

LOCAL EXPERTS APPOINTED

to help horticulture irrigators with decision making

Fruit Growers Victoria has been contracted to help horticulture irrigators in the Goulburn Valley and Swan Hill access the financial and agronomic information they need to make business decisions in the face of reduced water availability.

Through the project, growers are able to access one-on-one, free, confidential sessions with local Extension Providers who have a background in horticulture or finance.

John Wilson, General Manager of Fruit Growers Victoria, says the service is designed to help growers manage their businesses today, and plan for tomorrow.

“There are some big decisions for horticulturists to make this year that can have a long-term impact. This is particularly true for orchardists and other perennial croppers as well as annual croppers with significant capital infrastructure.”

“Our Extension Providers can act as a sounding board as you work through the options, whether that’s pulling trees, buying or selling water, expanding or trying something entirely different,” Mr Wilson said.

The Extension Providers for the Goulburn Valley are:

- **Ann Young**, who is part of a successful family farming stone fruit operation and has been a consultant on horticulture related projects at federal, state and local level. Ann also has extensive experience in accounting offices, quality assurance and horticultural training and assessment.
- **David Bell**, a horticultural consultant with David J Bell & Associates Pty Ltd. David has had a successful 28 year career in the agricultural chemical industry and irrigation technologies providing products and services for crops including pome and stone fruit, citrus, tomatoes and vegetables.
- **Henry Schneider**, who has more than 30 years of working in horticultural extension in the region, including 12 years with the Department of Primary Industries dealing particularly with drought, irrigation management and orchard nutrition. Henry has extensive knowledge in the irrigated pome, stone fruit & citrus industries, plus experience in the wine, table grape & dried vine fruits areas.
- **Liz Mann**, who has worked as a Rural Financial Counsellor for the past 12 months. For the past nine years she has also been the Industry Development Manager for the Australian Processing Tomato Industry based in the Goulburn Valley.
- **Russell Fox**, who has a wealth of experience dealing with growers in the Goulburn and Murray Valleys and is currently a Senior Agronomist with I K Caldwell specialising in pest and disease management, nutrition and irrigation programs in fruit and vegetable crops.

The project is being run by Horticulture Australia Limited in partnership with industry and supported by the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Sunraysia irrigator Tony Martin is chair of the project’s Implementation Steering Committee. He says water scarcity is a major issue for irrigated horticulture in the Murray-Darling Basin.

Distribution: Hume Region Drought Working Group, Hume Regional Managers Forum, Local Government Drought Committees, other drought support organisations and front counter staff.

*To view any of the Adobe Acrobat files, you will need **Adobe Reader**. Follow this link for the latest version of [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)*

“To ensure the profitability and sustainability of the industry, we need to give horticulture irrigators access to good agronomic and financial information,” Mr Martin said.

“There’s a lot of information out there from a variety of sources, and the Extension Providers have the knowledge and skills to help growers access information that is most relevant to them.

“The project is being run until the end of October across the southern Murray-Darling Basin, in Sunraysia, the Riverina and South Australia as well as the Goulburn Valley and Swan Hill.”

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FROM THE EDITOR

June has rushed to a close and if there was water to tread a lot of people would be doing just that.

With interest rate rises, fuel and food prices increasing, it is certainly proving a challenge for many in our communities.

I applaud you all in your commitment and perseverance to seek ways for our communities to deal with the challenges being presented, and to find a way forward in rural adjustment.

I encourage you to make the most of the inter-agency networks available and keep communication lines open. If there are events happening in your region, let me know so I can promote it on the online calendar of events.

Regards,
Toni Eames
Ph: 02 6030 4614
Email: toni.eames@dpi.vic.gov.au

NEWS

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For more information, including contact details in other regions, go to the HAL website, www.horticulture.com.au/mbdroughtinfo

Fruit Growers Victoria is the peak industry body for Victorian apple and pear growers and has its head office located in the Goulburn Valley. It represents deciduous fruit growers in the north east, central and southern regions of Victoria and furthers the interests of more than 300 fruit growing, packing and exporting businesses across Victoria. It provides secretariat support for ten other horticultural associations.

Call 03 5825 3700, email admin@fgv.com.au, log onto www.fgv.com.au and click the link on the front page, or contact the following Extension Providers to set up an appointment.

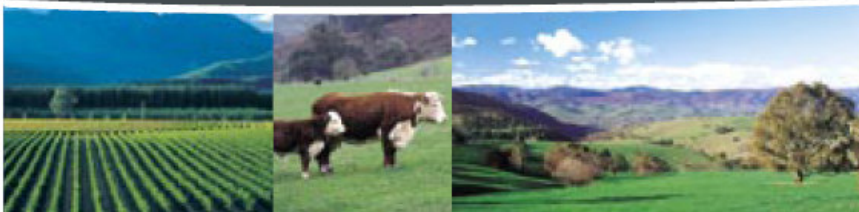
- Ann Young, 0409 503 711, hdc2@inet.net.au
- David Bell, 0417 501 503, david.j.bell@telstra.com
- Henry Schneider, 0417 091 679, f1hawk@hotmail.com
- Liz Mann, 0427 857 578, lizmann@aptrc.asn.au
- Russell Fox, 0428 570 394, russellf@ikc.com.au

In partnership with industry and supported by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Horticulture Australia Limited has developed this project "Drought Information Delivery for Horticulture in the Murray Darling Basin" (MDB) as part of the Australian Government's Irrigation Industries Workshop Programme.

