

Tune In & Tune Up

Drought and
Wellbeing
Webinar Series

the
power of
humanity



Webinars

1. Maintaining wellbeing through drought & prolonged stress (Wed 17 June)
2. The drought cycle; adaptation and strengthening resilience (Wed 1 July)
3. Wellbeing after the rains (Wed 15 July)
4. Family wellbeing in the face of ongoing stress (Wed 29 July)
- 5. Preparing for tough times (Wed 12 August)**

This Session

- Recording:
<https://bit.ly/2MqY7ez>
- Q&A
- Chat box





PREPARING FOR TOUGH TIMES

What does it mean to 'prepare' – and what does good preparation look like?

Jacki Schirmer

DISTINCTIVE BY DESIGN

HEALTH



UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA



HEALTH RESEARCH
INSTITUTE

Why does preparing help?

- Helps you identify practical changes and invest in them

- Encourages thinking and learning about options for tough times

- Increases your ability to make decisions and feel confident in them during tough times

- Reduces the shock/ surprise/ fear triggered by tough times when they do occur (to some extent)

Common challenges of trying to prepare for tough times

**There is no
best time or
way to
prepare for
tough times**

Common things we hear when we ask rural businesses and farmers about preparing for tough times

... it's not the right time to think about that

... I'm too tired/stressed to think about preparing for things that might or might not happen

... I don't know where to start

... I don't have time

... There's not much I could do that would help

... Everyone says I should do X but I want to do Y

... I want to do Y – but people will look down on me

... I don't want to waste time investing in things that might not work

... I'll feel like a failure if I put in all this effort and it doesn't help as much as I hoped

What's important to you?

This is the first critical question when preparing for tough times

Example 1: Cattle farmer

Objective of preparation:

Increase ability to continue earning income from cattle property further into drought

- Goal of preparation activities is to be able to maintain stock on property in drought & finish them ready for sale when others are finding it difficult to or destocking

Preparation activities might include:

- Increase stock feed storage capacity
- Feed pads for stock to protect soil from erosion
- Pasture management plan – when to shift to buying in feed; decision points for buying in early to reduce impacts of price increases
- Change fencing to enable grazing that better protects soil health during drought
- Change watering points

What's important to you?

This is the first critical question when preparing for tough times

Example 2: Cattle farmer

Objective of preparation:

Be able to maintain a minimum level of household income through drought

- Multiple options for achieving this objective
- Don't always require on-farm preparation activities

Preparation activities might include:

- Example 1 activities
- Build up savings sufficient to last a long period without production if destock during drought
- Increase off-farm work so household income can be maintained at sufficient level during drought – enables farm to cease production during drought as needed

What's important to you?

This is the first critical question when preparing for tough times

Example 3: Cattle farmer

Objective of preparation:

Maintain soil and pasture health through drought for faster recovery and restocking after drought

Preparation activities might include:

- Example 1 & 2 activities can also provide examples
- More likely to intentionally de-stock early to maintain groundcover, and to position themselves for early re-stocking

What's important to you?

This is the first critical question when preparing for tough times

There is no right or wrong answer to the question 'what's important to you'. Answering it helps you identify which types of preparation investment are likely to be most useful to you.

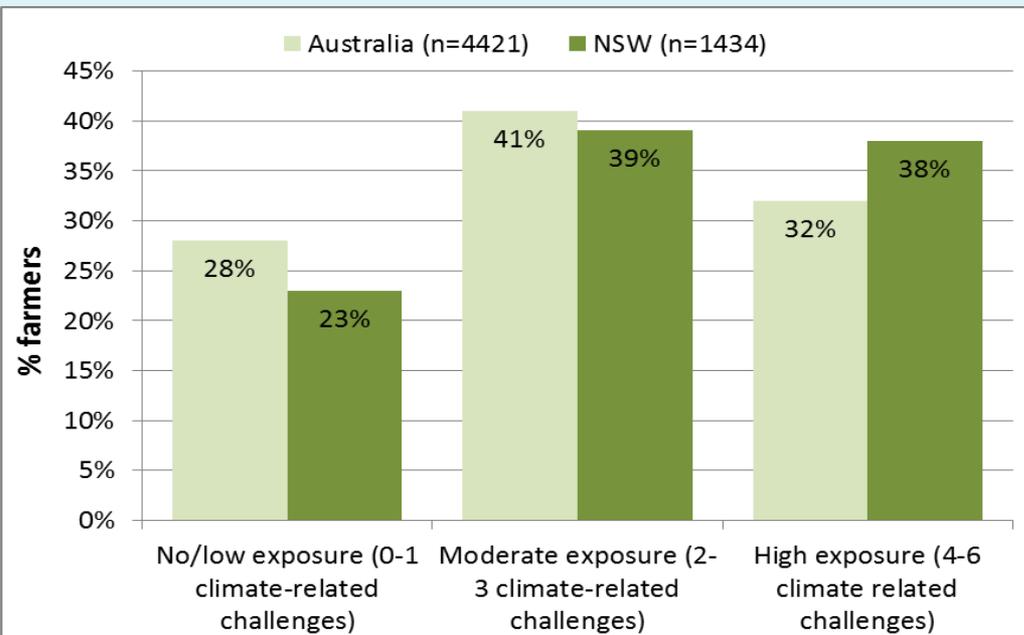
Think about the outcomes you want to achieve. What are they?
Which are most important?

