

Research area: VITICULTURE

Regional cluster: RIVERINA

## What technology and infrastructure can be adopted into Riverina vineyards and future Riverina vineyard developments to maximise water use efficiency and vineyard profitability?

### Background

In January 2019, Murrumbidgee Valley high-security, temporary water allocations were trading at approximately \$700 per megalitre (ML) and permanent allocations at \$6500 ML, which represents a significant potential cost to growers.

Increasing water costs and concerns over future water allocations and availability have many growers looking to maximise vineyard water use efficiency, prepare for reduced water allocations and consider future management options during dry weather periods.

### Why is it important?

If conditions remain dry, growers are looking for advice and technology to improve their water use efficiency while maximising grape production and meeting winery quality parameters. Deficit irrigation strategies, irrigation scheduling and timing considerations (through new technologies) at different grapevine development stages may improve water use efficiency, vine health, fruit quality and grower returns for high performing, in-demand varieties.

In addition, low performing or uneconomical blocks under this scenario are more likely to be restructured with new varieties and irrigation delivery systems. This process may create opportunities to future-proof vineyards by maximising water use efficiency through the adoption of new technology and infrastructure in Riverina vineyard developments.

### What would success look like?

Focusing on Shiraz, this project will deliver practical on-farm, water use efficiency recommendations for growers, including:

- key considerations and latest technology for adoption into current Riverina vineyards to maximise water use efficiency, and
- key considerations and latest technology for future vineyard developments to plan, design and implement strategies and infrastructure to maximise water use efficiency.

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