

Pacific seeds donation a blessing for drought-stricken farmers

THE donation of hundreds of bags of forage sorghum by Pacific Seed, and its distribution by a group of Rotary clubs, has helped drought-stricken farmers across New South Wales get through what was an especially tough season.

Boggabri Rotary president Malcolm Donaldson said the donation was enough to plant over 400 hectares in both local area and similar farms further south and was a welcome relief for farmers.

"The end result was that some crops fortunately grew to their full potential, which was quite spectacular, whilst others, including our own crops, got to about 1.25 metres high before drying off – this provided some valuable feed for longer than we expected," Malcolm said.

The large donation was distributed over a wide area of the north of NSW in the Boggabri, Gunnedah, Narrabri, and Coonabarabran districts late last year and has allowed farmers to generate carry-over feed and hay, providing resource support amidst Australia's dry summer.

Went to those who missed drought assistance

Pacific Seeds Managing Director Barry Croker said it was important that the company's donation was allocated to those who had missed out on receiving drought assistance.

"As an industry leader it felt like a duty of care to help our farmers during a time when the situation was beyond their control," Barry said.

"We were more than happy to provide hybrid forage seed as a practical donation, and it was fantastic to see that these donations have resulted in a positive outcome for many of the farmers.

"Of course, it is only one single step in the right direction, so we will continue to make sure that we are doing everything we can to support Australian agriculture during these tough times," Barry said.



There's no doubting the drought is not over yet.

In early June some farmers in the area have received up to 50-millimetres of rain which boosted soil moisture and encouraged the planting of winter crops.

"It's been well over a month since this last substantial rain event and so plenty of planting has been happening, but there is no doubt that this drought is not over yet, and it continues to have a profound impact on the region," said Malcolm

"The effects of the extended drought meant that most of these plantings have been done on sub optimal soil moisture and so will be heavily reliant on follow up rain.

"For a lot of farmers, it's worn them out physically, financially and emotionally, but it's practical donations like this that really make a difference and let us know that true support is available in times of need." ■



The donated bags of forage sorghum have been distributed by Rotary clubs.