



President: Mr Joe Moro

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Select Committee on Australia's Disaster Resilience
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Email: disasterresilience.sen@aph.gov.au

FNQ Growers seeks to make the following submission to the Select Committee on Australia's Disaster Resilience, as follows.

While the committee is considering the role that the Australian Defence Force, volunteer groups, not-for-profit organisations and state-based services and the support required to improve Australia's resilience and response to natural disasters, FNQ Growers wishes to draw your attention to the impact of natural disasters on horticultural growers, and areas that can be improved to enable timely recovery.

For background, FNQ Growers represents growers of more than 100 horticultural commodities, across the region north to Lakeland on Cape York Peninsula, west to Georgetown in the Gulf Savannah region and south Tully on the Cassowary Coast. As you can appreciate, this region is diverse in environment, and natural disasters.

One of the biggest issues experienced by our growers is recognition of natural disasters, particularly when it impacts a small numbers of growers, yet the impact is great with significant consequences to production.

For example, Lakeland is a remote community, 190km north of the main horticultural hub at Mareeba. It is steadily developing to become another fruit bowl for northern Australia, yet this growing community does not get recognised when impacted by disasters (high winds caused significant damage to a banana farmer late last year).

This is also applicable to other isolated incidents; severe frost in Dimbulah several years ago caused significant damage to a number of tree crops.

FNQ Growers would like to see funding available for crop replacement as a result of damage sustained in natural disasters, be it tropical cyclones, flooding or fire.



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Further, FNQ Growers submits that on farm storages, efficiency improvements to irrigation systems on and off farm and the building of more water storages should form part of resilience to natural disasters.

Regards

President
FNQ Growers