



**MINISTRY OF SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT**
TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO ORA

5 September 2024

Tēnā koe

Official Information Act Request

Thank you for your email of 14 August 2024, requesting information on the number of Rural Assistance Payments applied for and how many have been granted.

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act). I will first respond to your request, before providing you with some general information about Rural Assistance Payments.

Rural Assistance Payments have been activated for affected areas from 17 June 2024 until the close of 10 November 2024. For the period June to July 2024, no Rural Assistance Payments have been granted or declined.

General information about Rural Assistance Payments

Rural Sector Assistance was first introduced on 2 July 1986, under the Special Needs Grants Programme.

Rural Assistance Payments are Special Needs Grants available to farmers and growers (who get their main income directly - or indirectly - from Primary Industries) and do not have sufficient income to meet essential living costs.

This programme is only available when the Minister specifically announces assistance for an area and/or type of industry, usually after that area or industry has been affected by a natural disaster, such as flood, drought, or disease.

Rural Assistance Payments are available to meet essential living expenses for applicants affected by an adverse event or biosecurity incursion and live in an affected area declared by the Minister. Adverse events or biosecurity incursions include natural disasters, climatic events such as droughts or floods, and foreign pest incursions described as medium or large scale.

These payments are not available to those who lost wages due to being employed by the farmer (e.g., farm manager or fencer)

Payments are made every four weeks in a lump sum direct to the client.

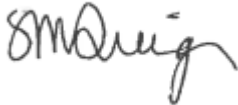
Here is link to the Ministry's website, with information about the 38 districts in which the payments are available, including information on how to apply: <https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/about-work-and-income/news/2024/rural-assistance-payments.html>

I will be publishing this decision letter, with your personal details removed, on the Ministry's website in due course.

If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with my decision on your request, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui



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Magnus O'Neill

General Manager
Ministerial and Executive Services