

What is the Optimising Irrigated Grains Project about?

GRDC have invested in a suite of irrigation research in the Southern Irrigation Zones to provide relevant information to assist farmers. The projects include the development and validation of soil amelioration and agronomic practices to realise the genetic potential of grain crops grown under a high yield potential, irrigated environment in the southern and northern regions and optimising farm scale returns from irrigated grains: maximising dollar return per megalitre of water. The overall objective of the project is that by June 2023, 40% of irrigated grain growers in the Southern Murray Darling Basin have the knowledge, confidence and tools required to optimise farm scale returns through increased yield and allocation of water resources. To achieve this objective, irrigation discussion groups are part of the suite of new research.

How do the Irrigation discussion groups work?

Eight discussion groups have been established across the irrigation region to help growers to learn from each other, build new networks, get the latest research data and have the ability to shape some of the trial work in the above projects to ensure it is relevant and meeting local needs. The discussion groups meet four times a year to discuss agronomy and soil trials in the region and the implications of the research results at a local level.

What are the discussion groups focussing on?

Initial meetings in each group resulted in key focus areas including:

- Use of technology for better resource/irrigation management- better water use efficiency, increase yields and profit
- Soil health and constraints to high yielding varieties of wheat, barley and corn
- Rotations/crop compatibility and optimal number and timing of irrigations to maximise \$ return per ML.
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- Flexible irrigation systems – tech and layouts
- Successful irrigation business – key drivers, similarities, decision making processes, crops / rotations / water use
- Dual purpose crops – successful options for grain/graze/hay

What are the focus paddocks?

One of the most exciting parts of the discussion groups is that the farmers get to experiment with new techniques, research methods or an idea that sparks their interest on a local property through the focus paddock projects.

Further information or to get involved...

Visit our website www.irrigatedcroppingcouncil.com.au or contact Mel Mann on mel.mann@irrigatedcroppingcouncil.com.au

