

Look Over the Farm Gate Community grants program

Program Guidelines
January 2026

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LOOK OVER THE FARM GATE COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. ABOUT THE PROGRAM

As part of the Victorian Government's drought support, it has established the Look Over the Farm Gate community grants program (Program) to help communities come together and support farmers and farming families under stress.

The Program is administered by the National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH) on behalf of the Victorian Government. Agriculture Victoria (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action) is supporting NCFH.

Grants of between \$1,500 and up to \$5,000 are available per eligible event.

For events of particularly high impact, grants over \$5,000 may be considered, please contact NCFH to discuss your proposal prior to submitting your application.

The Program is available statewide.

Applications are open until the Program budget is fully expended. Events must be held by 31 December 2026.

2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

Promoting good mental health in agriculture is vitally important - particularly during challenging or stressful times. Strong, connected communities are vital in building resilience during tough times.

Local agriculture industry groups, not-for-profit organisations and community champions are all well placed to boost farmer mental health and wellbeing through community events and programs that provide social connection opportunities for farming communities.

This Program empowers local organisations to deliver events and initiatives tailored to their unique needs.

The focus is on activities that support mental wellbeing and bring farmers, farming families and others in rural communities together - whether through mental health capacity-building initiatives or other creative ideas - reflecting the diversity of the communities they serve.

3. TYPES OF EVENTS

Events may include:

Social and/or networking event: up to \$5,000 is available for the delivery of social or networking events which increase community connection and promote mental health awareness and understanding, where farmers engage with like-minded people and health care professionals.

Mental health training or workshop: up to \$5,000 is available to deliver a relevant health / mental health care focused workshop or training opportunity.

There are no restrictions on how many applications can be submitted per applicant, however each event / activity must be submitted as a separate application.

4. WHO CAN APPLY?

Applicants must be a member of the agriculture industry or farming community or be able to demonstrate current links to a local farming community through activities such as supply and services, community support, healthcare providers. Applications are not restricted to not-for-profit organisations and applications do not need to be auspiced by a not-for-profit organisation.

Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to:

- Community or farmer groups
- Sporting clubs
- Volunteer organisations
- Service providers
- Incorporated bodies
- Private businesses
- Local government organisations
- Healthcare providers

5. WHAT CAN BE FUNDED?

Grant funds **must** be used for the eligible grant expenses outlined in the application and should directly benefit the farming community.

The following types of expenditure are eligible for funding:

- Guest speaker or trainer costs
- Venue or equipment hire
- Catering
- Other entertainment e.g. children's activities, musicians, comedians, film screenings, etc.
- Farmer health assessments

Other items will be considered at the discretion of the NCFH.

If you're unsure whether something is eligible, please contact NCFH to discuss.

The primary beneficiaries of the activity must be members of a Victorian farming community.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate how the proposed activity will support Victorian farmers, farming families and farming communities' mental health.

Social and/or networking event: grants of up to \$5,000 are offered for the delivery of social or networking events which increase community connection and promote mental health awareness and understanding, such as a guest speaker or social event where farmers engage with like-minded people and health care professionals.

Examples could include notable public speakers, or a local keynote speaker with personal experience.

Where a guest speaker is not proposed, please list relevant invited health care professionals that will be available at the event. Examples could include the NCFH, the Rural Financial Counselling Service, District Health Care or Bush Nursing Centres, or other Mental Health ambassadors (e.g. Beyond Blue).

Mental health training or workshop: grants of up to \$5,000 are available to deliver a relevant health / mental health care focused workshop or training opportunity for farming families, farm workers, farm advisors and the farming community.

Examples could include:

- a focused workshop or training opportunity for farmers or service providers on farmer mental health or supporting farmers in stressful situations delivered by a suitably qualified expert or trained health care professional.
- the provision of Health and Lifestyle Assessments (<https://farmerhealth.org.au/health-and-lifestyle-assessment>) at an appropriate event (note: this could be a social event, to be delivered by an appropriately qualified health care practitioner through a local public health care provider).

Successful applicants will be required to provide proof of eligible grant expenditure as part of their acquittal.

