

Manage Today, Plan for Tomorrow

In partnership with industry and supported by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Horticulture Australia Limited has developed a project *"Drought Information Delivery for Horticulture in the Murray Darling Basin"* (MDB) as part of the Australian Government's Irrigation Industries Workshop Programme.

The project aims to:

- Provide horticulture irrigators in the MDB with access to good agronomic and financial information to assist in making important business decisions.
- Ensure information provided is specific and tailored to meet the regional needs of horticulture irrigators in the MDB.
- Support horticulture irrigators in the MDB during their decision making process.
- Increase the capacity of the horticulture industry to deal with conditions of water scarcity so horticulture remains a viable industry under those conditions.

The project is tailored to meet the needs of horticulture irrigators in four key regions within the MDB. They are the Goulburn Valley & Swan Hill, Sunraysia, the Riverland and the Riverina regions.

Visit www.horticulture.com.au/mdbdroughtinfo for more information

Who should I contact to participate?

Regional Manager:

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Extension Providers:

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Murrumbidgee Horticulture
Council Inc.



Know-how for Horticulture™



Horticulture
Manage today, plan for tomorrow



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Forestry

Manage Today, Plan for Tomorrow

Assistance to help you assess
your options and manage
your business during reduced
water availability.

It's free, confidential and
one-on-one.

Riverina

www.horticulture.com.au/mdbdroughtinfo

Why is this project in place?

Water scarcity is a major issue for irrigated horticulture in the Murray Darling Basin (MDB). Drought conditions together with increasing competition for water and low fruit prices have threatened the viability of many properties.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of horticulture in the MDB, it is essential that growers have access to good agronomic and financial information to inform their business decisions.

This project offers horticulture irrigators the opportunity to work with experienced industry representatives (Extension Providers) to access tailored, relevant information to meet individual needs.

The service is designed to help growers manage their business today and plan for tomorrow. It is free, confidential and one-on-one.

How does the project work?

In each of the four key regions, Goulburn Valley & Swan Hill, Sunraysia, the Riverland and the Riverina, local organisations have been appointed as Regional Managers to oversee the work of Extension Providers.

Extension Providers who have backgrounds in either horticulture or finance will provide one-on-one information sessions for growers. They can assist you to work through your options by tailoring agronomic and financial information to your situation.

I have irrigated horticulture, what does it mean for me?

If you are managing your business on reduced water availability and feel that access to good, relevant agronomic and financial information will assist you to know your options and plan ahead, this service is for you.

Extension Providers will assist you with:

- Information targeted to your specific needs
- Assessing your business issues including the refinancing of next season's crop and/or water trading
- Identifying linkages with other agencies offering professional support, such as agronomic, accountancy, and mental health support services, and Centrelink
- Identifying linkages with other programs providing support to irrigators

How is this different from other drought information programs?

There are a number of drought information programs in existence within the MDB. This program is one-on-one and as well as working through your options, it will assist you to understand what else is on offer and determine if they are also relevant to your situation. It is important to recognise that some horticulture irrigators have not accessed any of the available programs and could be missing out on valuable assistance with their businesses.

How can I participate and what can I expect?

Growers who are interested in using the service should contact either the Regional Manager in their area or an Extension Provider directly to arrange a free, one-on-one confidential session.

Extension Providers will organise an initial visit to your property at a convenient time. During this meeting, an action plan will be developed which takes into consideration your individual situation and sets out activities that can be undertaken in response to managing your business with reduced water.

Some of these actions may relate to:

- production scenarios during 2008/09 and beyond
- budgeting dollars and water
- looking at off-farm income
- developing timelines for future decisions.

A second, follow up visit will include a review of the action plan and the progress made.

Know someone who might benefit?

If you don't think you would benefit from this service but know of someone who might, for example a neighbour or fellow grower, please give them this brochure and encourage them to find out more about what the service can do for them.