

# Ian Macdonald

Minister for Primary Industries  
Minister for Mineral Resources  
Minister for State Development



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Friday, 25 September, 2009

## NSW Government extends drought assistance

Drought assistance funding has been extended in NSW for a further three months to provide ongoing help for farmers still battling drought, NSW Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald said today.

“The dust storms experienced across the State this week are a reminder to everyone the drought is far from over and the people of rural and regional NSW are dealing with the effects of the drought everyday,” Minister Macdonald said.

“The NSW Government is providing a further \$7 million in assistance for the State’s long suffering farmers, some of whom have been battling the drought for seven years.

“This extension means farmers in drought affected areas can continue receiving a 50 per cent subsidy for the transport of fodder, stock and domestic water and stock to sale or slaughter.

“Virtually all of southern, central and western NSW is now in drought.

“Since May this year the area in drought has risen from 60 per cent to 65.9 per cent, with a further 24.3 per cent currently classified as marginal, increasing financial hardship for our farmers and rural communities.

“To date, the NSW Government has committed more than \$500 million in drought assistance measures including transport subsidies, emergency household assistance, payroll tax concessions to rural businesses and drought support workers.”

Minister Macdonald said seasonal conditions in the north and north east of the State have deteriorated over the past two months with warmer than normal temperatures and below average rainfall in many areas.

“There is now a real prospect that some northern areas could also slip into drought without good rains over the next few months,” he said.

“Further rains are desperately needed to secure winter crop plantings after early rains provided the potential for a predicted winter crop of five million hectares.

“The situation in the state’s major water storages is also grim. Our dams are currently sitting at 27.8 per cent of total water storage, which is around 2.3 per cent less than the same time last year.

“I can assure all farmers across NSW that the Government recognises their contribution to the state, that’s why we will continue working with them until this drought is behind us.”

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