

Question on Notice

No. 82

Asked on 5 February 2020

MR J MADDEN ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES (HON M FURNER)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise what measures the Department of Agriculture is taking to provide information and support to small landholders?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for the question.

Prior to the recent rainfall, some areas of southern and south east Queensland were experiencing some of the lowest rainfall totals in recorded history and many small landholders were faced with difficult decisions about the welfare of their livestock and how to appropriately manage their land.

The severity and impact of this drought affected many livestock owners who had not previously had to deal with a lack of rainfall of this magnitude. As a result, the Palaszczuk Government developed a response that utilises multiple agencies to provide small landholders with information and technical assistance on caring for their land, their livestock and themselves.

Known as the Small Landholder Livestock Response, the initiative utilises free public forums to provide livestock owners with information on their duty of care under animal welfare legislation; basic technical information on the nutritional requirements of horses, cattle, sheep and goats; and options for dealing with drought-affected livestock, that is, to feed, sell, agist or euthanase. The forums also detail the assistance available through the Rural Financial Counselling Service, Queensland Health and the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors.

Local authorities are also involved in the forums to provide a holistic suite of information to attendees. To date, pilot forums have been held in Clifton and Kingaroy. Recognising that rainfall has been patchy across the region and not all areas have received sufficient rainfall to break the drought, additional forums are being developed in consultation with local authorities, and these will be rolled out over the next few months across southern and south east Queensland.

The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is also updating its on-line and hard copy resources to provide a range of information to small landholders that own livestock. Longer term, the Palaszczuk Government will continue to provide support for this initiative to educate small landholders and ensure improved animal welfare and land management outcomes for livestock owners in this sector.