



# Farmers Feed our Families

You can help save theirs.

Australian farming families face the relentless hardships of bush life, from natural disasters and financial distress to mental health struggles and isolation.

**Since 2015, Rural Aid has been tackling the issues head on,** deploying on-the-ground support when and where it's needed most.

The climate is harsh.

There are pressures to produce year in, year out.

Stress and isolation knock mental wellbeing.

**Be the one who stands with our farmers when they need us most.**

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## Isolation Can Be a Killer

When left untreated and unsupported, mental health struggles can easily lead to fatal outcomes.

Every 10 days a farmer dies by suicide.\*

\*Source: National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) study 2009-2018.

# Rural Aid Stands Shoulder to Shoulder with our Farmers



**Rural Aid Community Representatives** are known, trusted and embedded in our regional towns, working in and alongside their community.



They are locals who **understand the culture** of their region.



**They are the 'glue'** that connects our farmers to the help they need.



**We don't leave when the dust settles**, the smoke clears, and the waters recede. That's when some of our most important work begins.



Rural Aid Counsellors are **qualified, experienced professionals** providing a unique carry-through service.



## They Suffer in Silence

Despite their daily challenges, our proud rural families often try to manage the unmanageable on their own. Studies have shown...

**Rural Australians are 50% less likely to seek help.\***

\*Source: Mental Health in Remote & Rural Australian Farming Communities A Brief Report Produced for Rural Aid Australia 'Supporting and Informing the Potential Expansion of Rural Aid Australia's Counselling Team' Author: David Younger, Clinical & Consultant Psychologist 6 April 2021.

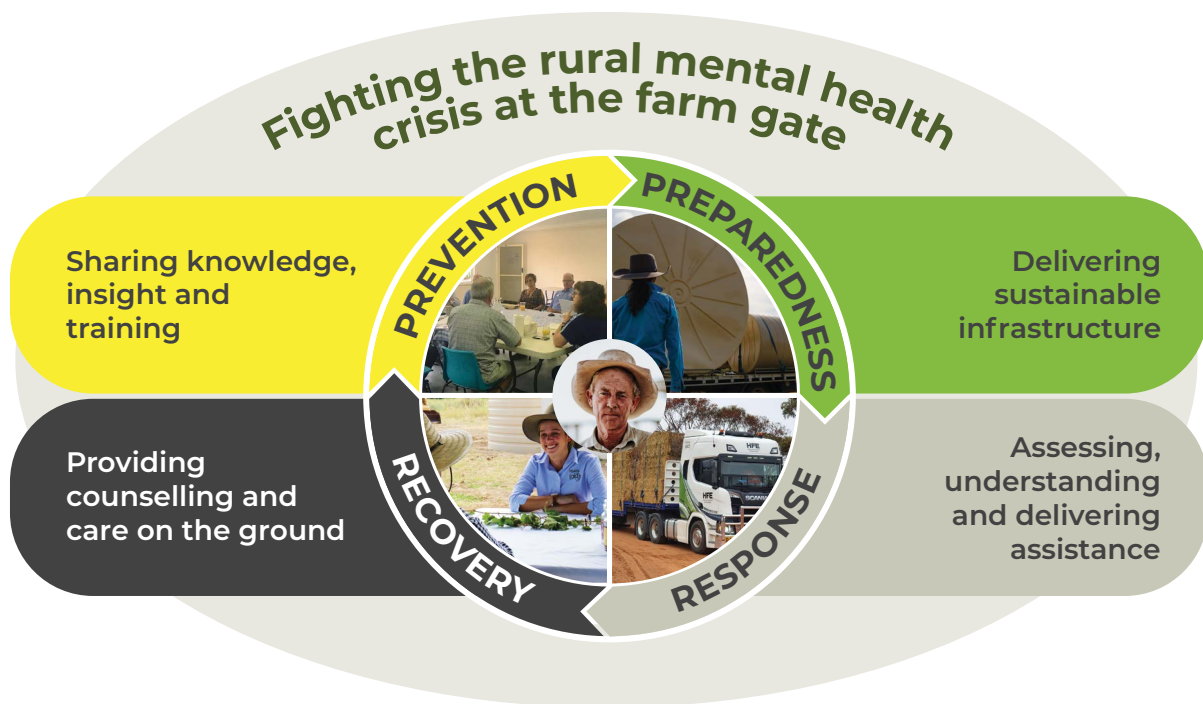
# Before, During & After



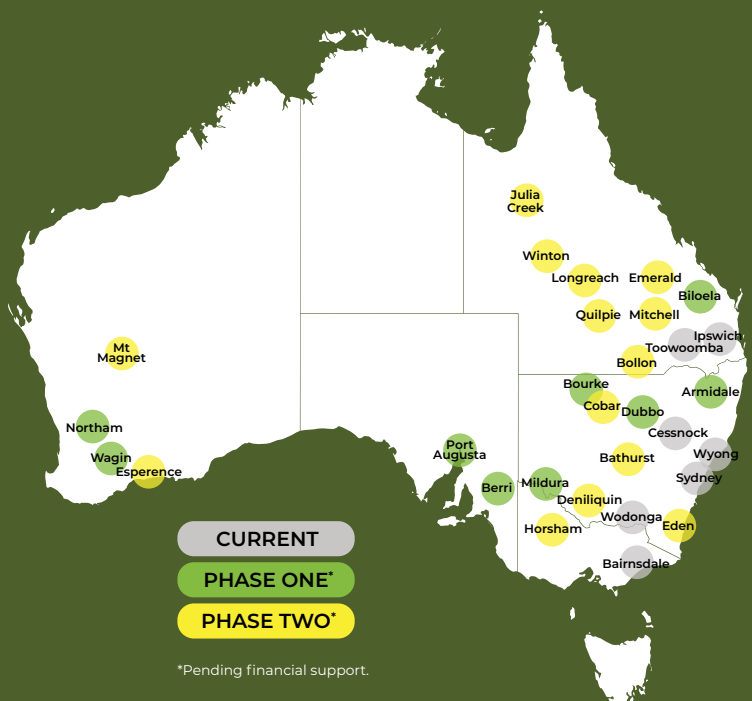
Rural Aid can't stop the floods, fires, and droughts, but we can be there for our farmers when they need it most.

