

# RURAL AID 10 YEAR IMPACT REPORT



2015-2025

A decade of action.  
A resilient future.



# OUR STORY

Over the past decade, Rural Aid has supported farmers and rural communities across Australia, providing essential relief during the nation's most devastating natural disasters. Farmers play a crucial role in these communities—not only as food and fibre producers but as part of the social and economic fabric that keeps rural Australia strong.

In partnership with key stakeholders, Rural Aid has worked tirelessly to deliver practical solutions and meaningful outcomes, helping communities recover, rebuild, and foster long-term resilience.

As we reflect on the impact of the past 10 years, we extend a heartfelt thank you to our incredible farmers, generous donors, dedicated corporate partners, passionate volunteers, and our devoted staff. Together, we've created lasting change — and together, we will continue to build a stronger, more resilient rural Australia.





## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Ten years ago, Rural Aid was founded with a simple mission: to support the farmers and families who are the backbone of rural Australia. Today, I'm proud to say we not only continue to fulfill that mission but have become a trusted ally to communities in their most challenging times. Thanks to the financial support we receive from long term regular donors, corporate sponsorships, small individual contributors and also volunteers; we are able to deliver essential support through droughts, floods, bushfires and other challenges faced by our primary producers. Rural Aid's journey has been one of resilience and hope, and as we look ahead, our commitment remains stronger than ever. We will continue to stand by our farmers, working hand in hand with our partners to ensure a prosperous future for rural Australia.

Alex Hutton  
Chairman | Rural Aid



## CEO'S MESSAGE

As we celebrate 10 years of Rural Aid, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our incredible supporters. Their generosity has allowed us to provide critical assistance to our farmers when they need it most. Over the past decade, Rural Aid has stood by our farming communities through some of their toughest challenges—whether it's drought, floods, or other hardships. We've seen the power of coming together to make a real difference, and we're more committed than ever to ensure our farmers have the support they need, not just today, but for the long term. Together, we've built something meaningful, and we look forward to continuing to work alongside our partners to create a stronger, more resilient future for rural Australia.

John Warlters  
CEO | Rural Aid




# 10 YEARS OF RURAL AID IMPACT




Over **\$125m** in generous donations

to Rural Aid, empowering farmers across the nation to rebuild and thrive.



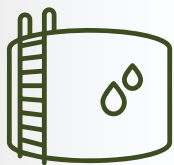
More than **160,000** bales of hay

delivered to farms, bringing vital sustenance to livestock in need.



More than **90m** litres of water

provided to farmers and their families, ensuring they have clean water for washing, bathing and drinking.



**500+** water tanks boosting water storage by **11.25m** litres of water

purchased and delivered to farmers ... safeguarding vital resources for the future.



**\$25m+** in financial aid

giving disaster-impacted farmers the support they need to stand strong and recover.



Over **50,000** volunteer hours

making a real difference to farmers and their communities in times of need.



**173** farms worked on & **103** community projects completed

as part of our farm recovery event program, strengthening the bonds of community in the face of adversity.





Over **1000** community events

attended by the Rural Aid Mental Health & Wellbeing team.



More than **13,000** free counselling sessions

offering a critical lifeline of mental health support for farmers and their families.



**800+** students across **32** schools

have been empowered with resilience skills through our Mustering Growth Program.



More than **60** towns engaged

through our Community Development program



*“ Thank you for being so thoughtful and supportive. On behalf of my family and I, thank you Rural Aid for having our backs in time of need and for showing compassion and understanding for life on the land. A recipient of financial assistance from Rural Aid ”*

# DISASTER ASSISTANCE:

## Transforming lives in times of crisis

Over the past decade, Rural Aid has stood alongside Australian farmers and rural communities, providing practical support during natural disasters like droughts, floods, and fires. Our work is driven by a simple goal: to support farmers before, during, and after disasters, helping them prepare, recover, adapt, and build long-term resilience.

One of our most recognised initiatives, Buy a Bale, was launched in 2015 during the drought and quickly grew into a national movement. Australians rallied together to provide essential hay and domestic water to struggling farmers. While Buy a Bale remains a core part of what we do, Rural Aid's support has expanded well beyond hay, now offering direct financial assistance, mental health services, and hands-on help through volunteer programs. Through our disaster response efforts, we've helped thousands of farmers keep their livestock fed, their household taps running, and provided financial relief to ensure farms can persevere in times of adversity.

Support isn't just about immediate relief—it's also about the long road to recovery. Our Farm Recovery Events bring volunteers together to clear debris, rebuild fences, and restore properties, while also offering emotional support and connection to ensure farmers don't face these challenges alone.

