

AgForce helps farmers prepare for future natural disasters

Farmers will have the chance to access vital tools and information about how best to prepare for natural disasters at AgForce Projects field days in December.

The 'Beyond the floods' field days are being held in Beaudesert and Boonah on 5 December and Lowood on 6 December and are a follow up to AgForce's highly successful 'On the Road to rebuilding' tour which helped flood affected farmers get back on their feet after the January floods.

As landholders across the region continue to rebuild damaged property infrastructure, AgForce disaster recovery officer Noel Brinsmead said the field days will give farmers access to vital services and tools to continue the recovery effort and advise all landholders about how they can best prepare for any future natural disasters.

"The day will include presentations from insurance and financial providers, information about recovery grants, fire management and fuel build ups, an in-depth climate forecast and disaster recovery experts to help landholders recover and prepare if fire or flood was to affect their property in the future," Mr Brinsmead said.

AgForce Projects staff will also be on hand to provide vegetation management assistance to landholders looking to rebuild or relocate on-farm infrastructure, and mapping and GPS information to help with property planning and future disaster preparedness. An overview of key AgForce policy issues will also be presented.

"The focus for many in the region has been to rebuild in order to get their business back on track but it is also important for landholders to consider how they can be better prepared for any future disasters," he said.

"It is important producers take action now to be prepared for the upcoming summer season so we'd encourage landholders to consider having their property mapped now as a tool to assist in current and future recovery efforts.

"A property map can be a very useful tool in the unfortunate event of a flood or fire as it helps you demonstrate to your bank or insurance provider how the disaster has affected your property, allowing you to work out the specific infrastructure that has been affected and to prepare a pre and post-disaster property condition report, map and plan."

Other key speakers include:

- AgForce policy director, Drew Wagner - Flood update and key AgForce policy issues
- AgForce Projects staff - vegetation management, coal seam gas, mapping and GPS tools
- Dave McRae, Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) - Seasonal climate update
- Craig Welden, SEQ Fire and Biodiversity Consortium - Fire and biodiversity
- Queensland Fire and Rescue Service - Fire management and fuel build ups
- Tim Saal, Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health Queensland (CRRMHQ) - Managing stress and recovering from disasters
- Insurance and financial support from Wesfarmers Insurance, Suncorp and Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority (funding and grants)

These information sessions are provided free through funding from the Queensland Government. All are welcome to attend at any time during the session to access information or to simply catch up over a BBQ. To attend please register 10 days prior to the event at www.agforceprojects.org.au or (07) 3238 6048. Session times: 5 December - Beaudesert 9am-1pm, Boonah 4-7pm and 6 December - Lowood 10am-1pm.

For comment call Noel Brinsmead on (07) 3238 6041 or 0400 665 436.

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Pic caption: AgForce disaster recovery officer Noel Brinsmead (left with producers Richard and Gaye Luck at a flood recovery field day) will provide producers with information about how to prepare for natural disasters at AgForce Projects field days in Beaudesert, Boonah and Lowood in December.