought declaration** to access drought preparedness assistance.

Producers will **need a Farm Business Resilience Plan** that identifies activities to improve resilience when applying for the new drought assistance programs with QRIDA. You can find more information, including a plan template, [here](#).

These grants are the first of more drought support to be made available as part of the drought assistance package. QRIDA will also be administering concessional and interest-free drought loans in early 2022.

Learn about the Farm Management Grants and Drought Preparedness Grants below.

Farm Management Grants

Farm Management Grants offer primary producers a 50% rebate on the cost of eligible professional advice up to a maximum of \$2,500 to produce a Farm Business Resilience Plan for their property.

Farm Business Resilience Plans help producers to:

- recognise risks associated with production, including climate and weather (such as drought)
- identify business risks, including financial and market factors, and how to respond to those risks and
- understand personal risks such as workplace health and safety.

To be eligible for assistance, you must:

- be a primary producer as defined in the guidelines

- have paid for the eligible professional advice
- have received the eligible professional advice from 11 November 2021
- have received the eligible professional advice from a suitably qualified adviser(s) who:
 - is not the applicant
 - does not have an actual or perceived conflict of interest with the applicant and
 - is not employed by an entity owned or partially owned by the applicant.

While these rebates are available to offset the cost of seeking eligible professional advice, they are not available to cover the costs of activities to implement the advice. A Drought Preparedness Grant or a [QRIDA Sustainability Loan](#) may be available for implementation activities.

Find out more about the Farm Management Grants on our [website](#). Applications can be submitted via the [QRIDA portal](#). This program is jointly funded by the Queensland and Australian Governments.

Drought Preparedness Grants

Drought Preparedness Grants offer up to **\$50,000** as a co-contribution grant to assist primary producers undertake on-farm capital improvements that will improve the drought preparedness of their property.

These grants cover **25% of the cost** of purchasing new permanent capital infrastructure to a cumulative amount of \$50,000 over five years.

The grant aims to assist producers with the cost of implementing improvements identified in their Farm Business Resilience Plan, including:

- water infrastructure, including pipes, water tanks, water troughs, dam construction and/or expansion, drilling a new working bore, water conservation infrastructure and water pumps
- equipment that improves the ability of the business to manage drought and
- any freight or contractor costs to purchase and install equipment or infrastructure, including consumables.

To be eligible for funding, the project will:

- involve the purchase and installation of new permanent capital infrastructure
- improve the ability of the primary production business to prepare for continue to operate in, or recover from, drought conditions
- be a drought preparedness activity listed in your resilience plan for the primary production business and
- not have already commenced the project before the assistance is approved.

[Find out more about the Drought Preparedness Grants](#), which includes the application form and instructions on how to apply. This program is funded by the Queensland Government.

Contact QRIDA

There are a number of easy ways to contact QRIDA:

- Freecall 1800 623 946

- Email us contact_us@qrda.qld.gov.au

Our business hours are 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

QRIDA's offices will close for the festive season at 5.00pm on Friday 24 December and will reopen at 8.30am on Tuesday 4 January 2022.

FURNER'S FENCEPOST

Rural Economic Development Grants EOI deadline extended



Farm Fresh Fine Foods in Bundaberg has expanded its product offering thanks to a Rural Economic Development Grant.

The Queensland Government has extended the deadline for expressions of interest in its job-creating Rural Economic Development Grants program so flood-affected primary producers don't miss out.

Expressions of interest for the \$3.3m fourth round of the popular RED Grants will now be due by Monday, 20 December, 2021.

These grants are designed to support producers and businesses with significant projects that will create jobs in rural and regional Queensland, and we don't want great projects to miss out because of difficulties with flooding.

These grants help existing agricultural businesses to value-add and expand their capacity and create more jobs in rural communities.

Agriculture is an essential industry in Queensland and a vital part of Queensland's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan.

Rural Economic Development Grants provide co-contributions up to \$200,000 for food and agricultural businesses to support projects that create jobs related to value added primary production and provide significant economic benefits to rural and regional communities.

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Burdekin Shire Council

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