- Your objectives
- Household objectives
- Business objectives
- Land management objectives
- Community objectives

What types of tough times are you potentially at risk from?

The most successful preparation considers multiple types of risk

70% of farmers experience a minimum of 2 (and up to 6) climate-related tough times in a five year period



Farmers across Australia were asked whether in the last 5 years they had experienced 1) drought, 2) cold snap, 3) heatwave, 4) bushfire, 5) severe storm causing damage, 6) floods. Drought most common – and most experienced *at least* two other climatic events in a five year period.

Source: Regional Wellbeing Survey

What are others doing?

Check out ideas – but don't feel pressured to do them just because others are

There's a lot of good resources out there

NEW SOUTH WALES

“Planning for drought is a complex and difficult business. Too often, good ideas are forgotten once rain falls and business as usual resumes.”

– ***Preparing for drought – what the farmers say*** (available at

<https://www.tocal.nsw.edu.au/publications/farm-management/preparing-for-drought>)

VICTORIA

“It is important to take the time now to ensure good strategies are in place for your farm and business before the impacts of drought hit.” -

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/managing-for-and-during-drought/preparing-your-farm-for-drought>

QUEENSLAND

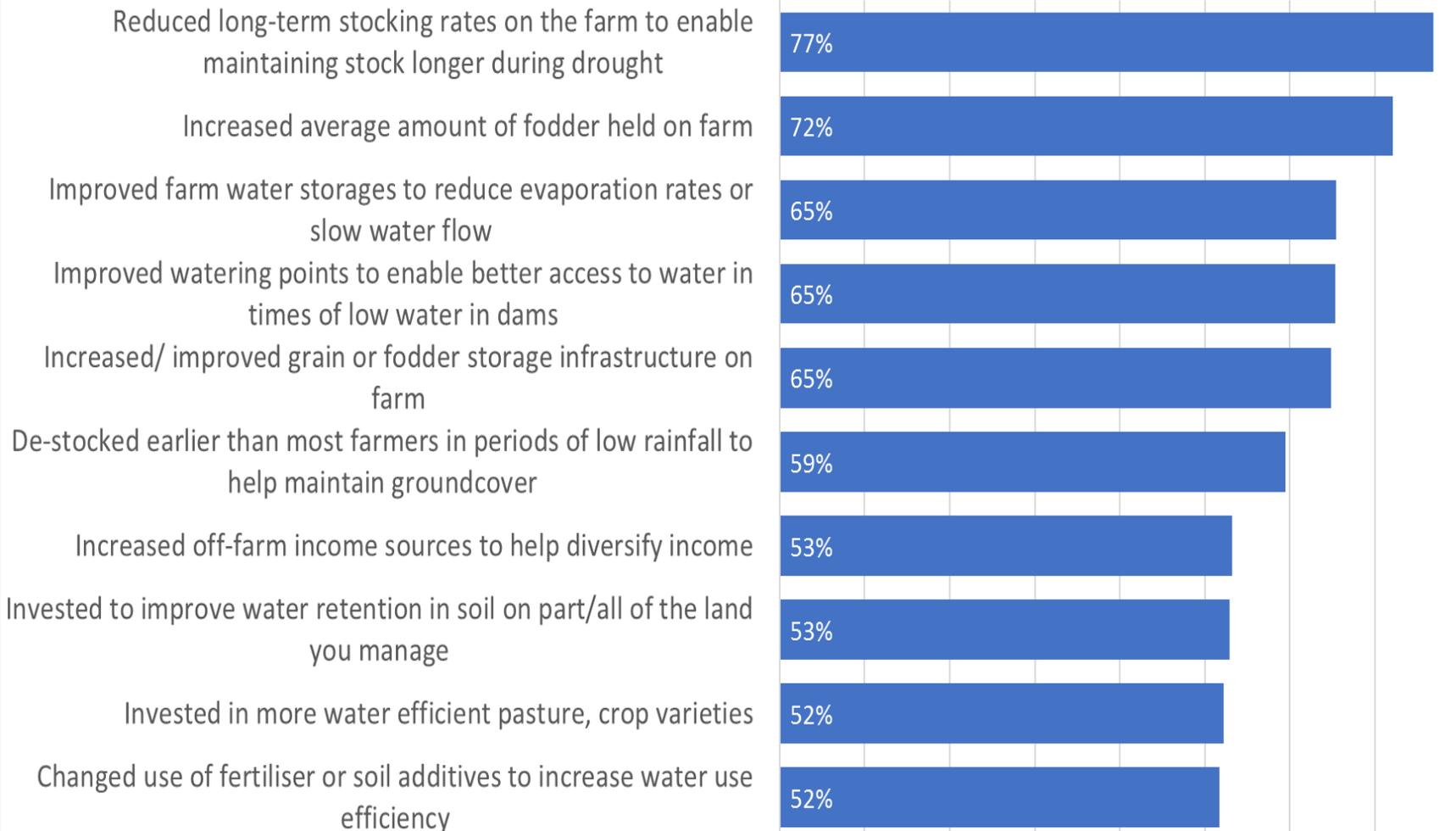
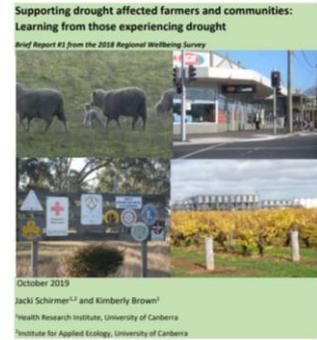
Series of resources for preparing for different types of tough times (including drought) at

<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/protecting-business/disaster-resilience/preparing-disasters/drought-checklist>

What drought resilience actions are farmers investing in?

