

Field days offer helping hand with leasehold issues and cyclone recovery

Landholders looking for information on leasehold land issues and cyclone recovery assistance can attend free multi topic field days being held in Chillagoe and Einasleigh on 12 and 13 July.

The AgForce Projects field days will update landholders on leasehold land issues including lease renewal, property mapping, leasehold rents and monitoring.

AgForce North regional manager John Hardaker said leasehold land issues impact many landholders in the region and it is important that landholders understand the impacts on their farming operations.

“A lot of landholders around this area are impacted by the Government’s Leasehold Land Strategy and need to know their rights in regards to this policy,” he said.

“Landholders who are affected by the Delbessie agreement, and in particular those with leases expiring in the near future, need to be aware of the situation and where they stand with the renewal process,” he said.

AgForce policy officer Lauren Hewitt will provide an overview of how leaseholders can calculate leasehold rents and the long term impacts of this on their business.

“With most rents increasing at 20 per cent per annum until 2017 and land values fluctuating wildly, it is crucial that all leaseholders/lessees find out about the current methodology for calculating leasehold rents,” Ms Hewitt said.

“The regulation that sets lease rentals is being reviewed next year, so leaseholders need to consider how these rental increases will affect their business, industry and communities and what should be reflected in any future leasehold rent methodology.”

Department of Environment and Resource Management senior natural resource officer Rob Hassett will outline details of the lease renewal process under the Delbessie Agreement (State Rural Leasehold Land Strategy) including land management agreements.

Mr Hassett will also explain land condition and self-assessment requirements of the agreement and will outline land management tools to assist landholders with productivity and sustainability.

The field days will also provide cyclone recovery assistance to landholders affected by Cyclone Yasi. Mr Hardaker, who also works as an industry recovery officer, said landholders need to take advantage of grants and recovery assistance available to get the industry back up and running.

“Landholders are encouraged to come along to these field days to get a better understanding of what grants they are eligible for and we will be working through some of the paperwork to make sure they get access to the right assistance,” Mr Hardaker said.

“While some properties have returned to business as usual, for many properties further inland, operation clean up is still underway with lots of jobs and contracts being issued for fence line work to help get mustering back up and running. But there is more to be done and this is about getting the industry back on track as quickly as possible, particularly after the live export ban has just compacted the impact from Cyclone Yasi.”

Other speakers include AgForce Projects technical manager Graeme Bell who will discuss the Australian Government's proposed Carbon Farming Initiative.

Field days are delivered free to all landholders through AgForward, an initiative of AgForce within its project division, funded by the Queensland Government and the Australian Government's Caring for our Country Carbon on Farm initiative.

To find out more or to register for these events please contact Paddy Roe on (07) 3238 6048, email roep@agforward.org.au or visit www.agforceprojects.org.au.