At the heart of our approach is understanding what disaster-affected farmers truly need. This means listening to communities, providing holistic support, and ensuring farmers have the financial, practical, and emotional resources to get back on their feet. By improving wellbeing, strengthening social connections, and helping farmers develop strategies to cope and recover, Rural Aid plays a crucial role in keeping rural Australia strong.



“ Dropping a line to extend my gratitude and thanks for providing the hay for myself and others last week. It is very much appreciated, and comes at a timely time. Your organisation does a wonderful job and has certainly left a lasting legacy with farmers through this region. I thank you for all the effort it takes to organise this, the sourcing of hay, transport arrangements phone calls to recipients etc, it's not lost on me.

A hay recipient | South Australia ”



**99%** of our surveyed farmers indicated that the support provided by Rural Aid was relevant to what they needed at the time.



# MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING:

## Supporting farmers to thrive

Rural Aid is deeply committed to improving the mental health and wellbeing of farmers and their families, understanding that mental health is as vital as physical resources in ensuring long-term recovery. Our dedicated team of professional counsellors live and work directly within rural communities, providing tailored support to address the unique challenges of farming life.

Our counsellors offer confidential conversations and support to farmers, their families and farm workers. We offer flexible options, including phone or on-farm consultations, ensuring that help is easily accessible regardless of location. This approach is especially important for farmers who may face barriers to accessing support. We unequivocally believe that one conversation at the right time with the right person can change everything.

The demand for our mental health services has grown exponentially, as more and more farmers reach out for help in navigating the pressures they face. Thousands of counselling sessions have been provided, and our Mustering Growth school program has equipped hundreds of students with the skills to build resilience and manage adversity. Our mental health initiatives are transforming lives by fostering a culture of support, reducing stigma, and encouraging farmers to prioritise their mental health.

Looking to the future, we are more committed than ever to expanding our mental health programs and strengthening the emotional resilience of rural communities. With the support of our partners and donors, we are poised to continue making a significant and lasting impact on the wellbeing of farmers and their families, ensuring they have the tools to thrive, not just survive.







*“ Rural Aid’s counselling and mental health support have been a real lifeline for me. As a farmer, the pressure can sometimes feel overwhelming, but thanks to the team at Rural Aid, I’ve learned how to manage stress and cope with the challenges of rural life. ”*

**Rural Aid counselling recipient**

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

## Building resilient, thriving rural communities

Over the past decade, Rural Aid has had a profound impact on rural communities across Australia, helping them navigate the social, economic, and environmental challenges they face. Our Community Development Program has focused on building resilience and empowerment in these communities, creating opportunities for growth, connection, and long-term sustainability. By engaging local towns in strengthening their futures, we've inspired hope-filled conversations and practical action.

Through collaborative efforts, Rural Aid has supported communities in building local leadership, strengthening networks, and empowering residents to take charge of their own futures. We've worked alongside rural communities to identify their strengths and leverage their assets, leading to meaningful, community-led initiatives with lasting benefits. From revitalising main streets to launching tourism campaigns and conserving vital river systems, these projects have helped towns envision their potential and take the necessary steps to see it realised.

Additionally, our workshops have guided numerous towns in developing tailored Community Action Plans, giving them clear pathways for future growth and development. This work has sparked initiatives that breathe new life into rural areas, encouraging a collective vision for progress and ensuring that these towns continue to thrive.

Looking back, Rural Aid's efforts have been instrumental in safeguarding the future of Australia's rural communities. By supporting and empowering these towns, we've ignited a renewed sense of hope and purpose, leaving a legacy of strength and resilience for generations to come.

*The Community Builders Project is helping us do things to a higher level without realising the training has had such an influence. Rural Aid have played a major role in taking our community to a level I hadn't considered achievable.*

**Attendee at a Rural Aid Community Development Event**



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*I think organisations like Rural Aid, that are quite clearly focused on helping rural people, whatever form that takes, are always welcomed by rural communities.*

**Community Development Program participant**

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# 2030 ASPIRATIONS

## What's ahead...

As we look ahead to 2030, the need for continued action in rural Australia has never been clearer. While we've made important progress, the challenges ahead are immense and we must stay committed to improving the long-term outcomes for farming and rural communities.

Rural Aid's vision is clear: to ensure the long-term sustainability of farming and rural communities, providing vital support before, during, and after natural disasters. We will continue to focus on building resilience, providing mental health and wellbeing support and practical assistance to improve the lives of farmers and their families.

The next decade is critical. We're committed to meeting the needs of our farmers and their families and rural communities. Our goal is not only to help rural communities recover but to thrive. Together, we can create a future where rural Australia flourishes - stronger, more connected and more resilient than ever before.





Rural Aid relies on the generosity of individuals, corporations, and businesses to provide vital support for our farmers.

Your contribution today can make a real difference.



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