(2018 Regional Wellbeing Survey –

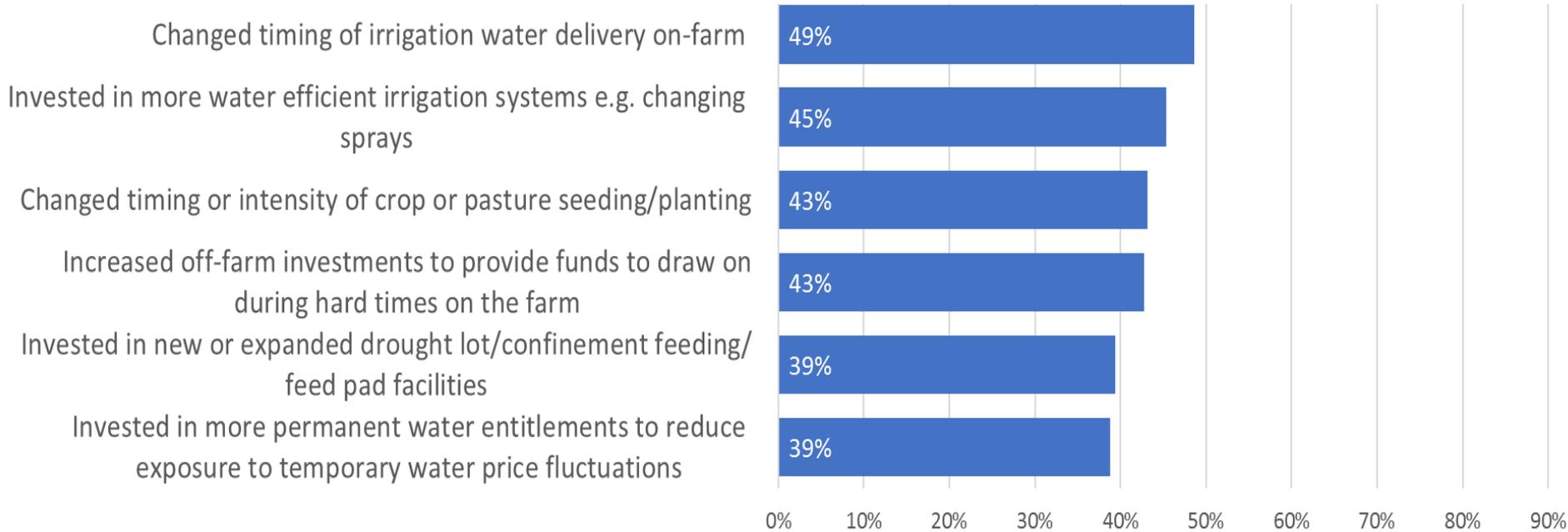
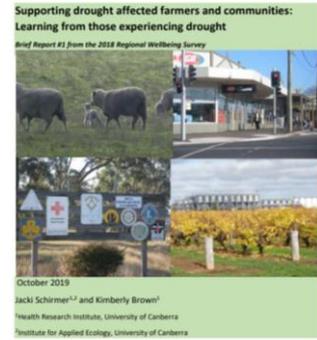
<https://www.canberra.edu.au/research/institutes/health-research-institute/files/regional-wellbeing-survey/reports/2018-reports/Supporting-drought-affected-farmers-and-communities.pdf>)