Media contact:

Kaaren Latham
Cox Inall Communications
02 8204 3852 / 0409 809 909
kaarenl@coxinall.com.au

Australian Alpine Valleys Agribusiness Forum and DPI present the:



Rural Futures Young Farmers FORUM

'What is your future?'

Monday 21st July 2008
DPI Rutherglen
3:30 – 8:30PM

RSVP Anne Shaw, AAVAF
phone 0458 216 088
email anne.shaw@alpvalleys.com.au

MEAL PROVIDED, NO COST
RSVP: WEDNESDAY 16TH JULY
BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL

speakers

Traci Griffin, DPI: Climate Change – operating environment, policy adaptation and mitigation

Neil Barr, DPI: Farm and local population change, social changes on the farm

Mike Stephens: Succession Planning and farm employment conditions

Jill Briggs: Rural Training Initiatives, will facilitate discussion sessions



www.alpvalleys.com.au

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Anglicare is helping struggling farming families

- *Anglicare can visit families at their property*
- *Listen and talk with them about their concerns*
- *Provide information on where best to get help*
- *Assist with grants and support*
- *Anglicare can provide hope*

Anglicare is available to “walk beside” families in need and assist them in their struggle to **make sense of their situation, to find options and to move forward.**

A direct impact of the drought in our region is the complexity of issues faced by farming families. Anglicare witnesses families struggling with financial hardship, acute anxiety and depression, marital conflict, and isolation. Farmers currently have deep concerns on their EC status post September and prospects for this season’s grain crop and grazing options.

Anglicare has also worked with many local communities to provide them with the contacts and resources to help and support their own members. This has been through pamper days, coffee meetings, and art projects with school communities.

Dan Ridley our Rural Community Resource Worker is ready to work with any farmers in search of support and would welcome your call.

For further information please contact:

Dan Ridley
Rural Community Resource Worker, Anglicare Wangaratta
Phone: 03 5721 9088 Mobile: 0400 059 242
Email: dan.ridley@anglicarevic.org.au

MEDIA WATCH

Newsprint Stories

AUSTRALIAN FINANCIAL REVIEW 28TH June By: Simon Evans – **THE FOOD FOREIGNERS WANT TO BUY**

An Asia-led price boom has delivered dairy farmers a windfall, but drought, fuel costs and a potential foreign takeover have brows furrowed.

[Australian Financial Review – The food foreigners want to buy](#)

THE WEEKLY TIMES 25TH June By: Kate Dowler – **NIMBLE FAMILIES STILL HAVE A BIG ROLE TO PLAY**

Rising competition from corporate investors in agriculture is no reason for farmings families to pack up and leave. That is the message from leading agriculture financial and management consultants.

[The Weekly Times – Nimble families still have a big role to play](#)

HERALD SUN 25TH June By: Ben Packham & Sarah Wotherspoon – **WARNING ON FUEL PRICES**

Motorists have had their strongest hint yet to prepare for higher petrol prices under the Rudd Government’s plan to fight climate change. As petrol prices nudged \$1.70 yesterday, Transport Minister Anthony Albanese said the Government’s emissions trading scheme (ETS) had to include major carbon polluters.

[Herald Sun – Warning on fuel prices](#)

Media Releases

23rd June – **WHEAT REFORM BILL PASSES FEDERAL PARLIAMENT**

The Rudd Government has delivered on a major economic reform after Federal Parliament today passed legislation to overhaul the bulk wheat export marketing system.

[MAFF – Media Release](#)

27th June – **DROUGHT POLICY REVIEW EXPERT SOCIAL PANEL**

Call for submissions to the expert social panel’s assessment.

Farmers, farm families, rural communities and social support service providers are among the many stakeholders being asked to contribute to the Australian Government’s assessment of the social impacts of drought.

[MAFF – Media Release](#)

Counselling Hotlines

Lifeline	131 114	Mensline	1300 78 99 78
Parentline	132 289	Kids helpline	1800 551 800

Do you know of any support available through community organisations and industry groups?

If so, please forward info through to toni.eames@dpi.vic.gov.au

Drought

by Ivan Lister

I've practised all my dad ever taught me and I've tried to stick to the plan,

But without any rain it's different, when one makes his living from this land.

I've planted the seed when I'm supposed to, after spraying the weeds – what a task!

The cost of fuel and the super can break you. Out the gate the dollars go fast.

With no rain we all watch hourly and continually look at the sky,

It may rain, but it mightn't. Bugged if I know why.

Me dad said "fill up the hayshed son"; He joked "save some for a rainy day",

But it's no bloody joke now dad, and the dams have all gone dry.

We watch as the markets go lower than any of us have ever been through.

