

Reference Guide

Provision of emergency animal feed during disasters

1. Purpose

To provide guidance on the provision of emergency feed, including fodder, to production animals by the Queensland Government, through the Department of Primary Industries (the Department) to sustain animals when it is not reasonable, due to a disaster, for owners to achieve.

Application: This guide applies to Public Service Entities (referred to as entity or entities) under section 9 of the Public Sector Act 2022 (the Act).

2. Background

- This guide should be read in conjunction with the [Queensland Interim State Disaster Management Plan 2024-25](#) which notes the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) role during a disaster event is to *"Collaborate with stakeholders with shared responsibilities and other organisations to facilitate prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery strategies and priorities for animal welfare within a community"*.
- Under the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 (ACPA)*, the person in charge of an animal has the responsibility for the provision of adequate food and/or water to an animal. However, the ACPA also notes that natural disasters, such as bushfires and floods, constitute examples of circumstances whereby such provision may not be reasonable to achieve, and therefore do not represent a breach of the ACPA by the owner.
- Under the s76 of the *Disaster Management Act 2003 (DMA)* a range of general powers are provided to district disaster coordinators and disaster officers, which may be used in circumstances including *"[to] prevent or minimise loss of human life, or illness or injury to humans or animals"* (s76 2 b ii). The general powers include the entry of people and vehicles into the declared disaster area.
- The Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements are based on local responsibility for the management of events in a region. The initiation and operation of emergency fodder supply should be managed within the structure of the Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG).
- For the purposes of this guide, the following definitions have been applied:
 - **Emergency feed** includes fodder and may also include compounded or pelletised feeds for livestock in intensive production systems, including semi-closed and recirculation aquaculture operations.
 - **Fodder** may include either of the following used to feed grazing ruminants:
 - hay (including oaten hay, lucerne hay and wheaten hay), or
 - straw (including cereal straw).
- The guide includes the position of Fodder Co-Ordinator based within an LDMG. The roles and responsibilities of this position are described in more detail in section 3d.

3. Guiding principles

a. Commencement triggers

Emergency feed distribution may commence through:

- Multiple reports of stranded or isolated production animals which are unable to access, or be supplied with feed, due to conditions arising from a disaster event.
- Multiple requests from livestock owners to Local Disaster Management Group(s) (LDMG) or Department of Primary Industries (DPI) for emergency feed.
- The scale and size of the event is beyond the capacity of animal owners and/or local groups to sufficiently respond to requests
- The Department receives a direction by the Premier or Minister to commence emergency fodder distribution.

Considerations before commencement should include, but are not limited to:

- Animal condition: the ability of the animal/livestock to withstand a lack of food; and if whether the provision of emergency fodder would likely preserve the animal's life.
- Funding arrangements: Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA) support the provision of emergency fodder under Category D (exceptional circumstance assistance) activations. It requires agreement from the Prime Minister and is provided under an equal cost-sharing arrangement between the federal and state governments. As a result, the process of application and public announcement of funding can take several days, with delays impacting operationally on fodder provision activities. Under these arrangements, there may be an advantage for local governments likely to be impacted by disaster, to maintain awareness of any significant local fodder supplies which may be able to be used in the early phases of any emergency fodder supply activities.

b. Cessation triggers

The decision to cease the provision of emergency feed will be undertaken by DPI in close consultation with LDMG(s), and other appropriate agencies. The specific thresholds for cessation will be influenced by the dynamics of the event and the rate at which conditions return to a state where animals can adequately feed on emerging vegetation or owners can provide feed to their livestock.

Emergency feed distribution will cease when:

- Capacity for owners to supply feed effectively to animals returns, such as through restored road access, recession of flood waters and/or resumption of regular supply chains.
- Direct access for isolated or stranded livestock to sufficient green pick.
- The Department receives a direction by the Premier or Minister to cease emergency fodder distribution
- Allocated DRFA funding is exhausted.

As is the case before and/or during a disaster event, information on livestock condition remains a key factor in assessing the capacity of livestock to withstand a lack of food post-event. This should also be taken into consideration with access of grazing livestock to green pick as it becomes available, and capacity of livestock to move to areas where feed is available. This also includes consideration of ground conditions and any other barriers to movement. If impacted animals can be reached by vehicle, emergency feed provision may be progressively scaled back. For example, centralised deliveries of fodder may continue for individual stock owners to collect. In addition, localised arrangements for fodder distribution may remain in place once the Department's fodder coordination role has ceased.

c. Eligibility

Under current arrangements in Queensland, the provision of emergency feed is supported by Category D DRFA funding. This applies to eligible primary producers in eligible local government areas. Eligibility requirements for primary producer companies or individuals seeking DRFA funding are outlined in the [Queensland Disaster Funding Guidelines](#).

