

JULY 2018

Torrumbarry Water Service Area Fact Sheet

The Farm Water Program operated across the Goulburn Murray Water Service Area. This region encompasses a number of Water Service Committees (WSC). WSCs consist of customer representatives who advise and assist Water Authorities in understanding stakeholder issues, needs and concerns. This Fact Sheet outlines participation and involvement across the **Torrumbarry Water Service Area** in the Farm Water Program for all completed projects in all rounds 1 – 5.

TORRUMBARRY WATER SERVICE AREA PROJECTS		
PROJECTS	WATER SAVINGS	FUNDED
132 PROJECTS	17 GIGALITRES	\$33 MILLION

Background on the Farm Water Program

A Northern Victorian consortium secured \$170 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 (\$70 million). Administered through its Farm Water Program the program assisted irrigators to achieve water savings by improving on-farm irrigation systems. At least half the water saved was transferred to the Australian or Victorian governments for environmental purposes. Funding was released in rounds.

On-Farm Irrigation Improvements



- 618 of 622 projects completed with \$170 million funding
- 68,000 hectares of works including:
 - Laser Grading
 - Drainage Reuse
 - Micro Systems
 - Sprinkler Irrigation
 - Gravity Channel Surface Irrigation
 - Pipe and Riser Systems
 - Irrigation Scheduling
 - Farm Channel Upgrades
 - Automatic irrigation

Water Savings Generated



- 82 gigalitres water saved.
- 38 gigalitres retained on-farm for improved productivity.
- 43 gigalitres transferred to Australian and Victorian governments for environmental purposes.

Food Security



- Increased resilience in the face of climate change and Murray Darling Basin Plan.
- Higher value of production per megalitre used (estimated increase of \$48 million per year).
- Irrigators can maximise benefits of a modernised supply from the GMW Connections program.
- Significant increase in production, time and labour savings when irrigating.
- On-farm investment stimulated after years of drought and then flood.

Environmental



- More water is available to protect and restore river health.
- More efficient water delivery systems reduce groundwater accessions (by about 20 gigalitres per year) and nutrient run-off (by about 120 tonnes per year of nitrogen and phosphorus) and help address salinity and water table issues.

Regional Development



- With an average cost-benefit ratio of 1.4, the funding administered through the Farm Water Program is estimated to generate at least:
- \$48 million a year in economic benefits across the region;
 - 122 jobs; and
 - significant social and environmental benefits and a boost in industry confidence and co-investment.



¹ Depending on industry and technology- individual circumstances will vary.

Fact Sheet – Torrumbarry Water Service Area (continued)

The figures shown below relate to participation and involvement by irrigators across the Torrumbarry Water Service Area in the Farm Water Program for all completed projects in all rounds 1 – 5.

ROUNDS 1 – 5 (completed)			PROJECT BY INDUSTRY TYPE					
PROJECTS	TOTAL WATER SAVINGS	FUNDED	DAIRY	BEEF	SHEEP & BEEF	GRAINS	MIXED	OTHER
132 PROJECTS	17 GIGALITRES	\$33 MILLION	83	1	7	17	22	2
PROJECTS BY IRRIGATION IMPROVEMENT WORKS								
Laser Grading – Hectares	3752	Pipe & Riser Systems – Hectares	5621					
Drainage Reuse – Hectares	3432	Irrigation Scheduling – Hectares	258					
Farm Channel Upgrades – Kilometres	2.4	Gravity Channel Surface Irrigation – Hectares	1849					
Sprinkler Irrigation	543	Micro Systems	376					
Automation*	230*	*with water savings generated						



Participant Profile: “Keely Station”

Property Location	Cohuna
Property Size	156 hectares
Industry	Dairy
Project	Laser Grading, Drainage Works, Pipe & Risers, & Automation
Project Timeframe	11 Months
Water Savings	190ML

Rodney Fletcher runs a dairy farm in Cohuna and was looking at automating irrigation on the property and successfully applied for Round 3 Farm Water Program funding. Mr Fletcher said, “The process was okay however delays due to rain were challenging. The project has exceeded our expectations and we are already seeing the benefits.”

Since its installation, automation has made unproductive country productive. “It has given us confidence in the industry and to stay on the farm,” said Rodney. “Without the Farm Water Program we would be out of the dairy industry” and he said they are “now milking 260 (cows), up from 180”.

When asked about the value of the relationships between stakeholders, Mr Fletcher added, “We signed with Goulburn-Murray Water because we wanted to access the Farm Water Program funding. The programs complimented each other and the CMA has been good to work with and good communicators.” The results of the project are being seen and making the farm more “user friendly”.

Rodney said, “Flexibility of the system is huge and also saves water. Better feed production and less labour (with 85% less labour to water). The only drawback to the system would be that power costs have increased from \$5.00 per megalitre to \$15 per megalitre.”



For more information on the Farm Water Program, visit www.gbcma.vic.gov.au.