



Media Release

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Population growth and improving agricultural conditions buffer regional Australia

Strong population growth in many of Australia's largest regional towns and improving agricultural conditions are helping regional Australia stand up to the global economic downturn, according to the June edition of the ANZ Regional and Rural Quarterly released today.

The report found regional Australia is experiencing varied conditions across the country, but there are general signs of optimism.

ANZ General Manager Regional Commercial and Agribusiness, Mark Hand said: "We're hearing a lot about the impacts of the global economic downturn at the moment, but it's great to see the resilience of many parts of regional Australia in recent months.

"In parts of Western Australia, employment growth remains strong, in Queensland there are pockets where agricultural land values are rising and in regional Victoria, there are impressive numbers of building approvals," Mr Hand said.

Key findings in the report include:

- Export revenue has been insulated in many instances by the strengthening Australian dollar and global commodity prices for wheat, wool, cotton and milk powder are climbing.
- Regional economies will benefit from Federal Budget measures such as business tax deductions on certain investment assets, a one-off \$50 million payment to the Export Market Development Grants scheme and continued drought assistance for 2009-2010.
- Seasonal conditions have been particularly good in key areas of Queensland and northern New South Wales and recent rain has delivered a good start to the winter cropping season for many producers.
- However, economies in some regions continue to deal with the negative impacts of recent flooding and the aftermath of the Victorian bushfires.
- Tourism operators across Australia are being impacted by the rising value of the Australian dollar against the US dollar and the Japanese Yen, a reduction in international visitors due to the global recession and swine flu concerns.
- Northern coastal regions have experienced strong population growth, but these regions are now seeing a sharp decline in the number of residential and commercial building approvals.

The report highlights region-by-region trends across Australia, and looks specifically at agriculture, population growth, employment, building approvals and the value of rural land holdings.

The ANZ Regional and Rural Quarterly is available at [ANZ Economics](#).

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