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Farm Household Allowance



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Farm Household Allowance (FHA) is an Australian Government support package that's available to eligible farmers and their partners experiencing hardship (including drought) for up to four cumulative years (1,460 days). FHA gives farmers breathing space to implement plans and seek training to become financially self-sufficient, so they are better placed to sustain their farming businesses.

Changes to FHA

The Australian Government has made some important changes to the program:

- Eligible farmers and their partners will now receive up to two lump sum supplementary payments worth up to a total of \$12,000 per household
- the assets threshold will be temporarily increased to \$5 million to allow thousands more farmers to access FHA support
- an additional \$5 million in funding to support the Rural Financial Counselling Service.

Farmers seeking assistance should call the Farmer Assistance Hotline 132 316 or the Rural Financial Counselling Service 1800 686 175.

The FHA program helps farmers make important decisions to improve their long-term financial situation. There are four key support elements to the program:

1. A fortnightly payment and supplementary allowances such as rent assistance, telephone and pharmaceutical allowances and a Health Care Card
2. Individual case support with a Farm Household Case Officer (FHCO) and a Rural Financial Counsellor (RFC)
3. A financial assessment of the farm enterprise up to \$1,500
4. Up to \$4,000 activity supplement that gives farmers an opportunity to develop skills, access training and pay for advice to better manage their business into the future.

Applying for FHA

- Call the Farmer Assistance Hotline on **132 316**
- Apply online at Farm Household Allowance or download an application form at humanservices.gov.au/farmhouseholdallowance
- Visit a DHS Service Centre

Need some assistance?

Don't have a Rural Financial Counsellor? It's a free service. Find one near you at agriculture.gov.au/rfcs or call **1800 686 175**

Support is available, but don't self-assess – the Department of Human Services and the Rural Financial Counselling Service can help you evaluate your situation.



FHA payment

FHA is delivered by the Australian Government Department of Human Services (DHS). Payments are made fortnightly, at a rate that aligns with social security allowances, such as Newstart Allowance (or Youth Allowance for those under 22 years of age).

Before farmers can receive FHA they will need to supply verifying information to ensure they're paid at the right rate. The Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS) can assist.

Planning for the future

Farmers in hardship are strongly encouraged to seek immediate support from DHS or the RFCS to assess their circumstances. Part of this support is assessing opportunities and timing of applying for a range of assistance, including FHA.

Once eligible, farmers will meet with a FHCO and RFC to develop a plan for their future.

Whatever the plan may be, farmers will have an opportunity to discuss and review it regularly with their FHCO and RFC. This will ensure farmers maximise the opportunities available to them during their time on the FHA program.

This individual case management and personalised support also encourages farmers to use their FHA payments strategically – empowering them to decide when it's best to transition off payment and preserve their financial support for future hardship.

Farmers and their partners in hardship are urged to take action now. Contact the Rural Financial Counselling Service or call the Farmer Assistance Hotline 132 316.

