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Australia's Victorian Farmers welcome $13.53 million green drought support

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Victorian Government announces drought funding assistance for South West farmersÂ amidst record-breaking dry conditions.Â

VFF President Emma Germano said the $13.53 million funding package would be used to help give farmers the tools needed to respond to the current dry conditions and comes after sustained advocacy by local farmers and the VFF.

â??Parts of the South West are the driest on record and I would like to thank Premier Jacinta Allan and Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence for listening to farmers and lending a helping hand. For many months as this green drought has lingered the VFF has been hearing from local farmers and relaying this information back to the government. Itâ??s encouraging to see some action to help those doing it tough. This is a sensible and proportionate response by the government and comes in addition to existing supports such as the Farm Household Allowance and Regional Investment Corporation loans.â?•Â Â

â??The VFFâ??s priority has been to see the immediate needs of farmers particularly around mental health and business advice being addressed. We know during times of drought, the financial, emotional and mental health burden on farmers and local communities is immense. Itâ??s important that farmers know these services are there to help them and that they are comfortable in reaching out,â?• Germano said.Â

Eligible farmers in the South West will receive up to $5,000 as a co-contribution grant to support water infrastructure upgrades to pipes, tanks, troughs, dams, stock containment areas, and grain and fodder storage.

Ms Germano said these grants would support immediate and long-term needs of farmers.Â Â Germano added the VFF will continue to monitor conditions state-wide and communicate information back to the government.Â

â??Farmers know the land better than anyone and thatâ??s why targeted funding to support water infrastructure upgrades is so important. It gives farmers the ability to better prepare their farm for immediate challenges and for future drought conditions. I would encourage eligible farmers to apply for the support and learn more on the Agriculture Victoria website. We will be closely monitoring conditions throughout Victoria to help ensure the government is tuned into the issues on the groundâ?•Â Â