

Thursday, 9 August 2018

**ABC Local Radio gets behind NSW farmers with drought appeal**

ABC Radio Sydney, ABC Canberra and local radio stations across NSW together with ABC NEWS, will run a drought appeal in support of farmers throughout the day tomorrow, Friday 10 August.

With all of NSW now officially declared to be in drought, many farmers are facing dire circumstances. ABC audiences, particularly those in Sydney and Canberra, will be encouraged to assist by donating to the Red Cross and other charities via a link on [abc.net.au/drought](http://www.abc.net.au/drought) or by calling 1800 RED CROSS.

All programs throughout the day, starting with the metropolitan and regional *Breakfast* programs and ending with *Drive,*will focus on the issues faced by farmers in rural communities, the effects of the drought and the future implications if it continues into Spring.

A special broadcast of Richard Glover’s *Thank God It’s Friday* (TGIF) program from 5.00pm to 6.00pm will feature regular contributors Gary Eck, Tommy Dean and Gretel Killeen, with music by Diesel.

Other program changes for Friday’s appeal include *The Country Hour* replacing *Conversations* with Richard Fidler from 11.00am to midday. A special 90-minute drought appeal program co-hosted by *Evenings* presenter Chris Bath and *Weekends* presenter Simon Marnie will air from 12.30pm to 2.00pm, replacing the *Myf Warhurst* show. James Valentine will also support the appeal with an “old-style telethon” during his *Afternoons* show from 2.00pm to 4.00pm. There will also be a collection of drought stories on ABC iview titled The Big Dry - Australia's drought crisis.

ABC Radio Sydney’s Manager, Melanie Withnall, said the appeal was in response to listeners asking how they could help.

“Our colleagues in our regional stations the length and breadth of the state are following events daily as the drought worsens,” she said. “The stories we’ve been hearing have been truly heartbreaking

“We’ll be crossing to them throughout the day to bring our city audience local insights into how the drought is affecting rural communities and the ways in which we all can help.”

*For more information:*

*John Woodward*

*Communications Lead, ABC Regional & Local.*

*(02) 8333 2621; woodward.john@abc.net.au*