



Farm Makeover Incentive Program Guidelines

Hunter Local Land Services is supporting land managers to take the first step towards building drought resilience on their farms. The Agricultural Extension team is delivering a **Farm Makeover Incentive Program** as part of The Paddock Between the Ears Project. The aim is to show landholders that one small decision to makeover a natural resource can improve their drought planning and farm production outcomes. Through sharing these farm makeover journeys, together we can bring a new can-do mindset to drought preparation and management in the Hunter region.



What's it all about?

Landholders can apply for **Farm Makeover grants** to help fund a small project or 'doable chunk' to improve a **natural resource asset** on their farm. Natural assets are native vegetation, paddock trees, grasses and bushland, dams, streams and wetlands, rocky outcrops and fallen timber. Healthy and functioning natural resource systems make a big difference to farm environments. The co-benefits provided are called **ecosystem services** and include shade, shelter, erosion control, water filtration and aeration just for starters, keeping water supplies cooler and cleaner, sheltering pastures and stock, and providing habitat for insects and wildlife to pollinate crops and keep pests at bay.



Why get involved?

Drought resilience is a process: it's about challenging the way we think when making decisions and planning. Resilience involves looking at the bigger environmental picture, setting goals and moving forward, sharing ideas and adapting. This is an opportunity to innovate and look to ecosystem services to improve drought planning and makeover an existing farm asset.

Farm Makeover Project ideas to improve drought planning & farm production:

- ✓ Improve stock water quality by planting native grasses, reeds and trees on a dam
- ✓ Ensuring your pump-hole is cleaner and lasts longer by restricting stock access
- ✓ Start a succession plan by fencing off paddock shade trees for regeneration
- ✓ Create and plant shelter belt habitats and drought fodder reserves
- ✓ Rebuild a wetland to filter runoff and reduce algae in water sources
- ✓ Design your own project that builds drought resilience in the farm landscape

How to learn more?

Discover the value of ecosystem services and inspire your Farm Makeover project via **The Paddock Between the Ears Program** page on the Hunter LLS website! Download a Challenge & Change fact sheet with video and website links. Discover ANU's Sustainable Farms website for ideas, tools and resources. Visit Hunter LLS on Facebook & YouTube and follow the Farm Makeovers journeys of local farmers & set-up of EcoAction demonstration sites around the Hunter. Get ideas for your new Farm Makeover!



Where to apply?

Review the program guidelines and contact Hunter LLS Ag Extension team to start your application.



Farm Makeover Incentive Program Information

Applications Open	1 December 2021
Program Closes	30 June 2023
Final date for project Completion	30 May each financial year, or as stated in contract agreement.
Application rounds	Applications will be assessed quarterly in January, April, July & October.
Funding Availability	<p>Maximum LLS incentive contribution is \$4000 per project application with additional funds and/or labour input to be supplied by the applicant.</p> <p>There will be approximately \$40,000 per financial year for this program.</p> <p>Unsuccessful applications may be carried over to the following round by agreement with proponent.</p>
Eligibility criteria	<p>All project sites must be on rateable landholdings with a Property Identification Code (PIC) in the Hunter Local Land Services region.</p> <p>All successful applicants must be prepared by prior agreement for Hunter LLS staff and contractors to record their project journey via site photos, interviews, video or case study. The aim of the program is to promote sustainable farming through shared learning experience. Interested landholders can self-record their project.</p> <p>All successful applicants must do a short interview with research staff to assess the success of the program in achieving outcomes.</p> <p>Project site physical monitoring will be required by prior agreement for a period of two years. Eg. water quality, groundcover, bird or wildlife activity surveys to be completed by LLS staff, contractors or landholders.</p> <p>All applications should base budgets on quotes for actual costs (ex-GST) and estimates of in-kind contributions. Invoices and receipts should be retained for project activities, as projects may be audited on completion.</p> <p>All applicants must identify and manage all Work Health and Safety (WHS) risks for their projects ensuring a plan is in place for compliance with all WHS laws by all people involved in project works and maintenance. A WHS template is available. The funding recipient will hold appropriate insurance including public liability to cover all risks associated with the project.</p>
Ineligible projects	<p>Project works must not be funded through any other LLS program.</p> <p>Landholders are ineligible if they have received funding in two or more LLS funding rounds as this program is designed to engage new applicants in sustainable land management. Only one Farm Makeover Program application will be considered per landholder.</p> <p>Project objectives include building drought resilience in farm landscapes. While there is no minimum property size, land holdings, water storage dams or off-stream water projects must have an agricultural production or livestock purpose. Irrigation and domestic water supply projects will not be funded.</p>

Assessment criteria

A panel will assess and score all applications, ranking projects. Successful projects will be selected using the following criteria with each component scored on how well the project meets program objectives:

- ✓ Use of ecosystem services to improve condition of a natural asset
- ✓ Potential to improve drought planning and resilience
- ✓ Scope of works in project description and budget detail
- ✓ Scale of works as mini-project and landholder contribution
- ✓ Landholder interest and availability to record and share project journey

Successful projects

Applicants will be advised if their project has been successful during the assessment month. A project contract will be presented and funds paid to successful incentive recipients on receipt of the signed contract and banking details. A sum of \$250 will be withheld and paid on completion of the project and final project report. The template for the report will be supplied.

Further information

Contact Hunter LLS Ag Extension team staff for assistance with your application and further information:

Upper Hunter

Maria Cameron0409 636765 or maria.cameron@lls.nsw.gov.au

Nikki Gilder0476 796729 or nicola.gilder@lls.nsw.gov.au

Lower Hunter

Col Freeman0428 043427 or col.freeman@lls.nsw.gov.au

Manning

Albert Mullen0428 670524 or albert.mullen@lls.nsw.gov.au

Lodge Applications

Application forms are available from Hunter Local Land Services staff or online.

