



ON-FARM ADVERSE EVENTS RECOVERY PLAN



Individuals and rural communities have responsibilities for responding to adverse events that affect farming families (agriculture, horticulture and forestry). Below are central government assistance measures that may be available in small, medium and large-scale adverse events.

An adverse event means any disruption caused by a climatic event or natural disaster and includes floods, storm events, snow events, droughts, tornadoes, earthquakes, tsunamis or volcanic eruptions.

An adverse event may be declared a civil defence emergency by the local council. However, it is important to remember that the availability of the assistance outlined in this leaflet is not dependent on the declaration of a civil defence emergency.

Individuals, communities and businesses need to plan and prepare for adverse events. One of the best ways to speed recovery and build your business and family's resilience is to think ahead and be prepared.

"Having no plan is a plan to do nothing"

WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF INDIVIDUALS?

Individuals are primarily responsible for their response and recovery following adverse events. You should consider the risks you face from adverse events and develop strategies to protect your family and business from those risks. These risk management strategies might include:

- › setting aside reserves of money, food and livestock feed;
- › owning a generator;
- › keeping insurance up to date;
- › locating buildings and planting crops away from areas of high risk;
- › planting drought-resistant crops and planting trees on highly erodible land;
- › keeping stock in good health; and
- › considering climatic risks and natural hazards when purchasing land.

Individuals are also responsible for safeguarding the welfare of their livestock, including the humane disposal of livestock. Under the Animal Welfare Act 1999, the responsibility for ensuring the health and welfare of animals rests with the owner or the person in charge of the animals. Farmers are urged to make timely decisions to avoid problems. You can seek advice from Federated Farmers, veterinarians, stock and feed agents and farm advisers.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL RURAL SUPPORT TRUST

To find out more about:

- › qualifying for assistance;
- › requesting government support.

WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF RURAL COMMUNITIES?

Community members need to work together to manage local and regional adverse events. A community may be:

- › a small group of farmers living in an isolated valley;
- › a sector group in a region; or
- › all of the people occupying a district or a region.

Rural Support Trusts are community organisations involved in coordinating response and recovery activities in rural communities during or after an adverse event. Rural Support Trusts operate in every region in New Zealand and work closely with local Civil Defence Emergency Management groups. The Trusts also work closely with other rural organisations such as Rural Women NZ, Federated Farmers, Forest Owners' Association, Farm Forestry Association and Horticulture New Zealand.

Following an adverse event of any size, your regional Rural Support Trust should be your first point of call for information on the assistance and support available.

Central Government will also activate an emergency line 0800 779 997 following medium and large-scale events to provide information on the assistance available.

RESTORATION OF ESSENTIAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

Local government is responsible for restoring community services such as roading, water supplies and flood protection.

Central government is responsible for state highway restoration through Transit NZ.

Telecommunication and line companies are responsible for restoring phone and power supplies.



SMALL-SCALE EVENTS

Every year there are periods of disruptive weather or localised adverse climatic events that affect a relatively small number of farms. Communities should first organise a local response with local government and their local Rural Support Trust. However, farming families severely affected may qualify for the following central government assistance.

TAX RELIEF:

Inland Revenue has a number of tax relief assistance measures including late deposits or early withdrawals from the income equalisation scheme, late re-estimates of provisional tax, extensions of time for filing, instalment arrangements, and remission of penalties. For more information, contact your tax agent or Inland Revenue’s emergency helpline 0800 473 566.

WORKING FOR FAMILIES ASSISTANCE:

If your income has changed as a result of an adverse event, you may be eligible to receive extra money through Working for Families. Working for Families package is made up of three components:

- › **WORKING FOR FAMILIES TAX CREDITS:** These are paid to families with children aged 18 years or under to help with the cost of raising a family. They are made up of four types of payments: family tax credit, in-work tax credit, minimum family tax credit and parental tax credit.
- › **CHILCARE ASSISTANCE:** This can help with the cost of childcare for preschool and school aged children. It is made up of two types of payments: Childcare subsidy; and OSCAR subsidy (out of school care).
- › **ACCOMMODATION SUPPLEMENT:** This can help with the cost of your rent, mortgage, board and other essential household costs. You don’t have to have children to get an accommodation supplement.

To see if you’re eligible for more money through Working for Families go to www.workingforfamilies.govt.nz and check how much you could get by using the calculators. You can also call 0800 774 004 for more information on housing and childcare, or 0800 227 773 for more information on tax credits.

