



CATTLE COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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Drought advice workshops provide an important step forward

Following consultation with the Cattle Council of Australia and Australian Dairy Farmers, the Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, The Hon. Peter McGauran MP, has announced Federal Government funding of \$400,000 to stage 24 drought advice workshops for beef and dairy producers.

Cattle Council Executive Director, Mr David Inall, says that this is an important announcement by the Government. "Many drought affected producers are at the end of the road and their capacity to pay the bills has almost expired; the situation for many cattle producers is now extremely urgent," Mr Inall said.

"The real issue now is the shortage of roughage that currently exists within Australia and we urge all parties to explore every possible option that facilitates the unlocking of available fodder reserves around Australia.

"These workshops will provide producers with technical advice regarding the feeding options available in the current environment where roughage is in great shortage. Importantly, the workshops will be a package deal, also providing producers with an opportunity to meet with rural councillors as well as other drought support services.

"It is critical that the government's drought response is delivered through dialogue with producers and producer organisations, which is exactly what is occurring," Mr Inall added.

The Cattle Council of Australia and Australian Dairy Farmers have joined forces to ensure that a strong, unified and robust approach, on behalf of beef and dairy cattle producers, is communicated to key decision makers.

"The severity of the drought means that all local issues are of national concern. The Cattle Council of Australia and Australian Dairy Farmers will continue to maintain close and meaningful dialogue with the Minister to ensure that all effective drought response solutions are explored," Mr Inall concluded.

The first drought advice workshop is planned for northern Victoria in late May. Once venues are confirmed, details will be available on www.cattlecouncil.com.au

Ends

For further information contact David Inall, Executive Director, Cattle Council of Australia on (02) 6273 3688 or Selena Jensen at Pegasus Communications on (03) 9239 6447.

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