

ON-FARM EMERGENCY WATER INFRASTRUCTURE REBATE SCHEME

ROUND 2

SCHEME GUIDELINES

ABOUT THE SCHEME

The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments are offering a rebate to drought affected farm businesses who need to invest in on-farm water infrastructure that addresses the needs of grazing livestock or assists in maintaining existing permanent horticultural plantings. The rebate funding is being made available from an allocation from the Commonwealth and Victorian Government.

The On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme (the Scheme) is available to eligible farm businesses in the East Gippsland and Wellington Local Government Areas.

SCHEME OBJECTIVE

The Scheme provides a one-off 25 per cent rebate up to \$25,000 (GST exclusive) to eligible livestock and horticulture producers for the costs associated with the purchase and installation of on-farm water infrastructure that addresses the needs of grazing livestock or existing permanent horticultural plantings and improves resilience to drought.

ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

The Scheme is open until the funds are fully allocated during 2021–22.

The rebate is 25 per cent of the cost of purchase, delivery and/or professional installation of on-farm water infrastructure for animal welfare needs or maintaining existing permanent horticultural plantings that will also improve resilience to drought. The maximum rebate that can be claimed is \$25,000 (GST exclusive) per farm business.

The availability of rebates is subject to funds being available. No rebates will be offered beyond the allocated funding of \$1.725 million (excluding GST).

ELIGIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES

Water infrastructure must be purchased and installed for genuine animal welfare purposes or to maintain existing permanent horticultural plantings that will also improve drought resilience.

Eligible water infrastructure for grazing livestock includes:

- a. The purchase and installation of:
 - Pipes
 - Water storage devices such as tanks and troughs associated with stock watering
 - Water pumps and associated water distribution systems

This project is jointly funded through the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment and the Victorian Government Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment

- b. Drilling of new stock water bores and associated power supply such as generators
- c. Desilting works of existing stock and domestic dams
- d. Other materials or equipment necessary to install the above excluding purchase of machinery
- e. Any freight component to purchase and install the equipment
- f. The professional installation costs to install the water infrastructure

Eligible water infrastructure for permanent horticultural plantings includes:

- a. Drilling of new groundwater bores
- b. Desilting dams

All appropriate statutory approvals and licences must be obtained for the eligible water infrastructure activities, where applicable. This is the responsibility of the applicant.

INELIGIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES

The Scheme will not provide funding for (but is not limited to):

- a. Water infrastructure that has been purchased and installed where there is not an animal need or permanent horticultural planting need or the potential for this need
- b. Water infrastructure that has been purchased and installed for uses other than to supply water for livestock or an existing permanent horticultural planting
- c. Water infrastructure for irrigation (including pasture, crop or fodder irrigation)
- d. Wages for your employees or your self-assessed labour or transport costs
- e. Other types of on-farm infrastructure that do not relate to improving water security
- f. Activities for which you have made a financial commitment prior to **19 May 2020**¹

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to access funding under the Scheme:

- a. You are a property owner, share farmer or lease holder undertaking grazing livestock production or permanent horticulture
- b. Your property is located in an eligible Local Government Area
- c. You are a primary producer, and as the owner and operator:
 - You are registered as a primary producer with the Australian Tax Office and have an ABN and are registered for GST
 - You have a right or interest in the land for the purposes of primary production
 - You contribute a significant part of your labour and capital to the farming enterprise, and under normal business conditions, you earn more than 50 per cent of your individual income from the farming enterprise² OR

You commenced your farming operation after 1 July 2017 and 50 per cent of your gross income will be derived from your primary production business within three years of the date of your Application. Eligibility of new entrants will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- d. You purchased the eligible water infrastructure on or after the **19 May 2020**¹
- e. The work will help ensure that the on-farm water supply system for grazing livestock or permanent horticultural plantings is more resilient to future dry seasonal conditions

Applicants that received a rebate in the initial Scheme (Round 1 in 2019 and 2020) are not eligible to receive a rebate in the extension of the Scheme (Round 2 in 2021). A rebate from the extended Scheme will not be provided for works that were funded by a rebate from any other support provided by the Victorian or Commonwealth Government.

¹ Case by case consideration will be given to investment made prior to 19 May 2020 but after 1 July 2018 for grazing livestock producers and 1 July 2019 for permanent horticulture producers.

² As a guide it is anticipated that farm turnover would exceed \$50,000 per annum under normal business conditions. Normal business conditions refer to a year with no adverse climatic conditions (drought/flood/fire) in which average yields/productivity is achieved. Normal year income is based on this productivity and long-term achievable commodity prices.

APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Applicants should carefully consider activities against the eligibility criteria set out in the Guidelines before submitting an application.

Applications will be assessed against the eligibility criteria.

Rural Finance and/or Agriculture Victoria reserves the right to request further information from you or from any business or individual you have engaged, to assist in assessing the application and to verify any information provided in your application.

Applications submitted may be subject to an audit to determine compliance with the Scheme Guidelines.

Applications for rebates must be made on the appropriate application form and be accompanied by the documentation stated in the application form.

Complete applications will be processed in order of receipt.

