



FINAL REPORT RESULTS

15th January 2014

ROUND 1 On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program

The Farm Water Program (FWP) requires landowners to submit a final report upon project completion. The purpose of this report is to gain general feedback and assess landowner attitudes in regard to the the benefits of the FWP and the funding received from the Australian Government. All 76 projects funded under Round 1 of the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program (OFIEP) are now complete and final reports have been prepared by landowners.

The majority of landowner feedback has been positive and indicated that the greatest perceived benefits of the FWP for them related to labour and water savings.

Landowners were asked to provide their perception of the water savings achieved through the FWP (Table 1). Of those responses received, the indication was that water savings had either been achieved as expected or had exceeded original expectations.

In many cases landowners acknowledged other benefits of the FWP including economic, environmental and social benefits

Table 1: Landowner responses to water savings achieved

Response	Number	Percentage
Above Expected	12	16%
As Expected	32	42%
Below Expected	0	0%
System Not Used	20	26%
No Response	12	16%

“A very worthwhile project with ongoing benefits for our farming enterprise, plus the environmental benefits”

“...chemicals eliminated, with all their problems”

“The project has allowed acreage to become economically viable...”

A further indication of the success of the FWP was that through the injection of Australian Government funding to their projects, landowners had a more positive outlook relating to the long term sustainability of their property.

“...modernised irrigation infrastructure drives sustainability over a long period this couldn't be achieved without FWP. Program hugely beneficial, future management will benefit”

Further, landowners stated that without funding, infrastructure upgrades to their properties would be difficult and in some cases impossible to pursue resulting in their farm management continuing in an unsustainable manner.

“Best on farm water savings program that has occurred in the district/region. Has allowed me to conduct these works now rather than waiting another 10 years and less efficiently using water in the interim”

“Great program – win for all concerned. Would not have been able to self-fund”

While the majority of landowner feedback was positive, there were some concerns raised in regard to the processes involved in the FWP, rather than the FWP itself. Several landowners were not as prepared for the disruption that would occur on farm when undertaking the works however, maintained that the disruption was worthwhile as the final outcomes allowed them to move towards long term sustainability.

“The project was more involved at the farm level and took a larger amount of my management time than I was expecting, a very worthwhile project with ongoing benefits for our farm enterprise...”

Overall, information collected in the final reports showed that landowners' were positive about the FWP and considered that undertaking the infrastructure works proved to be a worthwhile investment.