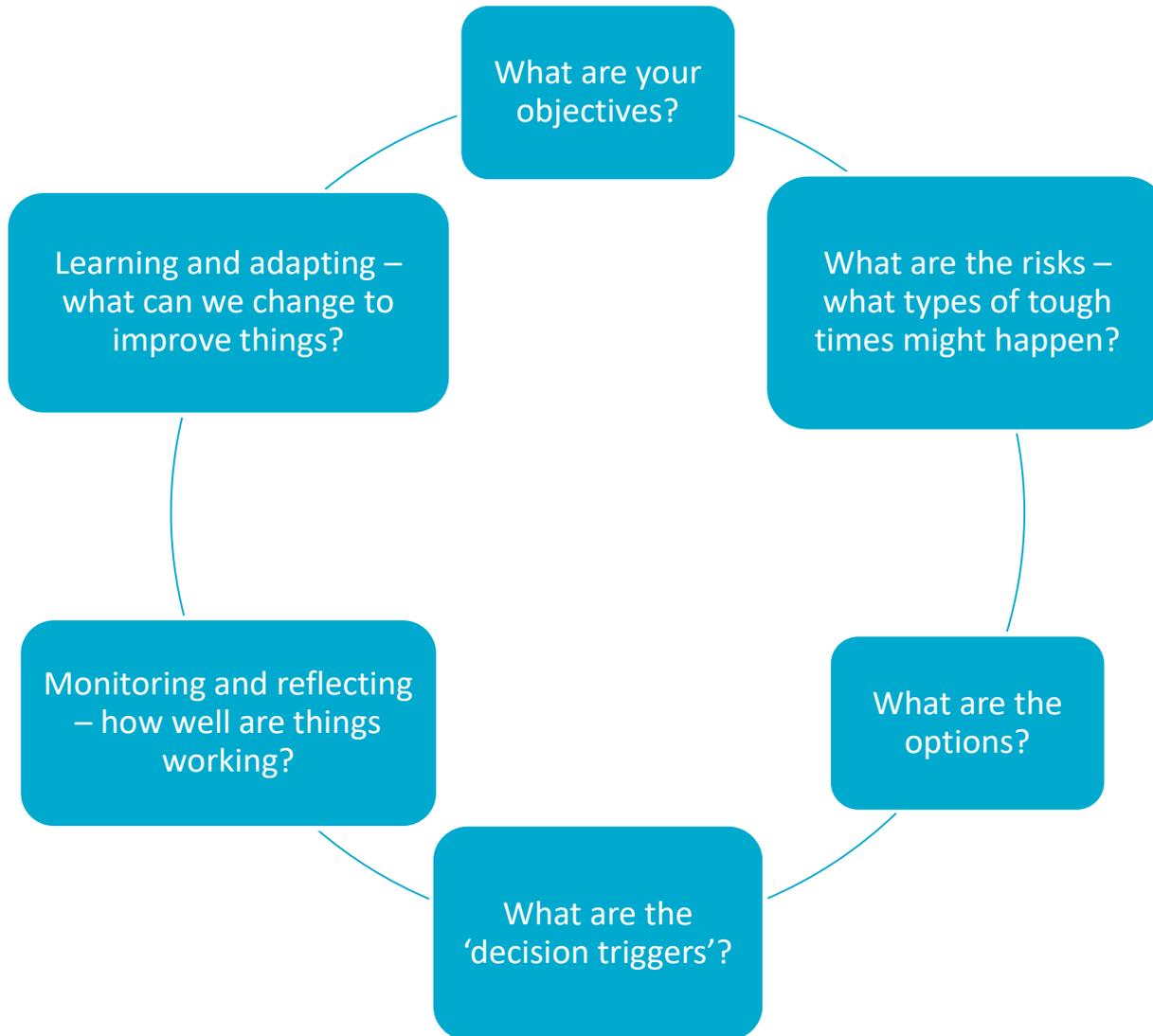
What drought resilience actions are farmers investing in?

(2018 Regional Wellbeing Survey –

<https://www.canberra.edu.au/research/institutes/health-research-institute/files/regional-wellbeing-survey/reports/2018-reports/Supporting-drought-affected-farmers-and-communities.pdf>)



