



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry



National
Farmers
Federation

National Drought Forum 2023 PROGRAM

BUILDING, CONNECTING, PARTNERING



Tuesday 26 September 2023
Rockhampton, Queensland

Welcome to the 2023 National Drought Forum



Senator the Hon Murray Watt Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Minister for Emergency Management

Ever since I became Agriculture Minister nearly a year and a half ago, people have given me plenty of advice. But one of the big pieces of advice was that the best time to prepare for a drought was yesterday. And the next best time is now. Especially with climate change likely to deliver more intense droughts in the future. That's why events like today's National Drought Forum, the first under the Albanese Government, are so important.

As Minister, I've shown how much I believe in collaboration and listening, to solve the ag sector's challenges, and I hope today is a good representation of that. I'm thrilled to have such a broad and varied group of people at today's event. This includes representatives from federal, state and local government, agricultural industries, charities and the finance sector as well as First Nations, conservation and community groups. Thank you for tackling this challenge with us and I'm looking forward to all the discussions, insights and ideas that will arise from today.



Tony Maher Chief Executive Officer, National Farmers' Federation

As Australian agriculture ploughs towards its goal to become a \$100 billion industry by 2030, it is imperative we are proactive, rather than reactive, when it comes to building drought resilience and preparedness in our regional, rural and remote communities. Drought is a recurring part of Australia's landscape and drought resilience is entrenched in the job description for Australian farmers. As we stare down the barrel at another El Nino bringing drier conditions, and with droughts forecast to become more frequent, severe and longer lasting as a result of climate change, ensuring industry's preparedness has never been more important. Today's National Drought Forum allows government, industry, and communities to come together and better understand the impact and challenges associated with drought and climate change. It is this ongoing collaboration and strong network that will bolster our industry's sustainability in times of crisis. Everyone has a role to play to ensure farmers and regional communities across the country are efficiently and effectively supported before, during and after drought events to minimise future triple bottom line impacts. We welcome your attendance and strong contribution to today's forum, as an important opportunity to support agriculture's preparedness.

Session 1: Preparing for drought, the next steps

Gardner Lounge

Time	Session
8:00 – 8:45 am	Registration
8:45 – 8:55 am	Welcome and housekeeping Oli Le Lievre—CEO & Founder of Humans of Agriculture
8:55 – 9.00 am	Welcome to Country Darumbal Enterprises
9.00- 9.10 am	Treasurer’s Opening Address The Hon Dr Jim Chalmers MP—Treasurer of Australia
9:10 – 9:20am	Minister’s Opening Address Senator the Hon Murray Watt—Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and Minister for Emergency Management
9.20 – 9.30 am	Welcome and Introduction Adam Fennessy PSM, Secretary—Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
9:30 – 10:00 am	Keynote Address and Farmer Wellbeing Survey Tony Mahar, Chief Executive Officer—National Farmers’ Federation
10:00 – 10:15 am	Climate Update Matthew Coulton, General Manager—Water & Agriculture, Bureau of Meteorology
10:15 – 10:30 am	Drought Policy Update Mel Brown, First Assistant Secretary—Farm Resilience Division, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
10:30 – 11:00 am	Morning tea

Session 2: Panel discussions

Time	Session
11:00 – 12:30 pm McHugh Lounge	<p>Panel 1: Money Talks</p> <p>Chair: Bron Christensen, Chair- National Farmers’ Federation Economics Committee</p> <p>An Interactive Q&A panel discussion on how we can help farmers build financial resilience and what is getting in their way.</p> <p>Panel includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ardie Lord, Sutherland Station, Lord Pastoral Co.■ Leanne Rudd, Director of The Money Edge- Agribusiness Accountants & Advisors and Certified Practising Accountant■ Andrew Smith, Head of Agribusiness Development, Rural Bank■ Angie Bowden, Rural Financial Counsellor, Rural Solutions Queensland Inc.
11:00 – 12:30 pm Phillips Lounge	<p>Panel 2: Not the usual suspects</p> <p>Chair: Nina O’Brien, Disaster Resilience and Recovery Lead, Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal</p> <p>Featuring presentations and Q&A style discussion on how we can include and engage the whole community to drive action from the ground up to prepare for, manage through and recover from drought.</p> <p>Presenters include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Melanie Shannon and Melinee Leather, Barfield Road Producer Group■ Ben Fee, Chief Executive, Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland Inc. and Daniel Willson, Chief Executive, Regional Development Australia Yorke and Mid North, South Australia■ Georgie Somerset, Chair, Red Earth Community Foundation■ Suzanne Thompson, Chair, Australian Native Food & Botanicals <p>Panel include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Oli Le Lievre, CEO & Founder of Humans of Agriculture■ Natasha Johnston, Founder and CEO, Drought Angels■ Dr Raelene Ward, Knowledge Broker First Nations Engagement, Southern Queensland & Northern NSW Drought Resilience Adoption & Innovation Hub, Future Drought Fund■ Ross Blanch, Lifeline Counsellor■ Sarah Parker, 2022 Rural Community Leader of the Year