Supporting our mates in the bush is about more than disaster response. Our work starts with preparing communities for the challenges they may face, and building more resilient and sustainable infrastructure when the dust has settled.

Straddling all stages of the disaster life cycle is Rural Aid's largest team – our counsellors – who provide continual support and connection through the good times and bad.



## Help Expand our Counselling Support Nationally





# Make a Meaningful Difference



Your contribution means Rural Aid can continue to:



Expand our Counselling Program to place **dedicated mental health and wellbeing support in rural communities nationally**



Build our Disaster Response emergency fund, enabling us to **commit more financial and tangible support** (e.g. hay, water) **to communities in the wake of natural disasters**



Implement Community Programs through the 'Our Towns' initiative to **strategically plan for a more sustainable and vibrant future** through improved infrastructure, technology, and volunteer support.



Bolster our Volunteer Program and Farm Army so we can **connect farming families with support when they need it most**

## Rural Aid is Australia's Rural Charity

Moved by the plight of western Queensland farmers struggling to feed their livestock, Tracy and Charles Alder launched the highly successful 'Buy a Bale' campaign in 2015, inspiring Australians to purchase hay bales to support the farmers in need.

From that galvanising moment, Rural Aid was born, and in the subsequent years its work has reached some of the most remote corners of the country touching the lives of thousands of rural Australians.

Rural Aid's strong governance, operational transparency, and unshakeable commitment to its cause has cemented its reputation as Australia's most trusted rural charity, consistently delivering on its promises and honouring the contributions of its supporters.

Distributed more than  
**\$1.8m in financial support**

Provided fodder support to  
**1,200 farmers (valued \$5m+)**

Delivered  
**21,000 bales of hay nationwide**

Supplied  
**5m litres of domestic water**

Devoted more than  
**\$400k to counselling support for farmers**

Dedicated  
**9,000 volunteer hours**

Figures for the past 12 months.



# Our Mates in the Bush



**Chris Neilsen  
Warwick, QLD**

When the 2019 bushfires tore through Queensland's Darling Downs region, Warwick cattle farmer Chris Neilsen's steep mountain property was decimated, with kilometers of vital fencing destroyed.

Rural Aid answered the call, deploying a team of volunteers to help Chris rebuild.

"The fire in 2019 in this area was devastating," Chris said, "but now I've got six people giving me a hand and things are getting done so quickly. I know it's an adventure for them, and I hope it stays an adventure. Because I am deeply indebted to them."



**Megan & John Duncan  
Walgett, NSW**

The unforgiving dry weather of recent years has been endlessly challenging for fourth generation brother and sister farming duo, Megan and John Duncan. They've struggled to keep their property going, with their 3000 sheep, several hundred cattle and mixed cropping all at the mercy of nature.

"You just have to survive," John said. "You tighten your belts up and destock when you can." The fodder and volunteering support the Duncans received from Rural Aid made the tough times a little easier. "It really boosts your morale," Megan said. "It's just really lovely to think that other people care. We really appreciated that very, very much."



**Liz & David Hill  
Thallon, QLD**

Stalwarts of the Thallon community, Liz and David Hill are not just hard-working mixed farmers, they are also passionate advocates for Rural Aid, having received financial assistance themselves in the past. Liz and David actively encourage their community to consider Rural Aid's financial help if they're struggling to make ends meet.

"It stops people going without the necessities," David said. "And it actually puts money back into the local economy," Liz added. "It's more than the money that makes the difference, it's the acknowledgment that you are doing it tough."



**James Neal  
Taree, NSW**

A proud fifth generation dairy farmer, James Neal was pushed to his limits when the biggest floods of his lifetime hit his Oxley Island property in March 2021.

His 600 cows couldn't be milked for two days as floodwaters ravaged his dairy and paddocks. "It was a very stressful time... everyone was physically and mentally exhausted," James said.

With the help of a team of Rural Aid volunteers, James was able to clear his paddocks and focus on recovery, both for his property and for himself personally. "We're lucky we've got Rural Aid here," James said.

## Farming can be Challenging

But our farmers are critical. They face fires, drought, floods - everything mother nature throws at them to keep food on our tables.

**93% of the food we eat comes from Australian farmers.\***

\*Source: National Farmers' Federation (NFF) Australian Farmers statistics.

# It's Time to Stand by Their Side



## Your Help Will Make A Difference.

The need is widespread, and the need is ongoing.

There is no quick fix.

But the future stability and sustainability of Australia's farming community CAN be safeguarded through the actions we take today.

With your support, together we can create the framework from which future generations of proud Aussie farmers can continue to flourish.

With your generosity we can:

- expand our **Counselling Program** nation-wide
- build our **Disaster Preparation & Response** resources and capacity
- implement **Community Programs** to build a more sustainable future
- bolster our **Volunteer Program** to stand with our mates in the bush when they need it most

*For our mates in the bush*



## Contact Us

If you would like to make a meaningful difference to the lives of farming families, please email [philanthropy@ruralaid.org.au](mailto:philanthropy@ruralaid.org.au)

Visit: [ruralaid.org.au](http://ruralaid.org.au)

Call: 1300 327 624

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