FarmWater

JUNE 2016

Farm Water Program Fact Sheet – Dairy Industry

The Dairy Industry in the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District have been active participants in the Farm Water Program. This Fact Sheet outlines their participation and involvement in the program across all rounds until Round 4.

Background on the Farm Water Program

A Northern Victorian consortium has secured more than $200 million from the Australian Government's On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program ($46 million); the Victorian Government's NVIRP ($16 million); the Victorian On Farm State Priority Projects initiative ($43 million); and the Victorian Farm Modernisation Project ($100 million). Administered through its Farm Water Program the program assists irrigators to achieve water savings by improving on-farm irrigation systems. At least half the water saved is transferred to the Australian or Victorian governments for environmental purposes.

TOTAL DAIRY PROJECTS - ROUNDS 1-4		
PROJECTS	WATER SAVINGS	FUNDED
313 PROJECTS	43 GIGALITRES	$79.2 MILLION

DAIRY PROJECTS BY ROUND			
ROUND 1	ROUND 2	ROUND 3	ROUND 4*
92	147	72	2*

** Round 4 had overall low participation (7 projects in total). The low participation was largely attributed to the difference between the price being offered for water and the price available on the water market.*

DAIRY PROJECTS BY IRRIGATION IMPROVEMENT WORKS (ROUNDS 1 – 4†)			
Laser Grading – Hectares	8162	Pipe & Riser Systems – Hectares	9938
Drainage Reuse – Hectares	5922	Irrigation Scheduling – Hectares	690
Sprinkler Irrigation – Hectares	908	Gravity Channel Surface Irrigation – Hectares	5970

† *Figures are for completed works as at 20th June 2016.*

Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority | North Central Catchment Management Authority – Connecting Rivers, Landscapes, People | North East Catchment Management Authority | Goulburn-Murray Water | Northern Victorian Irrigators | Murray Dairy – Your Levy at Work | Dairy Australia | Victoria State Government | Australian Government

Coomboona Dairies: A Dairy Industry Case Study

When Alex Arena – the owner of Coomboona Diaries – was upgrading his on-farm irrigation systems he found the Farm Water Program process to be "efficient and practical". With the support of Project Management Company CAF Consulting, "Coomboona employees were able to maintain their focus on the business and not be distracted" by the project.

Property Owner Alex Arena has seen "significantly improving yields", "reducing overall feed costs" and "reductions in labour costs" since completing his Farm Water Program project.

CAF Consulting's Leigh Findlay (who was the Project Manager for the project) advice to others was, "Get to know your GB CMA Project Manager and open up the lines of communication in a transparent fashion early on." Alex Arena agreed saying, "Take the time to thoroughly research your project and involve all stakeholders upfront. The project was highly sensitive to the environment; we worked closely with local Council and the local Environmental groups to maximise environmental outcomes, which included preservation of 100 acres of on-farm bushland." After refining irrigation design, the project still required the removal of 28 significant trees; however, vegetation offsets were implemented in a nearby wetland located on the property. "We are very proud of the environmental outcomes we collaboratively delivered," said Mr Arena. For Leigh Findlay, "The downstream benefits in terms of jobs and GDP to the region are enormous on a dairy project of this scale." The works on farm were completed by local companies and Mr Findlay said, "It was clear by the time this round had hit the ground that GB CMA had plenty of experience in prior rounds, which made reporting and administration of funding relatively straight forward." Alex Arena was of the same mind saying the Farm Water Program was an "excellent initiative that when executed and coordinated with all stakeholders can lead to significant efficiencies." The project was also implemented in collaboration with the GMW Connections Program (NVIRP at the time) with Coomboona taking over 4.2kms of GMW spur channel supplying three landholders including Coomboona Dairies.

Property Location	Coomboona
Property Size	342 hectares
Industry	Dairy
Project	Laser Grading, Drainage Works, Gravity Irrigation and Centre Pivots
Project Timeframe	16 months
Water Savings	407ML transferred to government