



The Country Women's Association in Tasmania (Inc.)

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Member of the Associated Country Women of the World

12 August 2008.

Inquiry into Government Drought Support
Productivity Commission
Locked Bag 2
Collins Street East
MELBOURNE VIC 8003.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to submit the following submission on behalf of the Country Women's Association in Tasmania (Inc.).

The Association is very much aware of the many hardships suffered by those in drought areas of Tasmania through the distribution of drought relief funding. (*Appendix A*)

The Association has been distributing funds since November 2006. Funds have been donated to the Association by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and also by Woolworths Limited who have staged two successful National Drought Action Days. The Tasmanian Government donated \$75,000.00 in late May. All see CWA as a respected organisation and an ideal body for the delivery of funds.

We have seen a huge increase in applications especially since December 2007. (*Appendix B*) The drought seems to have come later to Tasmania and farmers are now feeling the effects. For the last couple of months many shearers have approached us for help as work has been very scarce. From the applicants we have seen that many are struggling with credit cards used to the maximum for essentials and many with overdue accounts that need to be paid. We have received many thank-you's with all saying how much the help has been appreciated and how it has helped so much. One applicant said he knew of a couple of people who were considering suicide but that our help had enabled them to go on.)

Two types of funding have been available – individual and community. To date over \$400,000.00 worth of funding has been distributed for individuals/families, helping over four hundred and seventy applicants. Applicants can receive up to \$2,000.00 and we have paid accounts such as electricity, telephone, rates, medical and pharmaceutical, insurance and car registration. Many applicants have asked for vouchers which are available for spending through Woolworths Limited – applicants can choose to purchase groceries, buy petrol or shop at Big W.

The Association has distributed funding for twenty three community events paying for such things as fireworks for a school fair, barn dances, guide camps, transport for swimming clubs and netball teams and musicians to attend events.

An information sheet (*Appendix C*) is available and applicants are required to complete an application form (*Appendix D*). The criteria has been quite broad with the key guideline being that the family must derive their main income from farming or an associated business.

Our Association feels that this type of funding is extremely important and hope that the government can continue to financially support farmers with the payment of household expenses.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Sincerely

Keren McCallum
State Secretary.

Appendix A

Most applicants report -
Selling stock for much lower prices, some even culling. Many selling earlier than usual resulting in loss of income. Some not even keeping breeding stock
Buying stock feed, hand feeding
Stock in poor condition
Crops not growing or poor quality
No water
No income – re-mortgaging properties, using credit cards
Contract shearers have no work some only working a couple of days a month
Owners downsizing staff numbers

Taken from applications:

New Norfolk

It affects you emotionally as well as it is so stressful.

Lemont

We are in one of the worst affected areas. We have reduced our stock numbers from 2500 to 1000 being our breeding stock. We have been feeding constantly for 18 months and have had to spend a large amount of money to find water for stock. Our main income is wool and our woolclip has halved whilst our expenditure on feed and water has sky rocketed.

Stonor

April - The drought is worsening here in the Midlands. Still buying fodder and other supplements to keep the animals we have left going. All funds from forced sales has been used up plus the wind blew away seed we sowed.

July – Much the same – still buying feed. Although we have had a little rain a lot more is needed to give a good growth in the Spring.

Oatlands

We have had to sell 3/4 of our stock and also hand feeding grain to the rest so there is no money left for living expenses which puts a lot of strain on the family.

Oatlands

Now in 3rd year of drought, stock numbers cut to bare minimum and all being supplementary fed. Reduced stock numbers has drastically cut the quantity of bales cut and drought has impacted also on wool cut, quality and quantity. As a family we have made many cuts to our household expenses to make ends meet.

Tunbridge

Feeding sheep for last 3 years non-stop. Costs rising, income non-existent. Stock numbers low and still falling

Tunbridge

We virtually have nothing on farm just dirt. My husband cannot even get work – he has averaged 3 days a month for the last 4-5 months.

Woodsdale

June – No change. Getting colder and drier and getting very stressed out

July – rain has started but sadly a little too late.

Glenora (June)

Rainfall 2006 13”

2007 17”

to date less than 4”

Gretna (March)

No money from crops for a few years. Had 400 round bales of hay a few years ago, now down to dirt. Handed in our baler and mower. Down stocked sheep. Less wool cheque.