LABOUR ASSISTANCE:

- › **TASK FORCE GREEN (TFG):** This is available if properties have suffered damage from an adverse climatic event. TFG is a wage subsidy programme for specific projects that are of benefit to the community or environment. For more information contact your local Work and Income office.
- › **JOB SEARCH SERVICE:** A service for people who are either working and want to stay in their current job, are looking for a job, or want or need to change careers and/or are interested in training.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

Work and Income may provide financial assistance to both farming and non-farming families whose incomes have been affected by an adverse event. This financial assistance may include:

- › **UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFIT:** This provides income support for people who are looking for work or training for work.
- › **EMERGENCY BENEFIT:** This is an income and asset tested benefit payable to people who are in hardship and who are unable to earn enough income for themselves (or any dependent family) and cannot receive another benefit.
- › **SPECIAL NEEDS GRANTS:** This provides a non-taxable, one-off recoverable or non-recoverable payment to meet immediate needs.

HOW CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE IS TRIGGERED

The matrix of government response is used as a guide by the Government for determining which recovery measures may be made available. Each event is assessed using five criteria, and is classified depending on where the majority of the criteria sit within each column below.

		SCALE OF ADVERSE EVENT		
		SMALL-SCALE (The majority of the criteria sit within this column)	MEDIUM-SCALE (The majority of the criteria sit within this column)	LARGE-SCALE (The majority of the criteria sit within this column)
THEMES	CRITERIA	ASSESSMENT/CLASSIFICATION OF THE EVENT		
RISK MANAGEMENT OPTIONS	Availability of options	Readily available	Moderately available	No practical options available
MAGNITUDE OF EVENT	Likelihood of the event	Frequent	Infrequent	Rare
	Scale of physical impact	Local level	District level/multi-district level	Regional/national level
CAPACITY OF COMMUNITY TO COPE	Degree of economic impact	Local level	District level/multi-district level	Regional/national level
	Degree of social impact	Local level	District level/multi-district level	Regional/national level
EXAMPLES		2006 Whangaeahu Valley flood 2005 Gisborne flood	2007 Northland storm 2007 North Island East Coast drought 2006 Canterbury snow 2004 Eastern Bay of Plenty flood	2008 National drought 2004 Lower North Island floods 1988 Cyclone Bola
POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE		Small-scale event recovery measures	Small-scale event recovery measures + Medium-scale event recovery measures	Small-scale event recovery measures + Medium-scale event recovery measures + Special recovery measure

- › **RECOVERABLE ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS:** This provides non-taxable, interest free, financial assistance to meet essential immediate needs for special items or services. This assistance has to be paid back but may be paid back in installments.

MENTORING/ADVICE:

Financial negotiation and counselling/mentoring services are available via Rural Support Trusts for families and individuals who need to talk with an independent person experienced in farm, forestry or orchard management. Contact your local Rural Support Trust, or alternatively contact Victim Support on 0800 842 846.

MEDIUM-SCALE EVENTS

Occasionally there are adverse events that impact on farms and farming families on a district/multi-district scale. Communities and regional organisations are expected to organise local responses. In a medium-scale event central government may provide assistance as outlined above, plus additional assistance including:

RURAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS: Work and Income may provide payments to assist with essential living expenses. These payments are set at the same rate as the unemployment benefit; an income and asset test applies. For more information contact your local Work and Income office or a Rural Support Trust.

NEW START GRANTS: MAF may provide a one-off grant for families to permanently leave commercial farming when there is no adequate financial viability as a result of an adverse event. Strict criteria apply to these grants. For more information contact your local MAF Policy office.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ASSISTANCE: MAF may provide grants for education workshops, meetings and media information to provide technical and financial advice on options for dealing with adverse events. This technology transfer would often be administered via industry organisations.

COMMUNITY EVENT ASSISTANCE: MAF may provide grants to help sponsor local community events aimed at boosting morale. For more information contact your local MAF Policy office.

AGRICULTURAL RECOVERY FACILITATOR:

Facilitators would be appointed to coordinate the initial stages of some recovery operations. They would work via the local Rural Support Trust and help identify at risk farming families and help these farming families access applicable assistance. For more information contact your local Rural Support Trust or MAF Policy office.

