



MEDIA RELEASE – 11 MAY 2020

## **GERF and VFF team up to support farmers in need**

**The Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund will partner with the Victorian Farmers Federation to support farmers affected by the East Gippsland bushfires.**

Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund (GERF) President John Mitchell announced on Friday the fund has allocated \$1.4 million to farmers from the \$10.4 million GERF raised during its 2020 bushfire appeal.

“The 2020 GERF appeal has received outstanding support within the region, across the country and indeed from many countries all over the world,” Mr Mitchell said.

He said the partnership with the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) would enable the remaining 2020 GERF appeal funds to be distributed to Gippsland farmers in need.

“About \$9 million of the \$10.4 million raised has already been distributed to more than 2,060 families or residents in East Gippsland.”

“The majority of the remaining funds will go to farmers to replace fencing destroyed in the fires, while up to \$100,000 will be allocated to farmers in urgent need of fodder to sustain their stock through the winter period. Farmers seeking financial assistance for fodder will need to include these details on the VFF application,” Mr Mitchell said.

“We’re looking forward to seeing the remaining funds being distributed in the coming weeks.”

The VFF will administer the \$1.4 million through an online grants application process, which will enable farmers to apply for grants for fencing replacement if their property was affected by the East Gippsland fires.

VFF President David Jochinke said the organisation was thrilled to be able to further support farmers through the partnership.

“The spirit of mateship and camaraderie among our farmers and the Victorian community was palpable during Victoria’s bushfire crisis. It’s great to see that continue with this new partnership.

“On behalf of the fire-affected farmers and the Victorian Farmers Federation, I want to thank the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund for their generosity.”

Applications will be open from Monday 11 May 2020 until Friday 22 May 2020, unless the funds are expended before this date and will be assessed on receipt.

Farmers can access the online application form and review the criteria on the VFF website at <https://bit.ly/3ccLDSO>

Only applications which meet the eligibility criteria will be considered.

*All media enquiries: Danny McDonald, 0448 905 833*

The partnership was made possible following consultation with East Gippsland Shire Council, Bushfire Recovery Victoria, VFF and other agencies.

The Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund (GERF) is a charitable organisation providing emergency relief to Gippslanders who suffer loss to their property as a result of a bushfire, flood or storm event. Established in 1978, it is operated by a small group of local volunteers.

For more information, visit [www.gerf.org.au](http://www.gerf.org.au) or follow the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund on Facebook or Twitter.

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