



Waterfind
Newsletter

On-Farm
Irrigation
Efficiency
Program

(Round 3)

30 JANUARY 2014

Waterfind & On-Farm

by Waterfind

Welcome to the second edition of the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program – Round 3 Waterfind Newsletter. This edition will showcase one of the many projects that is currently being completed through funding from the Australian Government's OFIE program.

Update: Waterfind's On-Farm Projects

Waterfind has been working with many irrigators since November to finalise the transfer of their water entitlements to the Australian Government and start works on their on-farm efficiency improvement projects.

As of 15 January 2014, Waterfind has distributed over \$2.7 million to local contractors and irrigators who are carrying out the works. These payments have been made for numerous activities including clearing land, buying new pipes, laser-leveling and much more.

Many irrigator projects managed by Waterfind have already experienced benefits with the On-farm Irrigation Efficiency Program with one dairy farmer stating that milk production has increased in just 12 months from 7,000L/day in 2013 to 11,000L/day. The dairy farmer is now able to grow his own pasture, giving his cows an abundance of fresh feed. In the past he had to ship in feed from other growers. The team at Waterfind is keen to continue hearing our irrigators' stories and sharing their experiences with you.



Works being completed near Deniliquin, New South Wales

Waterfind On-Farm Case Study: Dehne

Dehne is an irrigator near Jarklin, Victoria who is participating in Round 3 of the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program through Waterfind's sub-project: laser grading and irrigation infrastructure upgrade and redesign.



Works being completed on Dehne's paddock near Jarklin, Victoria

Dehne and his family run a dairy farm. He has installed new systems with OFIE funding in his diary that enables him to use the effluent run-off for the irrigation of his perennial pastures.

Dehne's project was approved in August 2013. Due to the timing of his crop cycles, his project got under way very quickly. Contractors have already delivered all stops, outlets and structures and have commenced installations. Dehne and the contractors have worked hard over the last few months (in some very hot conditions!) finishing the landforming of one section, completing the re-use system and installing new channels. Benefits of the project include:

- Increased production and reduced irrigation (11.6ML/ha to 8.7ML/ha)
- Water savings of 2.9ML/ha across all fields
- Re-use system allowing the capture and reuse of runoff

As of 15 January, Dehne has finished approximately 70% of the works and is on-track to finish the project within his estimated timeframe. The works being completed on Dehne's property will save approximately 428ML per year over the next five years. Dehne has returned 218ML of water to the Australian Government for environmental use.

Interview with Dehne

What do you think are the benefits of the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program?

After I make the infrastructure changes, I will get more from my crops and still use less water than I am right now. This program gives me the money to put the proper infrastructure in. It also lets me do the project in a very short period of time so I can concentrate on my core business which is dairy farming.

What should other irrigators be aware of when thinking about participating in similar programs or completing similar projects?

Irrigators should know their budgets and know that the quotes for different things such as pipes can change quickly. If you start the works months after you get the quotes, be prepared for changes to the prices since suppliers might have increased their prices. Also make sure your farm design is correct so you know what needs to be done (for example, moving dirt).

Would you participate in this type of program again?

Yes, I would apply again. For the people who can apply, I would recommend applying.

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