6. WHAT WILL NOT BE FUNDED?

Funds must only be used for the eligible grant expenses outlined in the application. Funds must not be used to cover the cost of alcohol, event planning or administration fees, staffing costs or wages, equipment purchases, contingency fees, event insurance, cleaning fees, door prizes, raffles, fundraising activities or any items inconsistent with the promotion of positive wellbeing or that will not benefit the farming community.

7. WHAT IS REQUIRED TO APPLY?

Proposed activities must:

- be located within the State of Victoria, and
- target farmer mental health and wellbeing activities i.e. a social connection event or mental health training opportunity or workshop (see section 3 Types of events).

Applications must include details of the event, including:

- key contact details
- details of the event (location, timing, target audience, expected participants)
- goals of the event (e.g. a statement on the intended mental health focused outcome; for example: peer to peer support, health care practitioners, suicide prevention, mental health stigma reduction, awareness of local health care services)
- describe how positive health messages will be shared (e.g. guest speaker, panel discussion, comedian, creative activity, film with discussion, distribution of wellbeing resources)
- list support services that will be invited to, or be involved in, the event and any resources that will be available about farmer mental health and wellbeing (if any)
- list additional third-party funding partners (if any)
- itemised breakdown of proposed grant expenditure
- amount of funding request
- the applicant (or auspicing organisation) must hold valid public liability insurance for the event.

Applicants' contributions can be financial or in-kind (such as venue hire).

8. WHAT ARE THE FUNDING CONDITIONS?

Funding agreements

Successful applicants must agree to the terms and conditions of the grant and are required to retain and provide evidence of eligible grant expenditure including copies of receipts, invoices and any other relevant documentation.

Grant funds will be paid **after your event has taken place**. If this poses a difficulty for your group, please contact NCFH to discuss alternatives.

Failure to comply with the guidelines of this program may result in the withdrawal of funding and/or a requirement to repay any funds already disbursed, or reduction in the grant amount payable.

Rescheduling events

Events funded under this program may only be rescheduled **once** from the original approved date and must be held before 31 December 2026. Applicants should communicate changes to events to NCFH prior to the approved event date.

Legislative and regulatory requirements

In delivering the event, recipients are required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and state/territory legislations and regulations, including but not limited to:

Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)

Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications that may arise from event funding.

Acknowledging the Victorian Government's support

Successful applicants must include acknowledgement of the Victorian Government's support and that funds have been provided as part of the Victorian Government's Drought Response on **all** promotional material and event promotion using the banner at the bottom of the page, available for download on NCFH website.

Successful applicants are encouraged to tag NCFH and Agriculture Victoria in social media posts about their event using #LookOverTheFarmGate.



This event is supported by a Look Over the Farm Gate grant provided by Agriculture Victoria under the Victorian Government's 2025 Drought Support Package. #LookOverTheFarmGate



Publicity

Grant recipients may be asked to assist Agriculture Victoria in promotion of the Program. This may include involvement in media releases, case studies or promotional events and activities. Agriculture Victoria may request recipients to fact check any text and seek all relevant approvals in order for Agriculture Victoria to use any imagery provided by the recipient associated with the Program prior to the publication of any such promotional materials. Agriculture Victoria may publicise the benefits accruing to the recipient and/or the State of Victoria associated with the support from the Look Over the Farm Gate program.

Provide a post event feedback and funding acquittal report

Successful applicants are required to complete a post-event survey within two weeks after the conclusion of the funded event. A link to the survey will be sent via email.

The report is to describe timing, attendance, feedback from attendees and proof of expenditure.

9. IS SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO PLAN AND RUN AN EVENT?

To help plan events and support applications, please read [Tackling the Tough Topics: A step-by-step guide to plan mental health and wellbeing events in farming communities](#). This guide provides practical templates, case studies and top tips to help design an event that is tailored to a community's specific needs.

When planning your event we encourage you to review the resources available at Sober in the Country around supporting attendees with the option of sophisticated non-alcoholic drinks at your events <https://www.soberinthecountry.org/alcohol-free-drinks/> and familiarise yourself with the information to support your event to cater for non-drinkers.