Time	Session
11:00 – 12:30 pm Gardner Lounge	<p>Panel 3: Decision time</p> <p>Chair: Joshua Gilbert, PhD Candidate, Charles Sturt University</p> <p>Featuring presentations and Q&A style discussion on supporting better decision-making by farmers, communities and governments, before, during and after drought.</p> <p>Presenters include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kristie Lisle, Owner-operator, ‘Moonkan Park’ Lisle Holdings Pty Ltd ■ Elizabeth Johnston, Major Programs Director – Water and Agriculture, Bureau of Meteorology ■ Dr Yiheyis Maru, Principal Systems Research Scientist, Team leader- Adaptation Pathways and Social Transition, CSIRO ■ Neal Hughes, Senior Economist, Farm Data and Analysis, ABARES <p>Panel includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Courtney Bryant, Assistant Secretary – Drought Policy Branch, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry ■ Scott Hansen, Director General, NSW Department of Primary Industries ■ Natalie Hughes, Rural Financial Counsellor, RAPAD/RFCASNQ ■ John Warlters, Chief Executive Officer, Rural Aid
12:30- 1:30 pm	Lunch

Session 3: Interactive workshops

Time	Session
1:30 – 3:00 pm Gardner Lounge	<p>Workshop 1: Back to the Future</p> <p>Getting the priorities right for preparedness programs in the next 4-year plan for the Future Drought Fund.</p>
1:30 – 3:00 pm Phillips Lounge	<p>Workshop 2: What helps and what hinders</p> <p>What should guide Australian Government decisions in response to drought?</p>
1:30 – 3:00 pm McHugh Lounge	<p>Workshop 3: Who, what, when and why?</p> <p>How can we use information flows to build better connectedness</p>
3:00 – 3:30pm	Afternoon tea

Session 4: Climate and Sustainability

Gardner Lounge

Time	Session
3:30 – 3:45 pm	Summary of interactive workshop discussions Oli Le Lievre, CEO & Founder of Humans of Agriculture
3:45 – 4:45 pm	Climate and Sustainability Featuring presentations on climate and sustainability as well as a Q&A style discussion of farmers sharing the changes they have made on their farms to reduce emissions, and the positive impacts it has had on their farm and drought resilience. Presenters include: Australia Agriculture Sustainability Framework Tony Mahar, Chief Executive Officer, National Farmers’ Federation Agriculture Land and Sector Plan Nadia Bouhafs, Assistant Secretary – Climate Policy, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Panel includes: Chair: Daniel Rea, Climate Mate, Fitzroy Basin Association Melinee Leather, Barfield Road Producers Group Natalie Sommerville, President, Australian Women in Agriculture and South Australian farmer; Independent Director National Farmers’ Federation Caitlin McConnel, Senior Associate – Agriculture & Food and Natural Capital Markets with Clayton Utz and farmer, Cressbrook Station
4:45 – 4:55 pm	Closing remarks Mel Brown, First Assistant Secretary – Farm Resilience Division, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
4:55 – 5:00PM	Event close Oli Le Lievre, CEO & Founder of Humans of Agriculture

Wednesday 27 September 2023

Please check your registration to see which tour you're booked on

Time	Tour descriptions
8:00 am – 12:50 pm	<p>Bindaree Property Tour</p> <p>Bindaree is a 1400-hectare organic certified breeding and finishing property, about 50 minutes north-west of Rockhampton, located on the Fitzroy River. This tour provides participants with an opportunity to see on-farm strategies for managing drought, managing pasture die-back, stock management, animal health and rotational grazing strategies, and techniques used to rehydrate the farming landscape and maintain ground cover. Bindaree is also a carbon neutral farming property.</p> <p>Itinerary</p> <p>8:00 am Depart Rockhampton Leagues Club</p> <p>8:50 am Arrive Bindaree</p> <p>9:00 am Focus on managing pasture die-back, stock management & rotation, and techniques used to rehydrate the farming landscape and maintain ground cover</p> <p>10:30 am Morning tea</p> <p>11:00 am Focus on on-farm strategies & practices for managing climate variability</p> <p>12:00 pm Depart Bindaree back to Rockhampton Leagues Club</p> <p>12:50 pm Approx. arrive back at Rockhampton Leagues Club</p>
8:15 am – 1:00 pm	<p>Belmont Research Station Tour</p> <p>Belmont Research Station, managed by CQUniversity and AgForce, is approximately 30 minutes outside of Rockhampton, located on the Fitzroy River. This tour provides participants with an opportunity to get a first-hand look at some of the latest developments in sensor-based research for improving livestock management and productivity in Northern Australia. This tour has a climate adaptation focus, including information on methane mitigation through targeted nutritional supplements, strategic tree planting to minimise heat stress, and pasture management practices.</p> <p>Itinerary</p> <p>8:15 am Depart Rockhampton Leagues Club</p> <p>8:45 am Arrive Belmont</p> <p>9:00 am Focus on benefits of methane mitigation, strategic tree planting and pasture management practices</p> <p>10:30 am Morning tea</p> <p>11:00 am AgForce presenting AgCarE</p> <p>11:30 am View latest developments in sensor technologies for livestock management and productivity</p> <p>12:30 pm Depart Belmont back to Rockhampton Leagues Club</p> <p>1:00 pm Approx. arrive back at Rockhampton Leagues Club</p>

Learn more about Australia's Drought Policy:



Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the National Farmers' Federation would like to acknowledge that the 2023 National Drought Forum is being held on Darumbal Nunthi (Country). We pay our Yadaba (respects) to the Traditional Custodians of this land, their culture, their language and elders both past and present.

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