Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Future Drought Fund

SA DROUGHT HUB

Adelaide University

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DROUGHT RESILIENCE ADOPTION AND INNOVATION HUB

DO YOU HAVE A PLAN TO MANAGE DRY TIMES AND DROUGHT?

Dry times and drought pose a key risk to farm businesses. Farmers, pastoralists and land managers should develop and act upon a management plan to mitigate this risk.

WHY IS A DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN IMPORTANT?

Planning for dry times and drought before they occur is critically important to not only being prepared for these adverse seasons, but also to make good, strategic and timely decisions leading into and during such events.

Taking timely action, making informed decisions, and implementing your management plan for dry times and drought are key to safeguarding your farm's productivity and mitigating the impacts of challenging weather conditions.

Good planning and timely implementation of drought management actions will also enable a faster recovery once seasonal conditions return to normal.

WHAT SHOULD A DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN INCLUDE?

A drought management plan should detail the physical, financial, human and other resources available to the farm, and the strategies you will employ to best manage these resources leading into and during drought. The plan should be in writing and set clear trigger points and associated actions that match your production system and environment. This will assist in good decision making when things are stressful.

KEY TIPS FOR A DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. **Put your plan in writing and act on trigger points.** Avoid deferring decisions in hopes of improved conditions, as this can limit your options over time. Take action as per your plan when trigger points are met.
2. **Prepare budgets for various livestock feeding and selling options.**
3. **Prepare budgets for various crop management and end use strategies.**
4. **Prepare cash flow budgets for 2–3 years.** Developing cash flow budgets for multiple years will help you assess your financial stability and plan for contingencies during extended dry periods.
5. **Maintain groundcover to increase resilience to and recovery from drought through reduced soil disturbance and loss.**
6. **Look after yourself – you are your business's most important asset.**

Taking care of yourself is essential to effectively monitor your business position, performance and outlook and make timely decisions as the season progresses. Actively manage stress and take steps to keep a positive mindset. Consider taking breaks. Build support networks within your community to access timely information and seek help from support services when needed. Prioritise your wellbeing.

PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

Planning for dry times and drought events, and preparing for them in advance, will help ensure that your production levels and property are in the best shape possible while maintaining land condition. This proactive approach will enable a faster recovery once the drought breaks, setting the stage for a more resilient future.

For more practical information and resources to help you prepare for and manage during dry times and drought, visit the SA Drought Hub Knowledge Base via sadroughthub.com.au



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