



Water for Profit

OPTIONS FOR MANAGING WITH LIMITED WATER



WATERFORPROFIT

All water contains some salts. When water is taken up by crops, much of the salt is left behind in the root zone. If this salt is not removed, then the salt concentration in the root zone will build up and affect crop growth and production.

Introduction

Given the extended dry periods that Australia typically experiences, virtually every farmer has to cope with drought in some way. While there are no miracle cures for water shortages, there are some things growers should consider to equip themselves better for extended periods of dry weather.

If you don't have enough water then there are only two courses of action available: either find more or need less. This may seem like a simplistic view of what can be a desperate situation but these really are the only options available to irrigators.

Finding more water

Additional water sources range from:

- surface catchments (new dams, raised walls, cell design)
- ground water (new bores, springs, wells)
- rivers and creeks (increased allocations, temporary transfers)
- recycled water (drainage, channels, treated water)
- a mixture of poorer quality water.

However, these options are not always available and the cost of development means that they may not be a viable option for many growers.

Alternative water management

Alternatively growers can approach their crop management so that they need less water. There are several ways this can potentially be achieved:

- manage every drop
- use more efficient application systems
- mulching
- target critical waterings
- regulated deficit irrigation
- reduce irrigated area.

More than anything it is important to have some form of drought management plan in place prior to a drought occurring. Options need to be considered prior to water shortages and irrigation should be managed carefully in the good times as well as the bad. While this won't solve the problem of droughts, it may minimise the impact that it has on your livelihood.

For more details contact Growcom on 07 3620 3844.



Disclaimer: This information is provided as a reference tool only. Seek professional advice for irrigation specifics.

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Queensland Government

