

SMARTER IRRIGATION FOR PROFIT

Smarter Irrigation for Profit is a national project that aims to investigate and quantify the expected water, energy, and labour savings associated with implementing best practice irrigation.

The WA Project

The WA demonstration farm is located at the Benger dairy farm of Michael and Sophia Giumelli. Benger is in the Harvey Shire, about 1.5 hours south of Perth. The farm consists of heavy soil types, with surface irrigation across 30 hectares and a 40 hectare centre pivot. Lower rainfall in previous seasons has seen water volume in the Harvey Dam decline to the point where current season allocation of irrigation water is only 40% of entitlement. This will create some challenges for the project, but also ensure we search for and implement the most current practices that will help to maximise water use efficiency.



Opportunities

- Increase the use of spatial data and objectively collected information to inform irrigation scheduling
- Implement soil moisture monitoring in extensive farming systems
- Evaluate the benefits of automation on surface irrigation systems
- Increase awareness of the cost of different fodder sources grown under irrigation

The specific aims of the project are to:

- Review current on farm system performance and identify opportunities for improvement
- Ensure that water use efficiency from crops and pastures grown with irrigation are optimised.
- Extend learnings from the site across agricultural sectors in the region.

Challenges

While all farm operations have some challenges opposing efficient operation, the WA project will focus on:

- Improving irrigation scheduling through the use of soil moisture and climate data
- Dealing with & understanding heavy soil types
- Making the most of low water availability



Over the next two irrigation seasons, the project will evaluate best practice irrigation techniques and measure the impacts on labour, productivity and fodder quality.

For further information or project progress updates, contact:

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The project is supported by funding from the Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources as part of its Rural Research and Development for Profit Programme, Dairy Australia and Western Dairy.

