



An Australian Government Initiative



REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUSTRALIA EYRE PENINSULA

Media Release

Building Drought Resilience in the Agricultural Sector

27 June 2024

Regional Development Australia Eyre Peninsula (RDAEP), in partnership with the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association (EPLGA), Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board and Ag Innovation and Research Eyre Peninsula (AIREP) is preparing a Regional Drought Resilience (RDR) Plan for the Eyre Peninsula as part of the Australian Government's Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program through the Future Drought Fund, which is being administered by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions in South Australia (PIRSA).

"Having a RDR Plan is important as it will help unlock Australian Government and other funding streams for drought resilience programs, projects and initiatives to be undertaken on Eyre Peninsula, as it will identify strategies and opportunities that will help the region prepare for, respond to and recover from drought" said RDAEP CEO Ryan Viney.

The RDR Plan aims to build drought resilience of the agricultural sector and allied industries, while taking a systems thinking approach which recognises that agriculture on Eyre Peninsula does not occur in isolation, and what happens on farms has flow on impacts to communities, the natural environment and the regional economy.

Drought can impact the agricultural sector and supporting industries, communities, natural environment, economies and infrastructure in many ways. Drought is not new to Eyre Peninsula, nor is variability and changing patterns of rainfall. This has been evident over recent months as changing seasonal rainfall patterns have impacted crop seeding and other activities on Eyre Peninsula. Farmers are also not new to adapting to changing conditions. They have a long history of being leaders and innovators in developing enhanced and new ways to sustain their farms during times of reduced rainfall and drought or other challenges.

There are many factors that make individuals, communities and regions resilient to drought. The Eyre Peninsula already has a range of features/characteristics that contribute to its resilience which can be further leveraged and strengthened. There are also new opportunities to be realised. These include measures before a drought occurs to build resilience and improve the ability of individuals, farms, communities and the region to manage through drought and recover, remaining sustainable over the longer term.

The RDR Plan will:

- document how the region might be impacted by drought; and
- identify strategies and opportunities to build and strengthen resilience to drought before a drought occurs, as well as during or when recovering from drought.

Ryan Viney RDAEP Chief Executive Officer said *“The RDR Plan is not just about what can be done collectively to build drought resilience of the region. It is also about what can be done individually, at household and farm scale and in communities to be drought resilient, which is why community engagement and consultation in the development of the Plan is critical to its ongoing success and implementation.”*

As such, community members are invited to attend one of 11 forums being held across the region to contribute to the preparation of the Eyre Peninsula Regional Drought Resilience Plan. Discussion forums will be held across the Eyre Peninsula from 2 July to 10 July 2024 at Whyalla, Kimba, Wudinna, Ceduna, Streaky Bay, Elliston, Port Lincoln, Cummins, Cleve, Cowell and Tumby Bay and will be 2 hours duration.

At the forum we will explore:

- How does/can drought impact the region?
- What are your personal experiences of drought?
- What contributes to drought resilience in the region?
- What are the opportunities to strengthen resilience to drought (before, during and after)?

People can register for these forums via the following link:

<https://www.trybooking.com/eventlist/eyrepeninsularegionaldroughtresilienceplan>

Alternatively, if people cannot attend one of these forums, they are encouraged to complete the following online survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EPDroughtPlan>

For further information the Drought Resilient Eyre Peninsula website is available at:

www.droughtresilientep.com.au

Media contact

Media inquiries, including interviews can be directed to RDAEP Chief Executive Officer Ryan Viney on 0407 976 156.