'Look at the stock and cull them', Yeah, I can hear dad's voice again coming through.

How the hell can we sell them, it's cost us \$1.60 up 'til now. Cull out the steers, be rid of them. Can't feed them anyhow.

At the market we get \$1.70. Done money, but no feed with the frost.

Take our yarding, agents and carting: \$1.90 more like the cost.

We look at the sky in the morning – it's red. Raises some hope.

Then away go the clouds and it's 40. How the hell will we cope?

"I've heard about this bloke from Violet Town way", the farmer's wife cautiously said.

"I've heard he can help with some dollars, that'll help keep us all fed".

"So now I can't support us?" was the farmer's hopeless reply. If it would only bloody rain by the autumn. Dad didn't say it would be this dry.

"Can I ring up the bloke I spoke about, it surely won't hurt to try.

It's not you, it's the drought that's broke us. No one's seen it this dry.

We owe for the mortgage, the power, the rates, school fees, car payment and the like.

No money for hay or for petrol. Now Roundup has taken a hike".

"Okay, ring up the guy you heard about. Bluey said he'd helped him out".

And sure we need a hand to stay here. Dad never saw such a drought.

REPORTS

Dry Seasonal Conditions in Rural Victoria

The DPI's Dry Seasonal Conditions (DSC) reports are produced monthly.

[DPI - Vic Dry Seasonal Conditions Report](#)

Managing Climate Risk in Rural Victoria

"The Break" produced monthly. [DPI - The Break Newsletter](#)

SUPPORT INITIATIVES

Exceptional Circumstances (EC)

Fact sheets, maps of areas covered by EC declarations and the relevant dates can be viewed at the [Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry](#)

To access EC support farmers need a certificate that their farm is in an eligible area. These are available via [Centrelink Drought Assistance](#) on 132 316.

For information on EC income support contact [Centrelink Drought Assistance](#) (external link) on 132 316.

Financial Counselling

Financial counselling is available from one of Victoria's Rural Financial Counselling services.

Rural Financial Counsellors can provide free, independent financial assessment for farming families and small rural businesses. This includes services for people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

For a list of Rural Financial Counsellors in your area contact DPI on 136 186 or visit [Rural Financial Counsellors - Victoria](#)

A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

The [Drought Assistance Guide](#) is the latest (Feb08) summary of drought assistance measures provided by the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

If you have not yet seen it, this a great guide to refer to.

This and other helpful drought publications can be accessed on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry website via the following link [DAFF - Drought publications](#).

KEY CONTACTS

Local Government Key Drought Contacts

To access contact details for a wider range of service providers in your local area please contact your Local Government Drought representative or follow the links to view your shires homepage.

Shire (<i>click on link to access website</i>)	Key Drought Contact (<i>click on name to email</i>)	Office number
Alpine Shire	Jan Mock , Community & Economic Recovery Officer	03 5755 0555
Benalla Rural City	Kim Scanlon , Drought Coordinator	03 5761 2247
City of Greater Shepparton	Janet Congues , Drought Recovery Officer	03 5832 9700
Indigo Shire	Sally MCCarron , Health & Wellbeing Manager	03 5728 8020
Mansfield Shire	Kevin Murphy , Senior Environmental Health Officer	03 5775 8544
Mitchell Shire	Rob McVernon , General Manager Community & Recreation	03 5734 6252
Moirra Shire	Sally Rice , Community Development Officer Kaye Thomson , Manager Community Development	03 5871 9222
Murrindindi Shire	Tammy Fallon , Executive Assistant	03 5786 1522
Rural City of Wangaratta	Ann Heywood , Executive Manager – Community & Social Planning	03 5722 0807
Strathbogie Shire	Caroline Harlow , Drought Coordinator	03 5795 0000
Towong Shire	Gerard Van Emmerik , Manager Community Services	02 6071 5100
City of Wodonga	Debbie Mackinlay , Recovery Manager	02 6022 9300

DHS Supported Counsellors/Outreach Workers in the Hume Region

Area Covered	Counsellor Name	Contact number
Indigo, Towong, Wodonga	Naomi Mason, UHCHS	02 6022 8888
Alpine, Benalla, Mansfield, Wangaratta	Ruth Malpass Jane Rushworth	03 5723 4000
Moirra (Nathalia focus)	Rachel Robertson	0427 840 430
Moirra	Jackie Star	03 5743 3200
Shepparton, (Strathbogie and Mitchell in emergency)	Terry Reed	03 5823 7000
Area Covered	Outreach Worker Name	Contact number
Strathbogie (Violet Town focus), Benalla	Ivan Lister	0407 856 374

GP Division contacts

Area covered	GP Division	Contact
Moirra (west end)	Murray Plains	Ruth Turpin 0412 966 778
Wodonga	Border	Mark Williams 02 60 491 900
Towong, Alpine, Wangaratta, Benalla, Mansfield, Strathbogie (east side), Murrindindi, Moirra (east end)	North East	Les Hume 0448 885 853
Mitchell	Central Highlands	5428 4848
Shepparton Strathbogie (west side)	Goulburn Valley	5831 5399