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MEDIA RELEASE

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DROUGHT RETAINS TIGHT GRIP DESPITE RAIN

The State continues to experience prolonged and widespread drought conditions despite some welcome rainfall in March, particularly in the east, eastern Riverina, Central and Southern Tablelands and Central West, Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Western NSW Adam Marshall said today.

Mr Marshall has released the NSW Department of Primary Industries State Seasonal Update for March, which shows that while some isolated areas had moved into drought recovery, much of the Western region missed out altogether.

“The NSW Combined Drought Indicator shows that although there has been some shifts in the nature of the current drought, 99.5 per cent of NSW is still experiencing drought conditions,” Mr Marshall said.

“It was wonderful to see farmers in some areas receive their first significant falls in a long time, but unfortunately there is no break from drought conditions.

“Sadly drought is continuing to retain its tight grip on the State and more follow up rain is needed to ensure that any short-term improvement is sustained.”

According to the Update, conditions are unchanged in the far west, north-west and parts of central NSW, which remain in the Intense Drought and Drought categories.

“I am acutely aware of how difficult these conditions are for our farmers, which is why I am quickly assessing current drought relief measures to make sure farmers are receiving the best possible support and that this support is ongoing,” Mr Marshall said.

“The NSW Government has committed almost \$1.5 billion to the drought support package, boosted the Farm Innovation Fund from \$650 million to \$1 billion and increased the value of low interest loans available through the fund up to \$1 million.

“As the Minister for Agriculture, I will continue to support our farmers to keep growing the world-class food and fibre we all rely on.”

The latest State Seasonal Update and information on a range of services and support available to primary producers is available on www.droughthub.nsw.gov.au

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