Applicants are encouraged to connect with their local shire, local service providers, speakers, and community leaders when planning and promoting an event and should check whether similar events may already be running in their area during a similar timeframe.

NCFH is also available to assist with refining event plans or supporting the running of events (i.e. as guest speaker or through provision of resources) and connecting with other applicants planning similar events in close proximity. Contact the NCFH if this is of interest.

NCFH is unable to promote individual events due to the high volume of events held.

10. APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

To apply, visit the NCFH website [here](#) to complete an application.

Applicants should carefully consider activities against the key criteria set out in the Program Guidelines before submitting an application (see sections 7 and 8).

The NCFH reserves the right to request further information from applicants or from any business or individual the applicant has engaged, to assist in assessing the application and to verify any information provided in an application.

NCFH will process completed applications in order of receipt.

By signing the application form, applicants are declaring that the information provided in the application and supporting documentation is true and accurate.

Providing inaccurate, untrue or misleading information may be a breach of criminal law for which serious penalties may apply.

Step 1 Application	Applicant to: • Complete application form through the NCFH website. • Confirmation email received upon submission.
Step 2 Review	• NCFH staff review application • If support requested, NCFH staff will contact applicant. • NCFH staff will contact the applicant if clarification of submitted information or further information is required.
Step 3 Outcome	• Applicants advised of outcome • Successful applicants must confirm their ABN, banking details, and payee information for payment processing. • Financial and banking information provided will be treated confidentially and used solely for the purpose of grant processing. Bank details will be securely stored and deleted after payment has been completed.
Step 4 Acquittal	• Post event feedback and funding acquittal report submitted to NCFH within 2 weeks after the event, including proof of expenditure.
Step 5 Payment	• Event funding payment made to applicant within 4 weeks after appropriate acquittal is received (if this poses a difficulty for your group, please contact NCFH to discuss alternatives).

NCFH, in consultation with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), may audit successful applicants throughout the life of the program.

11. FUNDING SOURCE AND DURATION

The Victorian Government is providing increased support to assist farmers and farming families affected by drought.

The total funding available for the Program is \$2,300,000 (including administration).

Grants of between \$1,500 and up to \$5,000 are available per eligible application.

For events of particularly high impact, grants over \$5,000 may be considered, please contact NCFH to discuss your proposal.

Applications are open until the Program budget is fully expended. Events must be completed by 31 December 2026.

12. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

The Program Guidelines are correct at the time of publishing.

NCFH and Agriculture Victoria (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action) may review and amend this Program at any time.

13. EVALUATION

The Victorian Government may conduct an evaluation to determine the extent to which the Program has contributed to Victorian Government policy objectives.

Grant recipients may be requested to provide information to assist in auditing during the Program or the evaluation after the Program's completion.

14. FURTHER INFORMATION

National Centre for Farmer Health

Telephone: (03) 5551 8533

Email: lotfg@wdhs.net

Web: <https://farmerhealth.org.au/>

Postal address: Western District Health Service, PO Box 283, 115 Lonsdale Street, Hamilton, Victoria 3300

Agriculture Victoria (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action)

For more information about other drought support being provided by the Victorian Government, please contact Agriculture Victoria. Telephone: 136 186.

Email: drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Web: <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/drought-support>

15. PRIVACY COLLECTION STATEMENT

Any personal information provided by the Applicant or a third party in an application will be collected by NCFH and Agriculture Victoria (Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action) for the purpose of administration of the program. This information may be provided to other Victorian Government bodies for the purpose of assessing the Program (for example, the Victorian Auditor General).

Data gathered through applications and acquittal may be compiled, aggregated and made anonymous by NCFH and Agriculture Victoria for program reporting, evaluation and research purposes.

Any personal information collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred will be held in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and other applicable laws.

Agriculture Victoria is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. Information regarding DEECA's approach to privacy can be found online at <https://www.deeca.vic.gov.au/privacy#personal>.

Enquiries about access to information should be directed to drought.support@agriculture.vic.gov.au

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



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