

Govt launches farmer climate change training program

The Federal Government has launched a \$26 million scheme to give farmers access to training programs to deal with the impacts of climate change.

Under the scheme, primary producers will receive grants to attend courses to help them understand the implications of climate change and train them to use new technology.

Agriculture Minister Tony Burke says it is important farmers are equipped to deal with the changing environment.

"FarmReady is about how you deal with climate change itself," he said.

"How do you adapt to the challenges that you are facing, as well as looking at methods as to how you can responsibly reduce your emissions.

"[It will] look at methods as to how you can financially manage your farm business in a way that deals with droughts that are going to come along more often than they used to."

From Minister Bourke's opening address to the NSW Farmers Fed Conference.

Today I'm pleased to announce the FarmReady Program. The FarmReady program will amount to \$26.5 million over 4 years. All that money comes from with Australia's Farming Future initiative. Primary producers individually will be able to apply for grants of up to \$1,500 each financial year to attend approved training courses which will help to cover travel, accommodation and childcare costs as well. The old 65% rule is gone, and it will be able to apply to up to 100% of a course, but at a maximum of \$1,500 each financial year for each primary producer.

Industry associations and farming and natural resource management groups, NRM groups, will also be able to apply for individual grants of up to \$80,000 each financial year to help support their members in adapting to climate change.

The first courses will be expected to begin over the next few months. Key areas to be covered by those courses will include understanding the implications of climate change, integration of new techniques to address the impacts of climate change, natural resource planning and adaptive management, integrated catchment management, fire management and flood management as a result of climate change, risk assessment and management options, knowing that financial skills are as important as land-based skills in dealing with the challenges that we face ahead. Financial management including budget preparation, management and reporting and research and analytical skills to source relevant information from a range of sources.

We said that we would maintain the commitment to training and through this initiative, through FarmReady we will be doing so. We want to make sure that we deal with this at each end. We want to be at the leading edge of developing the sort of research and development that we need. Then that research and development is no use to

anyone if it's sitting on a shelf. Farm Ready is about getting that information from the lab to the farm, about getting the financial skills provided right to primary producers in a cost effective way to try to make sure that the training opportunities that we talk about in childcare, in schools, in universities, in TAFE colleges are also skills that are provided in a very direct fashion to our primary producers.