



Country Women's Association of NSW

*Incorporated in 1931 by an Act of NSW Parliament
Constituent Society of the Associated Country Women of the World*

ABN 82 318 909 926

Media Release

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CWA calls upon the NSW Government to act now on drought relief for small businesses

As conditions across the state continue to worsen, the Country Women's Association of New South Wales (CWA of NSW) is calling on the NSW Government for more direct drought support, including support for non-farming small businesses who are also struggling alongside primary producers. CWA of NSW State President, Stephanie Stanhope said that the drought continues to bite and rural communities need the full support of the State Government.

"In early August [we wrote](#) to the NSW Government seeking support for rural communities and small business. We've outlined a full policy proposal and a suite of options to assist small business suffering because of the drought.

"Unfortunately, the Government has chosen not to implement further support for drought affected rural small businesses, [relying instead on a recent infrastructure announcement](#) to "fast track" regional infrastructure projects as the answer to much needed rural stimulus during one of the worst droughts on record.

"Whilst welcome, we don't see this as meaningful drought relief and it is not what communities are telling us they need. What they are telling us they need is real and tangible help, delivered to their businesses directly, in order to help them survive and support their communities into the future.

"We're not sure what the state government is waiting for – the time to assist is now. There are farmers facing their second or third year of failed or no crops. There are rural businesses that rely on primary production, and vice-versa. If these businesses can't survive the drought – and many have already closed - we will watch our rural industries and communities decline in front of our eyes."

The CWA of NSW is currently assisting farmers and farming-based contractors with the distribution of over \$13 million in grants for household support from donations, as well as Federal Government funding, which is now at a critically low level.

"Through the CWA of Australia we are also requesting more drought relief funding from the Federal Government to continue to provide financial support for households like bills and medical expenses. We're also continuing to advocate for the implementation of national drought policy. We also call on Minister Littleproud to actually respond to the recommendations on improving access to the Farm Household Allowance scheme which he has held since February.

“Everyone has a part to play in getting to the other side of this horrific drought. We’re asking the both state and federal governments to step up and do more, and do it urgently,” Stephanie concluded.

For more information or to apply for CWA drought aid grant, visit www.cwaofnsw.org.au

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