By signing the application form, you are declaring that the information provided in the application form and supporting documentation is true and accurate.

Providing inaccurate, untrue or misleading information may be a breach of criminal law for which serious penalties may apply.

Rebate administration process:

Option A Reimbursement for activities or infrastructure

Eligible infrastructure and/or activities that have been purchased since 19 May 2020³. *There is no guarantee that activities and/or infrastructure already purchased will be provided the rebate.*

Complete application form including supplying all supporting documentation.

Applicants are required to supply tax invoices and receipts for all rebate claims and photos of completed infrastructure implemented (or other evidence of installation).

Approval or rejection of the application will be communicated to the applicant.

On approval, payment of the approved amount will be arranged and processed as soon as possible via electronic funds transfer to the applicant's nominated account.

Option B (recommended) Proposed new activities or infrastructure

Eligible infrastructure and/or activities that are proposed to be purchased after submitting this application⁴

Complete application form including supplying all supporting documentation.

Applicants are required to supply a quotation for the proposed water infrastructure investment with details of your current water and proposed water infrastructure placement.

'In-principle' approval or rejection of the application will be communicated to the applicant.

On receiving written 'in-principle' approval, applicants are required to purchase infrastructure investment within three months of the date of approval.

On completion of the water infrastructure project, grant recipients are required to forward paid tax invoice/s for all rebate claims and photos of completed infrastructure implemented (or other evidence of installation) to Rural Finance. The grant recipient must pay for the project and/or activity initially and then Rural Finance will forward payment of the grant amount on completion.

Payment of the approved amount will be arranged and processed as soon as possible via electronic funds transfer to the applicant's nominated account.

3. *Case by case consideration will be given to investment made prior to 19 May 2020 but after 1 July 2018 for grazing livestock producers and 1 July 2019 for permanent horticulture producers.*
4. *There is no guarantee that activities and/or infrastructure to be purchased will be provided the rebate. All eligibility will need to be met prior to approval.*

GUIDANCE FOR WATER INFRASTRUCTURE DECISION MAKING

Additional statutory approvals may be required for some activities such as needing a 'take and use' licence for some bores.

Information about on-farm water management and farm management practices can be found on the Agriculture Victoria website: agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/water and agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/water/farm-water-solutions/managing-farm-water-supplies.

For more information on accessing groundwater, please contact Southern Rural Water by email srw@srw.com.au, phone 1300 360 117 or by mysrw.com.au/form/customer-feedback.

Information on emergency water supply points can be found on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website: water.vic.gov.au/groundwater/emergency-water-supply-points

Information on bore construction licenses for stock and domestic purposes can be found on the Victorian Water Register website: waterregister.vic.gov.au

Applicants are required to ensure that placement and design of water infrastructure meets relevant Victorian laws and that best practice advice is observed, where relevant.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to use business and farm plans to inform their broader infrastructure improvements.

REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

The Scheme Guidelines are correct at the time of publishing.

Agriculture Victoria, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment may review and amend these Scheme Guidelines at any time. Updates will be published on the Rural Finance website: ruralfinance.com.au.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Rural Finance

For more information about the On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme please contact Rural Finance.

Telephone: 1800 260 425

Email: admin@ruralfinance.com.au

Web: ruralfinance.com.au

Postal address: PO Box 1313 Bendigo Central, Victoria 3552

Agriculture Victoria

For more information about other support being provided by the Victorian Government and Commonwealth Government, please contact Agriculture Victoria.

Telephone: 136 186

Email: drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Web: agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons

EVALUATION OF THE SCHEME

The Victorian Government, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government may conduct an evaluation to determine the extent to which the Scheme has met its objectives. Rebate applicants and recipients may be requested to provide information to assist in auditing during the Scheme or the evaluation after the Scheme's completion.

PUBLICITY

Rebate recipients may be asked to assist Agriculture Victoria in promotion of the Scheme. This may include involvement in media releases, case studies or promotional events and activities.

Agriculture Victoria may request recipients to fact check any text and seek all relevant approvals in order for Agriculture Victoria to use any imagery provided by the recipient associated with the Scheme prior to the publication of any such promotional materials.

Recipients must not make any public announcement or issue any press release regarding the receipt of a rebate without the prior written approval of Agriculture Victoria.

Agriculture Victoria may publicise the benefits accruing to the recipient and/or the State of Victoria associated with the provision of an On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any personal information provided by the Applicant or a third party in an application will be collected by Rural Finance and Agriculture Victoria for the purpose of administration of the Scheme. This information may be provided to other Victorian Government bodies for the purpose of assessing On-Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate applications.

Data gathered through assessments may be compiled, aggregated and made anonymous by Rural Finance and Agriculture Victoria for Scheme reporting, evaluation and research purposes.

Any personal information collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred will be held in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and other applicable laws.

Agriculture Victoria is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. Agriculture Victoria's Privacy Policy can be found online at agriculture.vic.gov.au/privacy.

Enquiries about access to information should be directed to the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions' Privacy Unit by phone on 136 186 or email privacy@ecodev.vic.gov.au.