LABOUR ASSISTANCE:

Enhanced Task Force Green (ETFG) is an ‘enhanced’ labour assistance scheme that covers the wages of workers and supervisors to help with the clean-up operation in areas where there is too much damage for the local community to manage alone. ETFG can help with clearing trees and debris, repairing fencing, building repairs and general clean-up. ETFG workers can be local jobseekers, students, and workers who may not be able to work because of the damage caused by the storms. ETFG is funded by Work and Income, and organised in partnership with local councils and communities. For more information about ETFG, contact your local Work and Income office or council.

VOLUNTEER COSTS:

In some recovery operations, the travel and accommodation costs for volunteers from outside the region are met. For more information, contact your local MAF Policy office.

RURAL SUPPORT TRUSTS:

These exist in all regions of New Zealand, and would take a leading role in response and recovery activities in rural areas. The Trusts would be funded by MAF to lead/coordinate many of the activities outlined in this brochure. For more information contact your local Rural Support Trust or MAF Policy office.

LARGE-SCALE EVENTS

Occasionally, climatic or natural disasters occur on a significant scale that seriously impacts on the regional and/or national economy.

For large-scale adverse events, Central Government will lead the response and recovery phase in conjunction with local government and may provide additional assistance to that outlined above.

SPECIAL RECOVERY MEASURE:

May be made available at the discretion of central government. A special recovery measure would reimburse a share of the costs for:

- › restoration of uninsurable on-farm infrastructure;
- › re-establishment of uninsurable pasture, crops and forestry (excluding slips); and
- › initial clean up of silt and debris (where uninsurable).

Reimbursement would be at a rate of 50%, with an excess of \$10 000 or 10 percent of damage costs (whichever is greater). Assistance would be capped at a maximum of \$250 000 per farm business.

REQUESTING GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE:

After an adverse event, first contact your local Rural Support Trust and/or industry representatives such as Federated Farmers or Horticulture NZ. The Rural Support Trust, Local authorities and representative industry groups will liaise with their local MAF Policy office to:

- › advise on the severity of the event;
- › confirm that a local response has occurred; and
- › specify the type of assistance needed.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL RURAL SUPPORT TRUST

To find out more about qualifying for assistance and how to request government support.

NORTHLAND/RODNEY	Northland Rural Support Trust
WAIKATO/HAURAKI/COROMANDEL	Waikato/Hauraki/Coromandel Rural Support Trust
BAY OF PLENTY	Bay of Plenty Rural Support Charitable Trust
GISBORNE	East Coast Rural Support Trust (Gisborne)
HAWKES BAY	East Coast Rural Support Trust (Hawke's Bay)
TARARUA	East Coast Rural Support Trust (Taranua)
WAIKATO/HAURAKI/COROMANDEL	East Coast Rural Support Trust (Wairarapa/Upper Hutt)
TARANAKI	Taranaki Rural Support Trust
RUAPEHU/WANGANUI	Ruapehu-Wanganui Rural Support Trust
MANAWATU/RANGITIKEI/KAPITI	Manawatu/Rangitikei Rural Family Support Trust
MARLBOROUGH/NELSON	Top of the South Rural Support Trust
WEST COAST	West Coast Rural Support Trust
NORTH CANTERBURY	North Canterbury Rural Support Trust
MID-CANTERBURY	Mid-Canterbury Emergency Relief Trust
SOUTH CANTERBURY	South Canterbury Adverse Event Trust
OTAGO	Otago Adverse Events Support Trust
SOUTHLAND	Southland Rural Support Trust



To contact a Rural Support Trust near you, please call:

0800 787 254

(0800 RURAL HELP)

www.rural-support.org.nz

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL MAF POLICY OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION

LOCATION	TELEPHONE	MOBILE
HAMILTON	07 957 8314	029 957 8313
ROTORUA	07 921 3400	029 921 3407
HASTINGS	06 974 8814	029 974 8811
WELLINGTON	0800 008 333	029 894 0691
NELSON	03 543 9182	029 943 1025
CHRISTCHURCH	03 943 1703	029 943 1706
DUNEDIN	03 951 4700	029 951 4716

YOU CAN ALSO CONTACT OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

GOVERNMENT AGENCY	SERVICE	TELEPHONE
INLAND REVENUE	Emergency line	0800 473 566
	General enquiries	0800 227 774
	Working for Families (eg tax credits assistance)	0800 227 773
WORK AND INCOME	General enquiries	0800 559 009
	Working for Families	0800 774 004
VICTIM SUPPORT	General enquiries	0800 842 846
MAF – ANIMAL WELFARE	Complaints	0800 008 333
0800 GOVERNMENT HELPLINE	Only activated depending on scale of event	0800 779 997