It's not about a document – preparation should be an ongoing process

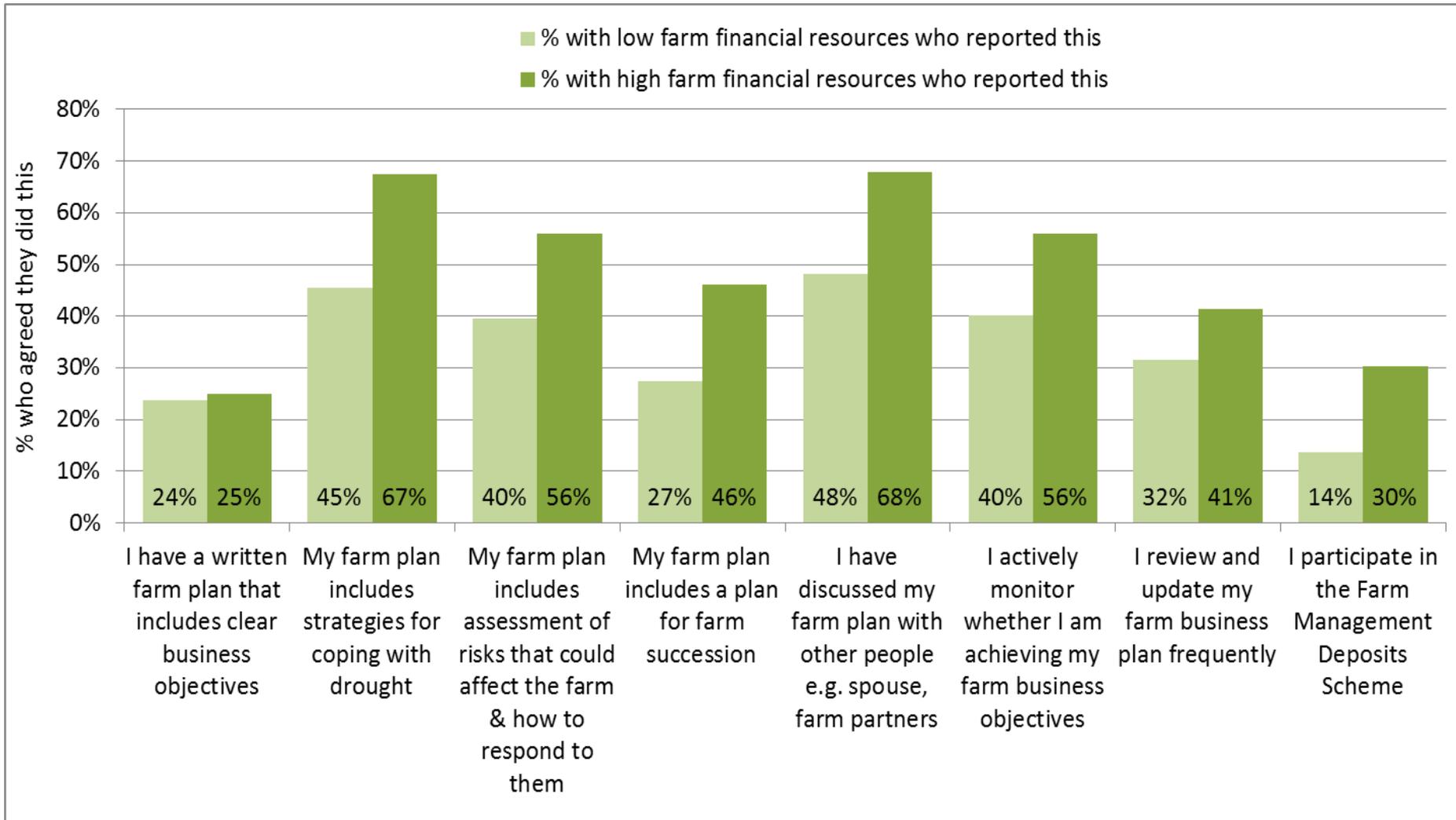


Support people to invest in ongoing preparation, rather than a one-off process

A documented plan needs to be actively used, discussed, revised, updated on an ongoing basis

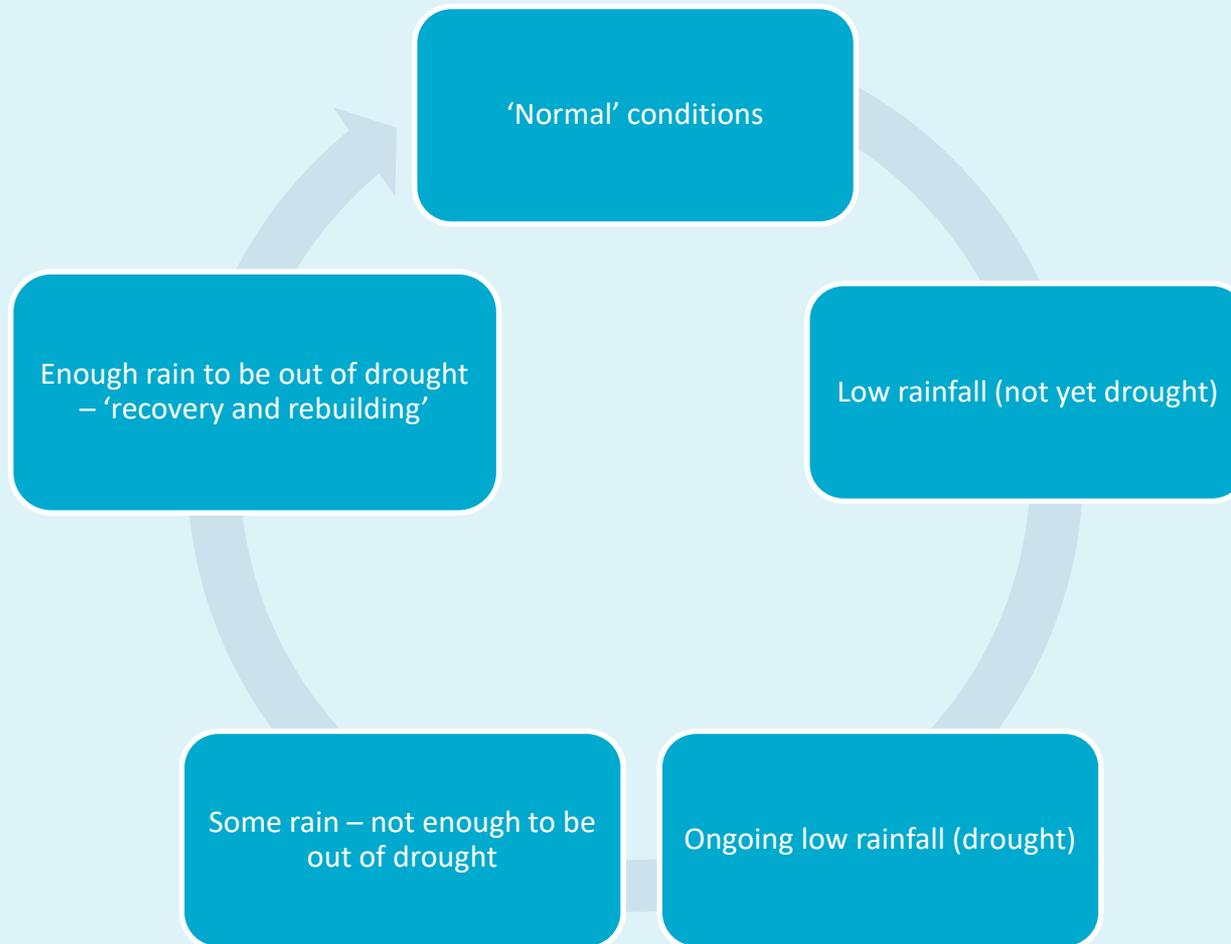
What helped farmers maintain farm financial health through climatic challenges? (RWS)

Forward planning for risks, monitoring outcomes and updating plans, and discussing farm planning with others all matter. Having a document doesn't



WHEN IS THE 'BEST TIME' IN THE DROUGHT CYCLE TO PREPARE?

