



**Niall Blair**

Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Lands and Water

## MEDIA RELEASE

Saturday, 31 October 2015

**NOTE: Click [this link](#) for footage, with grabs from Minister Blair and Charles Alder**

### **HAY TO HELP DROUGHT-AFFECTED FARMERS**

Minister for Primary Industries Niall Blair and Member for Barwon Kevin Humphries were on hand at Myall Station near Collarenebri yesterday while more than 14 truckloads of donated fodder was distributed to drought-affected farmers from the North West NSW.

The fodder drop of 540 donated bales of hay was organised by Rural Aid's not-for-profit Buy A Bale program, with the full cost of transport covered by the NSW Government under its transport assistance for donated fodder program.

The \$300 million NSW Drought Strategy includes \$5 million over the next five years for transport assistance for animal welfare and donated fodder from within NSW.

Mr Blair said farmers in the North West are doing it tough, with some parts of North West NSW continuing to experience extreme drought conditions.

"This hay will provide welcome relief for farmers at Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Collarenebri and Goodooga, who have been doing it tough with limited rain in recent years resulting in the heartbreaking loss of crops and in some cases almost total destocking," Mr Blair said.

Mr Blair said he welcomed the opportunity to meet with more than 30 drought-affected farmers and the local community, and to get on-the-ground feedback on Commonwealth measures and programs under the NSW Drought Strategy.

"While we now have the NSW Drought Strategy in place, and are administering two concessional loans measures on behalf of the Commonwealth, we are constantly assessing whether adjustments need to be made to ensure they support our farmers," Mr Blair said.

"I am in constant communication with the Commonwealth Minister for Agriculture about Federal assistance measures in NSW and I will provide feedback from yesterday's meeting."

Buy a Bale's chief executive officer Charles Alder said the charity program was happy to deliver much-needed support to the North West.

"Buy a Bale fundraising campaign has delivered more than 55,000 bales of hay to farmers in drought stricken areas of NSW since 2014 and we will continue to help farmers in need, thanks to the generous donations of people in city areas or those farmers who are more fortunate," Mr Alder said.

The 200 tonnes of hay was sourced from NSW farmers in Casino on the North Coast and Berrigan, near the Victorian border.