

Agricultural Tactics for Dry Times

Water availability and reliability options for drought affected dairy farmers
 Wonthaggi-Inverloch-Yanakie-Foster, South Gippsland, Victoria



Key Messages

- An innovative and collaborative approach to investigating water availability for drought affected dairy farmers
- Severe water shortages were overcome by utilising an overlooked and un-used asset
- Once a need within the community and local agricultural industry was identified, corporate assistance provided a path to investigate and secure long-term water supply options.

“...make a decision and make it early. Hopefully it’s the right decision, but having no decision is a disaster.”

Project Overview

South Gippsland Water’s decision to partner with the community and agricultural business to investigate water availability for drought affected dairy farmers came out of a ‘Tactics for Dry Times’ workshop in December 2015.

Organised by GippsDairy and Dairy Australia, the gathering of agency staff and local landholders focussed on looking at water availability and reliability options for drought affected dairy farmers in the South Gippsland Region.

Organisations

Inverloch Water Cluster representing Inverloch farming district, Yanakie Progress Association representing Yanakie farmers, GippsDairy, Dairy Australia, and South Gippsland Water.

Objectives

To exercise an innovative and collaborative approach to investigating water availability for drought affected dairy farmers across the South Gippsland region.

Outcomes

Inverloch:

- South Gippsland Water identified over 100ML of raw water that has accumulated in a disused storage basin near Inverloch.
- The water was made available to drought affected farmers in the area for stock and on-farm use.
- Landholders agreed to provide infrastructure and machinery to access and transport the water to farms (adhering to health, safety and environmental compliance requirements).

Yanakie:

- With no structured water supply in the Yanakie area, severe water shortages were being experienced due to reduced rainfall in 2014/2015 and 2015/16.
- The situation was critical and a partnership was formed to identify alternate water supplies to be utilised by farmers in the area.
- South Gippsland Water installed infrastructure to access a raw water storage system in the area, with the transportation of the water managed by the farming community.
- To identify a long-term solution for water security to the Yanakie area, the State Government provided funding



of \$50,000 to complete a feasibility study to identify and compare potential water sources and infrastructure solutions for providing a secure water supply to Yanakie for domestic and stock purposes and identify additional benefits.

Lessons Learnt

- Community and organisational partnerships are key drivers in identifying and developing innovative ways of accessing and using water to assist in drought relief measures.
- By working together an un-used asset was able to be utilised in keeping a key dairy farming district operating.
- Once a need within the community and local agricultural industry was identified, corporate assistance provided a path to investigate and secure long-term water supply options.

More Information

For more information visit the resource library on the Clearwater website <https://www.clearwatervic.com.au>

Contact

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