The key objective of the Future Drought Fund is to build drought resilience – helping farmers and regional communities to become more prepared for, and resilient to, the impacts of droughts.

The Australian Government has invested $3.9 billion, which will grow to $5 billion, in the forward-thinking Future Drought Fund. The fund is part of the Government’s Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan to deliver the support that Australian farmers and communities need to be sustainable and productive.

From July 2020, $100 million will be invested each year in projects that give farmers and communities the tools they need to prepare for, manage and sustain their livelihoods during droughts.

Programs
The first 8 programs are the:

1. $20.3 million Drought Resilience Research and Adoption program.
2. $20 million Farm Business Resilience program.
3. $15 million Natural Resource Management (NRM) Drought Resilience program.
4. $10 million Climate Services for Agriculture program.
5. $10 million Regional Drought Resilience Planning program.
6. $7.5 million Drought Resilience Leaders program.
7. $3.8 million Networks for Building Drought Resilience program.
8. $3 million Drought Resilience Self-Assessment Tool.

Key points
• $3.9 billion initially invested in Future Drought Fund will grow to $5 billion.
• $100 million invested annually to help farmers and communities build drought resilience.
• 8 Future Drought Fund programs will roll out from July 2020.
• The programs reflect feedback from the farming community.
• The programs are supported by a robust monitoring and evaluation framework.
Program aims

The programs help Australian farmers and communities to build drought resilience by:

• supporting the development and access to best-practice knowledge and tools by adopting research
• providing training to strengthen strategic business management skills and planning
• improving natural resources such as soil and vegetation
• providing accessible and useable information for decision-making
• improving regional planning to identify and guide actions
• increasing drought-resilience leadership capability
• enhancing and strengthening networks to build skills and connections
• improving community facilities to be drought resilient
• providing tools to assess risk and identify improvements.

The programs will be supported by a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure valuable learnings are embedded in future programs.

How the programs will help

Drought is an enduring feature of the Australian landscape. It has economic, environmental and social impacts on farmers, communities and the landscape.

Future Drought Fund programs will help farmers and communities build drought resilience. The programs are all tied to the 3 strategic priorities outlined in the 2020–24 Drought Resilience Funding Plan and will be delivered in accordance with the principles outlined in the plan.

The programs will also build capacity in rural and regional communities to better prepare them for the socio-economic impacts of drought and improve the wellbeing of local people.

Program development

The programs were designed based on expert advice from the independent Future Drought Fund Consultative Committee, and the valuable input from communities and industry during national public consultation on the draft Drought Resilience Funding Plan in late 2019.

You can find out more about the consultation on the Have Your Say website at haveyoursay.agriculture.gov.au/future-drought-fund.

Preparing for future drought

The Future Drought Fund is about the future. It’s about preparing our farmers and our regional communities for the droughts that will come.

The Future Drought Fund is an important part of the Government’s Drought Response, Resilience and Preparedness Plan to deliver the support Australian farmers and communities need to be sustainable and productive.

The government also provides in-drought support and assistance covering a range of areas, including:

• providing financial assistance
• investing in infrastructure
• supporting rural and regional mental health
• reducing pest and weed impacts
• improving access to information
• increasing existing services such as the Farm Household Allowance and Rural Financial Counselling Service.

For more information on in-drought support, visit agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/drought.

How to participate

For more information on the Future Drought Fund programs visit agriculture.gov.au/FDF or call 1800 900 090.