



## MEDIA RELEASE

# More farmers to access the Farm Household Allowance

13 Nov 2019

Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, said the Farm Household Allowance (FHA) was available to support farmers in hardship whether caused by drought, the aftermath of the terrible bushfires, or other reasons.

“The Coalition Government has delivered promised improvements to the support payment that helps struggling farming families make ends meet during this crippling and ongoing drought,” Mr Joyce said.

“The successful passage of the Farm Household Support Amendment (Relief Measures) Bill makes this important support available to more farmers and more often. Instead of a once in a lifetime payment for three years, as it was under Labor, it is now available four in every 10 years. That’s in recognition that droughts happen more frequently.

“These changes allow the responsible Minister to make lump sum payments available if and when needed in the future.

“It also means that those whose time on the payment expires this financial year can receive up to \$13,000 a couple or \$7500 a single person before the end of the financial year. For those who have already exited, the payments should be in eligible farmer’s pockets by Christmas.

Mr Joyce said the changes also mean that the off-farm income offset can be applied in more circumstances, for example, to include income from agistment.

“We’ve increased the upper limit so that farming families who have more debt than income can count that income, up to \$100,000, against their on-farm business losses,” Mr Joyce said.

“This is the first tranche of radical simplification to FHA following the independent farmer-led review of the payment. The allowance provides breathing space to farmers so they can sort out their finances and plan for the future. For that reason it’s time limited, in line with findings of the farmer-led review and the National Farmers’ Federation national drought policy.

“All those farmers who could benefit from this support should consider investigating it. It is predicted that more than 30,000 farmers could be eligible for FHA after further changes are legislated.

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Hon **Barnaby Joyce** MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

“We’ve been working to make the application process easier and shorter and a call to a Rural Financial Counsellor can help farmers work through that,” Mr Joyce.

(ENDS)

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