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Farm fodder response a credit to SA ag industry

By John Mundy, Forreston

Livestock SA member and fire response fodder coordinator

THE way farmers across the State have banded together in the past week to help those affected by the Adelaide Hills' fires has been nothing short of amazing.

In coordinating the fodder donation response, we have distributed 15 semi-trailer loads containing 4000 large round or square bales and 1000 small squares bales, plus donated chaff and horse feed through fodder stores.



This was all sent out from a temporary depot set-up at Kersbrook oval with the help of numerous volunteers to coordinate donations and prioritise deliveries. People volunteered their time to deliver the hay by trailer and some transporters contributed their time and heavy vehicles while other farmers donated tractors to help load.

For the area of the fire, it was amazing more livestock were not killed or injured. Our biggest challenges have been getting hay into some inaccessible areas – either because roads were too narrow for semi-trailers or they were still closed for long periods.

In the fire zone, there are about a dozen farmers who solely rely on livestock for their income and they have been well catered for with donated fodder. There have been numerous smaller farmers with 10-80 cattle or 20-300 sheep and while it's not their sole income, it's still a significant contributor to their property. They had all experienced total fodder losses and now many of them are better placed to face the summer ahead.

Livestock SA acknowledges the generosity of farmers in the Mid North, Yorke Peninsula and Mallee who have donated feed. They have come to the party very quickly and really saved the situation for a lot of producers. While there are so many who helped, credit goes to Michele Lally, Clare, and Kirsty Rehn, Kersbrook, for getting the ball rolling and to those who helped Livestock SA in administration by establishing a database and taking calls.

The depot will close today. Any further hay or fodder donations will be individually matched up to livestock producers. Thanks to all for a job well done.

- Details: Livestock SA, 08 8297 2299.