



Media Release

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ANZ extends dry weather assistance package for South Island farmers

ANZ is extending its assistance package to South Island farmers affected by extreme dry conditions.

The bank will commit an additional \$20 million to the assistance package, but will extend that if demand for help from farmers is high. ANZ launched the assistance package last January.

The announcement follows the Government today extending its South Island drought declaration, which covers much of the South Island's east coast, until 30 June 2016.

"While farmers in some areas have welcomed rainfall recently, others are still grappling with extreme dry conditions that will impact the productivity of their farms for some time to come," said Troy Sutherland, ANZ's General Manager Southern Commercial & Agri.

"Extending our assistance package recognises that the financial impacts of drought continue long after rainfall – sometimes for years – and supports liquidity as farmers regrass and restock. The sooner capital expenditure is made after rainfall, the faster businesses will recover."

The options available to affected farmers through ANZ are:

- Suspending loan principal repayments;
- Waiving fees associated with restructuring business loans considered necessary due to impacts of extreme weather;
- Waiving fees for term finance and investments which improve performance and the ability to respond to climatic variation in future years;
- Waiving the interest rate reductions associated with accessing funds on term deposits ahead of maturity date; and
- Providing access to discounted short-term funding to help farmers get through the immediate challenges while also protecting their long-term productivity.

Mr Sutherland said the impacts of drought go beyond finances and are a major source of stress for some customers.

"Serious weather events cause significant challenges and anxiety. We urge farmers to communicate regularly with their family, advisors and support networks."

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