

## Question on Notice

No. 1125

Asked on 25 October 2022

**MS C LUI ASKED MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND FISHERIES AND MINISTER FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES (HON M FURNER)—**

### **QUESTION:**

Will the Minister outline how the Palaszczuk Government is assisting the agriculture industry to grow good jobs in the Cook Electorate through schemes administered by Queensland Rural Industry Development Authority?

### **ANSWER:**

The Queensland Rural and Industry Development Authority (QRIDA) has been established by the Queensland Government to administer schemes of financial assistance principally to support rural and regional Queensland.

Recognising the importance of agriculture to regional communities as generators of employment, QRIDA, on behalf of the Queensland Government, administers a number of schemes of financial assistance which support the agricultural sector (both primary producers and the wider agriculture supply chain).

#### **Primary Industries Productivity Enhancement Scheme**

QRIDA administers the Primary Industries Productivity Enhancement Scheme (PIPES) which provides concessional loans to help primary producers looking to establish a primary production enterprise (First Start) or improve the viability of an existing primary production enterprise (Sustainability). Given the importance of primary production to regional communities, these loans assist to sustain employment in regional economies. In the Cook Electorate, QRIDA has provided the following amount of PIPES loans since 2016:

#### **Primary Industries Productivity Enhancement Scheme**

PIPES Fund	First Start		Sustainability	
	Approved Applications	Loan Amount	Approved Applications	Loan Amount
<b>Total 2016-17 to 2022-23</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$5,024,624</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>\$5,268,517</b>

#### **Disaster assistance**

QRIDA also administers financial assistance measures under the joint Commonwealth/State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA). The recovery grants and concessional loans under the DRFA support impacted businesses and primary producers to recover from severe natural disaster which, in turn, supports employment in regional areas after disaster.

In the Cook Electorate, QRIDA has delivered the following financial support since 2016:

- Disaster assistance loans for North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough (25 January - 14 February 2019), Severe Tropical Cyclone Trevor and Associated Low Pressure System 19-27 March 2019 and Eastern Queensland Bushfires, 7 October - 19 December 2019 totalling around \$1.2 million to support 6 applicants;

- Disaster assistance recovery grants for the North & Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough (25 January - 14 February 2019), Queensland Bushfires (September - December 2019) and TC Niran & Associated Low Pressure System 25 February - 3 March 2021 totalling more than \$6.5 million to support 153 applicants.

On behalf of the Federal Government, QRIDA administered the Restocking, Replanting and On-Farm Infrastructure Grants program which provided grants to primary producers that were impacted by the North and Far North Queensland Monsoon Trough (25 Jan - 14 Feb 2019) event, but where DRFA recovery grants were insufficient to support recovery. In the Cook Electorate, around \$2.9 million has been provided to support 8 successful applicants.

### **COVID-19 Jobs Support Fund**

In response to the impact of COVID-19, the Queensland Government offered a number of assistance measures to assist businesses sustain operations and retain employment, most notably, the COVID-19 Jobs Support Loan Scheme. These concessional loans were available to businesses in the agriculture sector, although the Cook Electorate figures below are for all industries:

<b>COVID-19 Jobs Support Fund loans</b>	<b>Approved Applications</b>	<b>Approved Amount</b>
<b>Queensland COVID-19 Jobs Support Fund (all industries) 2019-20</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>\$12,241,341</b>

### **Rural Economic Development Grants**

Rural Economic Development (RED) Grants of up to \$200,000 with a 50 per cent cash contribution requirement from applicants are available to fund projects which generate economic and employment opportunities related to primary production value chains across rural and remote Queensland. QRIDA has provided \$439,445 RED grants to three applicants in the Cook Electorate. Daintree Fresh is the latest recipient which will use its grant to install essential packing infrastructure to export fresh produce for the Japanese Market.

### **Other Programs Related to Agriculture**

The agriculture industry in the Cook Electorate has also benefitted from a range of other smaller financial assistance programs administered by QRIDA including:

- Farm Management Grants: rebates for professional costs associated with running a primary production enterprise (for example, succession planning, farm business resilience plans);
- Horticulture Irrigation Pricing Rebate Scheme: a 35 per cent rebate to horticulture producers to offset the cost of water to irrigate horticulture crops for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24;
- Drought Preparedness Grants: a grant of up to \$50,000 for investments in capital infrastructure intended to improve the drought preparedness of a primary production enterprise;
- Horticultural Netting Program Trial Expansion: Federal Government program providing a grant of up to \$300,000 for the installation of netting intended to reduce the impact of adverse weather and predation on horticulture crops.

<b>Other QRIDA assistance programs</b>	<b>Approved Applications</b>	<b>Approved Amount</b>
<b>Total 2016-17 to 2022-23</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>\$2,322,690</b>

Note: expenditure for these smaller schemes has been combined to ensure individual applicants are not able to be identified.

Further information on these assistance measures can be found on the QRIDA website at:  
[www.qrida.qld.gov.au](http://www.qrida.qld.gov.au)