Eligible activities and costs may include:

- Purchase of emergency feed;
- feed delivery (road, rail and aerial transport as required);
- fuel delivery;
- flights to locate and guide livestock stock to safe areas;
- wages of staff specifically employed for fodder delivery activities.

Emergency feed is provided for animal welfare and may be provided to production animals identified as being at risk, regardless of owner or property eligibility.

Emergency feed is provided to maintain life of stranded or isolated livestock. It will not be provided in sufficient quantities to maintain animal condition or growth.

Fodder requirements:

- Use local supplies preferentially (to support local economy and maintain biosecurity)
- Fodder will be required to have a Commodity Vendor Declaration which includes freedom from [restricted](#) and [prohibited](#) plant species.
- The provision of fodder will also be required to comply with any active state or national biosecurity movement controls.

d. Roles and responsibilities

Responsible agency	Key responsibilities	Key Relationships
DPI	Procure suitable fodder and road transport providers as needed Procure aviation broker service(s) able to provide sufficient capacity for fodder transport activities and communicate this to LDMG(s) and DDMG(s) Establish a point of contact for fodder donations (large and small), and ensure liaison between this person and the fodder/road transport provider(s) In collaboration with LDMG(s), appoint DPI or local government staff member(s) as Fodder Coordinator(s) to LDMG(s) Fodder Coordinator to communicate fodder distribution activities to DDMG District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) and LDMG in order to ensure activities are not in conflict with other DDMG or LDMG activities Work with LDMG(s) to identify suitably qualified personnel to organise aerial logistics as required	LDMG Fodder suppliers Aviation brokers

Responsible agency	Key responsibilities	Key Relationships
	Establish the role of Fodder Supply Coordinator within Operations in the DPI Local Control Centre (LCC), to liaise with Fodder Coordinator(s) in LDMG(s) Secure DRFA funding for fodder distribution (or other funding consistent with arrangements with QRA/Federal government) Establish minimum record-keeping requirements to meet the needs of financial auditing for DRFA funding Provide document/ spreadsheet templates for fodder distribution record keeping, which meet the needs of financial auditing for DRFA funding Support emergency fodder supply operations through appropriate communications, via the DPI LCC Public Information manager As required, establishment of taskforce for fodder distribution activities, to include: • DPI Disaster GM (Chair) • DPI State Co-ordination Centre Incident Controller • DPI Local Control Centre Incident Controller • DPI subject matter expert(s) in specialist areas as required (e.g. pests, animal welfare, livestock condition) • DPI procurement/finance officer • DPI LCC Fodder supply co-ordinator • Fodder suppliers • Aerial service brokers • Industry peak bodies as appropriate (e.g. Agforce, Queensland Farmers Federation) • Local Government Association of Queensland • Other government agencies (e.g. Department of Transport and Main Roads, Bureau of Meteorology, Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority)	
LDMG (Local Council)	Work with DPI and fodder suppliers to determine suitable fodder distribution point(s) Liaise as appropriate with DDMG to facilitate efficient usage of aerial assets Adhere to record keeping requirements as per DPI guidelines and DRFA funding requirements for fodder distribution	DPI
Fodder suppliers/road transporters (e.g. Aussie	Adhere to fodder distribution record keeping, which meet the needs of financial auditing for DRFA funding	DPI LDMG

Responsible agency	Key responsibilities	Key Relationships
Helpers, Rural Aid)	Ensure all fodder being sourced provided with appropriate Commodity Vendor Declarations and meets appropriate biosecurity requirements	
Aviation broker(s)	Broker aviation services as per contracted agreement Adhere to DPI Aviation Policy. Adhere to fodder distribution record keeping, which meet the needs of financial auditing for DRFA funding	DPI LDMG DDMG
Livestock owner	Confirm livestock cannot be safely fed Request fodder delivery from LDMG or DPI Advise of livestock locations (if known)	DPI LDMG
LDMG Fodder Coordinator	DPI or local council staff member, operating within the LDMG to: • Maintain records of requests for fodder • Liaise with fodder suppliers/transporters to organise supplies to local area (as needed) • Provide relevant information regarding fodder requests and road deliveries to LDMG/DDMG as needed to facilitate efficient aerial asset usage • Maintain situational awareness of road and air movements • Maintain records of fodder requests, road and air deliveries • Provide daily updates to DPI LCC Operations Manager or DPI LCC Fodder Supply Coordinator (if appointed) • Adhere to record keeping requirements as per DPI guidelines and DRFA funding requirements for fodder distribution	DPI LDMG DDMG Fodder suppliers/road transporters

e. Fodder process

LDMG

External activity

DPI

Multiple agencies

