



An overview of Farm Household Allowance

What you need to know about your payment and support

Your Farm Household Case Officer (FHCO) will contact you when you start getting Farm Household Allowance (FHA). They guide and support you while on this payment.

Starting on FHA	<p>You'll need to complete a Farm Financial Assessment (FFA). This is due 1 month from the date we request it. If you don't complete it, your FHA payment may stop. Talk to your FHCO as soon as possible if you need more time.</p>	<p>After completing your FFA you need to meet with your FHCO. They'll help you to work out your Financial Improvement Agreement. This agreement sets out your goals and activities while you're getting FHA. You have 28 days to enter into an agreement or your payment may stop. Talk to your FHCO as soon as possible if you need more time.</p>	<p>Your FHCO can refer you to a Rural Financial Counsellor. These counsellors can help you work out your financial and business options. They can prepare you for meetings with your lenders and go along for support. You can work with a Rural Financial Counsellor at any stage before, during or after getting FHA.</p>
Making the most of FHA	<p>The activities in your Financial Improvement Agreement will help you to improve your financial situation. You might get activity supplements worth up to \$10,000 over your lifetime. Check with your FHCO before you start an activity.</p> <p>You need to tell us about all your farm and non-farm income. People with employment income need to report every 2 weeks. Everybody else needs to report every 6 weeks.</p>	<p>We'll tell you how often you need to report when we approve your claim. The easiest ways to report your income are online, using the Express Plus Centrelink app or by calling 133 276.</p> <p>Your FHCO will contact you every 3 months to check how you're going with your activities.</p> <p>Talk to your FHCO if your circumstances change or if you want to change your agreed activities.</p> <p>Let us know as soon as possible if your financial situation improves. This is so you won't get overpaid and have to pay us back.</p>	
Preparing to come off FHA	<p>When you're close to the end of 4 years on FHA your FHCO will help you to leave the program. If you stop getting FHA before 4 years are up, you can always claim again later if you need to.</p>	<p>FHA is available for 4 years in specified 10-year periods. If you've already got 4 years of FHA you'll be able to claim again from 1 July 2024.</p>	

Farm Household Allowance

This is a fortnightly payment for farmers and their partners who are in financial hardship.

Payment is at the maximum rate of JobSeeker Payment or Youth Allowance.

You can get FHA for up to 4 years in specific 10-year periods.

We count 4 years as a total of 1,460 days.

You don't have to use these 4 years all at once. You can save it for when you need it.

The amount of FHA you get depends on your income and assets. You can have up to \$5.5 million in farm and personal assets. Let us know if your income or assets go up or down so we pay you the right amount.

Farm Household Case Officer

We'll assign you an FHCO when you get FHA. They'll guide and support you through your time on this payment. This includes making sure you're doing what you need to do to keep getting FHA. They'll check in with you every 3 months. If you have questions about FHA once you start getting the payment, call your FHCO.

Farm Financial Assessment

This is an assessment of your farm's financial position. You and a financial assessor need to complete it online. It helps you to see how you can improve your farm business. You get up to \$1,500 inclusive of GST to pay for the assessment. You do the first part of the assessment and the financial assessor does the rest.

Financial assessor

This type of financial assessor is someone who both:

- normally provides this kind of advice or assessment
- has relevant financial, agronomic or business qualifications or expertise to complete the FFA.

The financial assessor can't have a conflict of interest. This means they can't either:

- have an interest in the farm, including a business or trust that owns the farm
- be an immediate family member of yours or anyone else who has an interest in the farm.

Ask the person if they qualify to be a financial assessor. If you're still not sure check with your FHCO.

Financial Improvement Agreement

This agreement sets out your goals and activities over the next 4 years. It helps you to improve your financial position. For some people their goal may be to improve productivity. For others their goal may be to find work away from the farm.

The agreement can include study or training to help you improve your financial position on or off the farm.

Your FHCO will develop this agreement with you. You can change your agreement if your circumstances change. If you can't complete an activity as agreed talk to your FHCO as soon as possible or your FHA payment may stop.

Activity supplements

You can get activity supplements to help pay for your Financial Improvement Agreement activities. They're worth up to \$10,000 over your lifetime. This amount is available only once. It doesn't reset each time you get FHA.

You can use the supplement for activities such as:

- professional advice
- study, training, or counselling
- travel and accommodation related to an activity.

Speak to your FHCO before you do the activity. They'll tell you if you can pay for it with an activity supplement.

Rural Financial Counselling Service

This service gives financial counselling to farmers in hardship, at no cost to you. You can meet a Rural Financial Counsellor on your farm or at another convenient location. They'll look at your current financial position to give you options for the future. They can also help with debt mediation and succession planning.

Find a counsellor at recovery.gov.au/programs/rural-financial-counselling/RFCS

For more information

- Go to servicesaustralia.gov.au/farmhouseholdallowance
- Call your Farm Household Case Officer
- Call the Farmer Assistance Hotline on **132 316, Monday to Friday, 8 am to 8 pm**
- Speak to your financial adviser or Rural Financial Counsellor.