



**Rebuilding our Agricultural Sector -  
RESOWING AND  
RESTOCKING GRANT  
POLICY**



## WHAT WE BELIEVE

The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party believe that farming is critical to the economic, social and cultural development of our state.

Farmers have fed our growing population and have been at the forefront of this State's development since its inception. They are stewards of the land, producers of our food and carers of our livestock. Farming is the lifeblood on which every Australian relies.

Farmers are on the brink with competing land uses, the migrating urban fringe, inner city politicians imposing restrictive legislation and bureaucratic red tape at every corner.

To add to these woes, the industry has been bearing the burden of the most crushing drought in living memory since 2017. In January 2020, the DPI declared that the entire State of NSW was drought affected, with vast areas of the State in drought or intense drought.

The industry cannot simply be expected to rebound from these events in the economic climate that we now face.

Government support programs do not go far enough and do not allow farmers to get back to doing what they do best – grow the food and fibre that we rely on.

The national cattle herd is at its lowest in almost 30 years and the sheep flock the lowest since 1904 (MLA). In NSW, the area planted to summer crops decreased by 76% in 2019–20 to a record low 101,000 hectares. Total summer crop production fell by 66% to a record low 343,000 tonnes in 2019–20. Estimated wheat production in 2019-20 is 69% below the 10-year average to 2018-19 (ABARES).



## WHAT WE BELIEVE - continued

However, for the first time since 2017, many producers are in a position to seriously consider rebuilding depleted herds and flocks, and/or sowing a winter crop. Record prices for livestock and the level of debt farmers are carrying is making it incredibly hard for farmers to return to production. We need urgent support for farmers to restore farming enterprises to their productive state and the Shooters Fishers and Farmers Party has developed a proposal for a resowing and restocking grant program to address the current crisis.

The Shooters, Fishers and Farmers represent vast areas of NSW's great agricultural regions and our constituents, and all farmers across NSW, deserve this support. We will advocate strongly for the introduction of the resowing and restocking grant program to rebuild the agricultural industry to the great pillar of our state that it should be.



## GRANT PROPOSAL AND STRUCTURE

With agriculture in NSW representing a \$13 billion industry, the grants should be funded to the amount of \$3 billion to ensure the widespread assistance that is required. The fund should be administered through the Rural Assistance Authority and be in addition to the assistance currently available to farmers under any NSW or Federal Government drought assistance programs.

Grants of up to \$400,000 should be made available for eligible farming enterprises for the purposes of:

- Restocking livestock; and/or
- Sowing crops and/or replacing permanent plantings.

Applicants must enter into an agreement to repay 50% of the grant either through front-end co-contribution or back-end repayment.

### *Front-end co-contribution*

If entering into a front-end co-contribution, applicants must be able to demonstrate the availability of funds to the equivalent of 50% of the total grant amount. Front-end co-contributions by applicants can include, but may not be limited to:

- funds on hand including in bank accounts, terms deposits, Farm Management Deposits or other investments;
- finance raised from private or commercial sources on normal commercial credit terms;
- finance raised from government concessional loan sources; and
- amounts already expended on restocking, replanting or on-farm restoration in relation to the impacts of drought.

Co-contributions may not include funds from any government or non-government grant or charitable source.



## GRANT PROPOSAL AND STRUCTURE - continued

### *Back-end repayment*

If entering into a back-end repayment applicants must enter into an agreement to repay 50% of the total grant amount once an applicant earns above the compulsory repayment threshold based on yearly tax returns. There would be zero interest applied to this amount. Applicants entering into a back-end repayment arrangement may make voluntary repayments at any time.



## HOW GRANTS MAY BE USED

For livestock related grants, the funds must be used to cover costs associated with the replacing livestock to a number assessed as being in place prior to the declaration of drought such as:

- o purchase of livestock;
- o transport or freight costs;
- o agent fees; and
- o veterinarian fees.

For resowing related grants, the funds must be used to cover costs associated with replanting crops (including pasture) and/or permanent plantings that were lost as a direct consequence of drought conditions such as:

- o removal of damaged crops, plants or trees;
- o purchase of seed, seedlings or trees;
- o transport or freight costs;
- o fuel for planting equipment required for the planting crops or permanent plantings; and
- o labour and/or contracting expenses required for planting.



## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible to receive a grant applicants must:

- be an eligible farming enterprise that is located in the eligible area that has:
  - o destocked; or
  - o been unable to plant a crop; or
  - o has suffered loss or damage to permanent plantings.

as a direct consequence of the drought; and

- be able to demonstrate the losses suffered as a result of the drought;
- have been engaged in carrying on the farming enterprise when the drought declaration was made; and
- work majority of the time and earn most of their income from the farming enterprise, or have the potential to do so in normal times