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**ADF urges Government to simplify the FHA payments**

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**For Immediate Release**

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Australian Dairy Farmers (ADF) is pleased the Government has announced its intention to make it easier and quicker for farmers to access Farm Household Allowance payments (FHA).

Both ADF and the State Dairy Farming Organisations have been calling for a simplified system and streamlined access and asset valuation through discussions with both the government and relevant departments responsible for the delivery of these programs.

Interim ADF CEO, John McQueen said farmers were frustrated with long delays and need to have faster access to income support payments.

“We have been working closely with the Dairy Industry Liaison Officer to follow up on individual claims.

“Some farmers have reported waiting up to six months for their applications to be assessed and approved”, said Mr McQueen.

It is reported that this will be introduced into parliament today. The legislation means that the two mandatory waiting periods for the FHA would be scrapped and the 'on farm' assets test would be expanded.

The Government’s reported intention is to address the issues of water assets and shares in cooperative, necessary for the operation of the farm enterprise.

“These important changes would mean a more accurate definition of farm assets such as water rights, which would make more people eligible for the payment,” Mr McQueen said.

ADF urges that the legislation is passed by both houses in the current sitting to ensure struggling dairy farmers in need can access these programs as soon as possible.

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*Australian Dairy Farmers Limited (ADF) is a not-for-profit organisation representing the interests of Australian dairy farmers. We are a strong collective voice to Government and the community on national issues affecting dairy farmers and their profitability.*

*The ADF has a long history of successfully lobbying for the rights of dairy farmers on many fronts – including trade, value chain, water, carbon and animal health and welfare issues.*