

Animal welfare and livestock management

Drought calls for hard economic decisions to be made, particularly on the fate of stock. Stock owners should obtain all available information to make the best decisions. Take action early to minimise the impacts.

The economic survival of the enterprise may be at risk and stock owners must make good decisions to meet their moral and legal obligations to the welfare of their stock and their land. There is an abundance of high quality information and expert advice available to stock owners affected by drought. Start by reading this fact sheet

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-health/animal-health-in-a-drought>

In addition, farmer networks such as the BetterBeef, Bestwool/Bestlamb programs connect farmers to the latest news and events for the production of livestock – including critical information on managing through drought and water shortages.

Information and advice for sheep producers:

Contact: Cathy Mulligan
Project Officer, Bestwool/Bestlamb
Phone: (03) 5258 0229 or 0438 341 970
Email: cathy.mulligan@ecodev.vic.gov.au

Information and advice for beef producers:

Contact: Cheriell Tidd
Project Officer, BetterBeef Network
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Email: cheriell.tidd@ecodev.vic.gov.au

Drought Feeding

The Victorian State Government publishes resources on drought feeding and management of sheep and cattle. These can be found online here

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/sheep/victorias-sheep-meat-and-wool-industry/handling-and-management/drought-feeding-and-management-of-sheep>

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/beef/handling-and-management/drought-feeding-and-management-of-beef>

Copies of the booklets 'Drought Feeding and Management of Sheep' and 'Drought Feeding and Management for cattle' are available from the VFF Livestock office, contact 03 9207 5606.

Emergency stock containment areas

One of the best ways of minimising weed infestations, erosion and helping pastures to recover is to remove stock from normal paddocks and feed them in a stock containment area. A stock containment area is a carefully selected part of the property which is set up to hold, feed and water core farm-livestock during adverse weather periods or following a fire. It should be considered as part of the property management plan and once established should be maintained and be available for use during emergencies. More information regarding stock containment area requirements and location considerations can be found here

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/emergencies/recovery/livestock-after-an-emergency/stock-containment-areas>