Ouse

Selling land now, sold half our sheep, run out of hay and grain. Increase in petrol prices has taken a toll on irrigations needs also on our car use (we are very careful now), lack of income.

Orford

0 income for last 2 years

Longford

Two consecutive years of drought have had a huge financial impact on our farm causing enormous stress and worry to our family. We are still trying to pay off many bills that were paid for on our credit card.

Appendix B
to 29/7/08

			Received	Processed	Expended
2006					
<u>DAFF</u>	Dec		\$10,000	17 Individual 3 Community	May-07
2007					
<u>Woolworths</u>	Feb	\$13,556			
	Cards	<u>\$8,400</u>			
		<u>\$21,956</u>			
From CWA NT	Jun	\$34,204			
	Cards	<u>\$8,500</u>			
		<u>\$42,704</u>	\$64,660	86 Individual	Sep-07
<u>St Michaels Collegiate</u>	Dec		\$3,500	Purch cards	Jan-08
<u>DAFF</u>	Jul	\$40,000		92 Individual	
	Dec	\$40,000	\$80,000	18 Community	May-08
2008 New Round					
<u>Woolworths</u>	Feb	\$92,400			
	Cards	\$23,600	\$116,000	191 Individual	May-08
Misc Donations 1/4/07 - 31/3/08			\$1,853		
<u>DPIW</u>	May		\$50,000	91 Individual	\$979 Bal 29/7/08
			\$25,000	2 Community	\$20,430 Bal 29/7/08
<u>CWAA (Misc)</u>	Jun		\$7,787	Purch cards	Jul-08
<u>DAFF (Qld)</u>	Jun		\$35,000		\$15,000 Bal 29/7/08
Misc Donations 1/4/08 - 29/7/08			\$5,681		
		Total	\$399,481	477 Individual 23 Community	

Appendix C



Country Women's Association in Tasmania (Inc.)

Emergency Family Grants

Country Women's Association delivering emergency help

The Country Women's Association in Tasmania (Inc.) will distribute money sponsored by the Tasmanian Government to meet the immediate household needs of drought-affected families in rural communities.

GRANTS AVAILABLE

- Up to \$2,000 per household to help meet essential household expenses and other basic necessities such as food, clothing, fuel, emergency medical and dental costs, house rates, electricity and telephone expenses.
- Can include Woolworths Essentials cards, valued at \$250 each and redeemable for goods (excludes liquor or tobacco) in any Woolworths/Safeway, BIG W or Caltex/Woolworths.

ELIGIBILITY

- People eligible to apply include farmers, farming dependent contractors, service providers and local rural businesses.
- If you are receiving a pension you may not be eligible (please enquire).
- Applicants must also show that their primary source of income has suffered as a direct result of the drought.
- Rural families in receipt of other drought assistance are not excluded from applying for emergency help through the Country Women's Association grants.

Where can I get further information?

- www.cwaintas.org.au or phone 6231 3706

Appendix D



Application Form

Emergency Drought Aid 2008

THE INFORMATION PROVIDED WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL. ONLY STATISTICAL SUMMARIES WILL BE RELEASED

Name:		
Address:	Postcode	
Postal Address		No. dependents:
Telephone:	Home:	Work:
Email address:		
Are you in a drought affected area:	Yes/No	
<p>Assistance up to a maximum of \$2,000 per family/household is available to eligible applicants.</p> <p>What is your primary source of income?</p> <p>Do you receive a pension? If so what sort</p> <p>Briefly describe what impact the drought has had on your primary source of income and your circumstances:</p>		
Funds required for/or name of service provider	Due Date	Amount
Woolworths Essential Card/s – value \$250	Quantity	
<p>Total Amount sought : \$ _____</p> <p>Payments will be made direct to the biller (eg. Telstra)</p> <p>Please attach copy of UNPAID invoice or relevant paperwork.</p>		
APPLICANTS SIGNATURE: _____		Date: _____

Please return to the Country Women’s Association in Tasmania (Inc.), PO Box 583 North Hobart 7002 or fax to 6231 6829.