Try to invest in a bit of preparation activity regularly



In a changing climate, even the best farmers and community will have difficult times

Key barriers to good preparation are often fear of criticism, ostracism, failure

We need healthy resilience cultures that supports wellbeing:

- There is no such thing as the perfectly resilient farmer, business owner, community, household – it's normal to have periods where you can't cope
- Failure is critical to successful adaptation
- Doing things differently to others is acceptable
- For farmers - It's OK to leave farming if that is the best thing for you and your land
- The best preparation is different for every person – we need to encourage a thousand options for different people, and to be open to different ideas

Preparing for Tough Times

MEL TAYLOR

12 August 2020



Drought

A NATURAL HAZARD LIKE NO OTHER

- Challenges
 - Slow disaster
 - On/off - rollercoaster
 - Repeated / re-occurring
 - Under-researched / under-resourced
- Additional factors
 - Hidden
 - Intergenerational
 - Community
 - Climate change
 - Compounding / cascading / concurrent / complex



*(The Australian:
AAP)*

Why preparedness matters

PSYCHOLOGICAL PREPAREDNESS

What is 'preparedness' for drought?

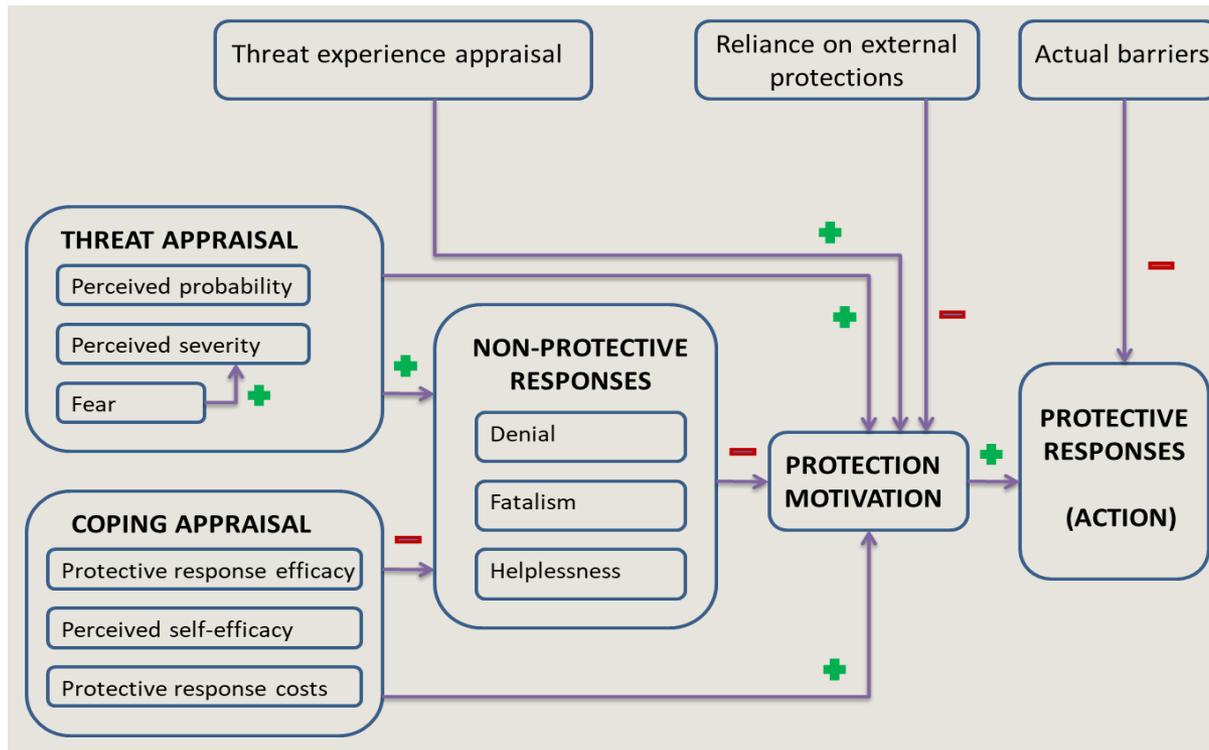
- Practical (**PPRR**)
 - Mitigation/Adaptation
 - Preparedness - infrastructure, business, diversification
- Psychological (Emotional)
 - 'a state of awareness, anticipation, and readiness'
 - mental resilience (buffering factor)
 - knowledge-based confidence
- Preparing for the 'event'
- Preparing for the consequences
- Benefits of psychological preparedness
 - Confidence, sense of control, careful/rational planning, better stress management, lower risk of subsequent negative mental health impacts (Roudini et al., 2017)



(ABC Western Plains: Adriane Reardon)

Protection Motivation Theory

A SOCIO-COGNITIVE MODEL FOR DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS AND ADAPTATION



Protection Motivation
(adapted from Grothmann, 2006)

Cost / benefit

Threat vs coping appraisal

Non-protective
(maladaptive) responses

Additional factors

- Experience
- External protections
- Demographics
- Social norms

Getting through tough times

STRATEGIES AND SUPPORTS PEOPLE USE TO MANAGE ADVERSITY

- NSW Population Health Survey
- 3995 residents of NSW
- 2007

- General adversity
“What are the things that get you through tough times?”

- Written / qualitative data / coded
- Full sample and four sub-groups
 - Gender
 - Household income
 - Psychological distress
 - Language other than English

Taylor et al. *Population Health Metrics* 2010, **8**:28
<http://www.pophealthmetrics.com/content/8/1/28>



POPULATION HEALTH METRICS

RESEARCH

Open Access

Psychosocial stress and strategies for managing adversity: measuring population resilience in New South Wales, Australia

Melanie Taylor¹, Margo Barr², Garry Stevens¹, Donald Bryson-Taylor², Kingsley Agho¹, Jennifer Jacobs^{1*}, Beverley Raphael¹

Abstract

Background: Populations around the world are facing an increasing number of adversities such as the global financial crisis, terrorism, conflict, and climate change. The aim of this paper was to investigate self-reported strategies and sources of support used to get through “tough times” in an Australian context and to identify patterns of response in the general population and differences in potentially vulnerable subgroups.

Methods: Data were collected through a cross-sectional survey of the New South Wales population in Australia. The final sample consisted of 3,995 New South Wales residents aged 16 years and above who responded to the question: “What are the things that get you through tough times?”

Getting through tough times

STRATEGIES AND SUPPORTS PEOPLE USE TO MANAGE ADVERSITY

Table 1 Coding categories for responses to the question: “What are the things that get you through tough times?”

CATEGORY	EXPANDED DESCRIPTION	%	95% CI
Family and self	me, my spouse/partner, parents, children	51.7	(49.5 - 53.9)
Friends and neighbors	my friends, neighbors	21.0	(19.2 - 22.8)
Emotional and philosophical	positive thinking, determination, hopefulness, love, sense of humor, belief that things will get better, others worse off	17.4	(16.0 - 18.9)
Religious and spiritual	my belief/faith, prayer, spirituality	10.6	(9.4 - 11.9)
Leisure interests and hobbies	TV, music, gardening, fishing, reading, personal computer	6.3	(5.2 - 7.5)
Positive lifestyle	good health/staying healthy, sleep, time to self, relaxation, rest, winding-down time, holidays, work/life balance	3.9	(3.1 - 4.8)
Wider social support	community/social groups, nonspecific people	3.5	(2.8 - 4.3)
Practical	pragmatism, breaking things down, previous experience, training, planning, analysis, information, and advice	3.4	(2.6 - 4.4)
Sport and physical activity	specific sports, walking, being active	2.7	(2.1 - 3.6)
Drinking and smoking	alcohol, tobacco	2.1	(1.5 - 2.8)
Pets	my dog, cat, animals	0.8	(0.5 - 1.3)
Financial	money, financial security	0.8	(0.4 - 1.4)
Professional help	medical professionals, G.P., psychologist, counselor	0.6	(0.3 - 0.9)
Medication	medication, drugs, specific drugs	0.2	(0.1 - 0.4)

Gender

Females – friends/neighbours, religious/spiritual

Males – Drinking/smoking, financial

Income

Lower – Emotional/philosophical, religious/spiritual

Higher – Family/self, friend/neighbours, Practical

Psychological distress

High – Leisure/Hobbies, drinking/smoking, professional help

Low – Positive lifestyle, financial

LOTE

No – family/self, friends/neighbours, emotional/philosophical, pets

Getting through tough times

STRATEGIES AND SUPPORTS PEOPLE USE TO MANAGE ADVERSITY

- Snapshot of population-level coping
- Not necessarily 'advice'/best practice
- Limitations
 - free recall
- Key finding - importance of 'others'
 - Family/friends/neighbours
 - Pets/animals
- Helps to identify 'what matters'



<https://www.farmonline.com.au/story/3367216/>

Supporting preparedness

WELL-BEING / COPING

- Prepare/plan
 - Information seeking is not planning
 - Avoidance
- Support self-efficacy
 - Perceived control
 - Incremental approaches
- Seek support
 - Preserve relationships and connection
- Identify 'what matters' (to you)



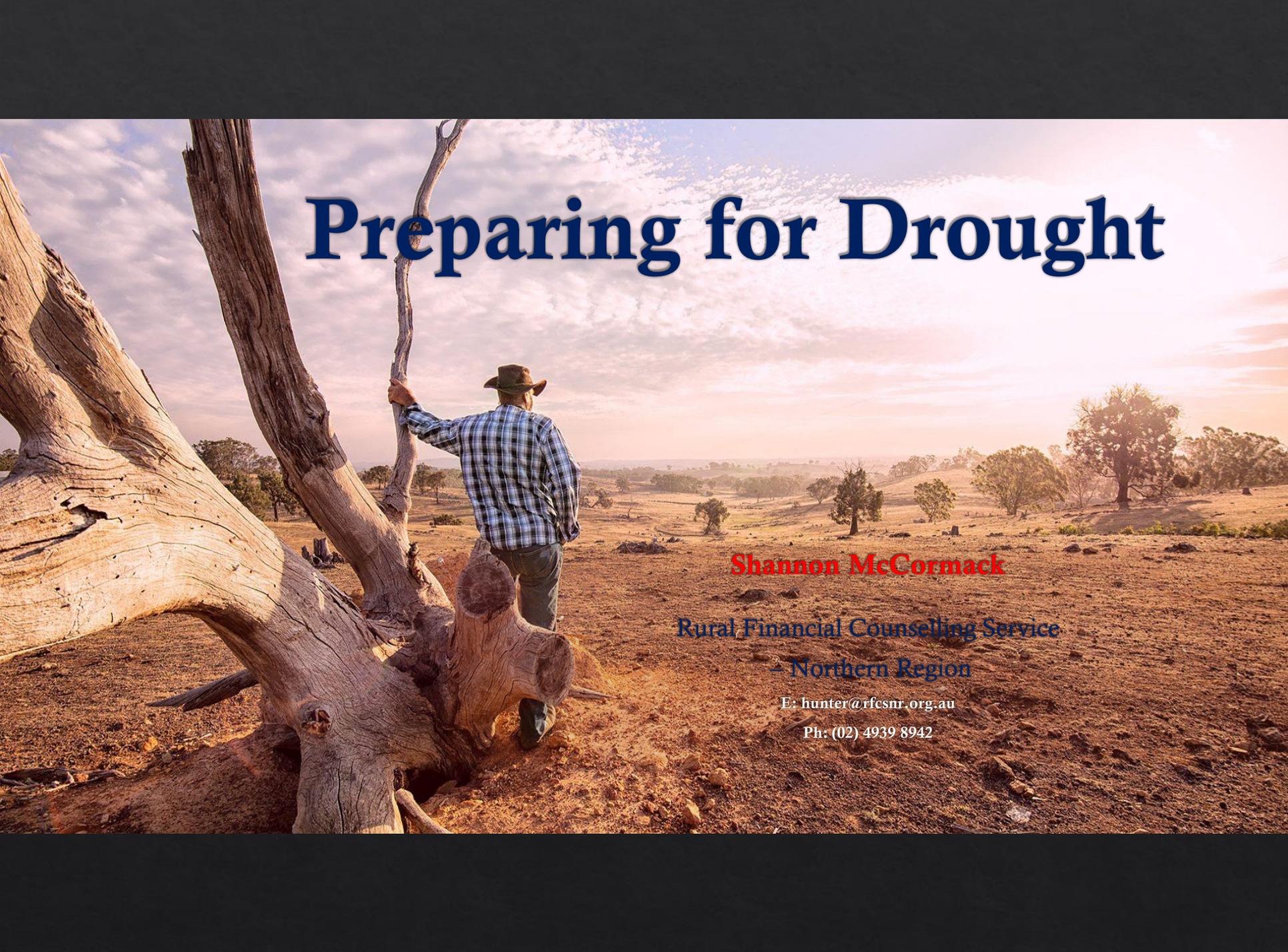
NSW RFS Campaign 2013

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EMSnwqIRnY>

Thank you

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Preparing for Drought

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Preparing for Drought.....

Reflection

Planning

Strategy

Business TEAM

Reflection

Past Dry times

What happened?



Reflection.....

What was managed well

- ◇ Stockpiled Hay

Things that were not managed well

- ◇ Feed or destock

What you would do again



Planning



Planning.....

Planning must meet –

- ❖ Financial
- ❖ Environmental
- ❖ Workforce
- ❖ Personal situations for the business

Planning.....

- Planning for drought assists the business with-
 - Business Sustainability
 - Identifying and Managing the RISK's of drought
 - Being PREPARED - Future

- Clear direction for managing tough times
 - Infrastructure is required to mitigate the risk of drought and
 - Silos, water infrastructure, feeders, etc.
 - How the business can finance changes



Strategy



Strategy.....

- ◆ How to put the plans in place

- ◆ Trigger points

 - ◆ At what stage do you start to destock

 - ◆ How these decisions will be made – feed availability

 - ◆ THEN..... When to buy back in

- ◆ What does the business look like POST the drought

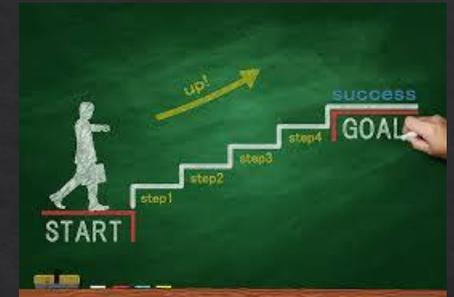
 - ◆ Go forward in your mind and look back at what would be the BEST case outcome for business after the drought – *How would you like the business to look post drought?*



Business TEAM



Business TEAM.....



- ◇ You are not and do not need to do all this alone !!

- ◇ A Business or Agribusiness is just like a sporting team
 - ◇ Fill the knowledge/skill gap with the right professional – DELEGATE.
 - Accountant
 - Agroimist
 - Livestock Marketer
 - Banker
 - Any other professional advisor that adds value to your business where you do not have the time or expertise.

Questions!



ARC Drought Resilience Program

- Support the Supporter
- Psychological First Aid
- Resilient Leaders
- Mentor Program
- Farm First Aid
- Outreach
- Expert advice
- Wellbeing resources



Thankyou!

- Recordings: <https://bit.ly/2MqY7ez>
- Questions: drought@redcross.org.au
- What Next?

