



IRRIGATION THE KEY TO A SUSTAINABLE FARMING FUTURE IN THE GOULBURN VALLEY

Located in northern Victoria, the Goulburn Valley region provides many opportunities for those in the agriculture sector who are looking to relocate or expand their business. Goulburn-Murray Water and the Committee for Greater Shepparton explore what is currently available, and how the two bodies are working together to achieve their irrigation goals.

Stretching across a large expanse of northern Victoria, from the Great Dividing Range in the south to the Murray River in the north, the Goulburn Valley is better known as the food bowl of Australia – producing some of the country's top export-quality produce.

Its abundant sunshine and rich soils provide a favourable environment for innovative and sustainable farming. And the key ingredient – water – is on hand from the country's largest rural water corporation, Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW).

GMW supplies water to thousands of farmers in the region through its management of about 70 per cent of Victoria's stored water resources. It also manages about 50 per cent of Victoria's underground water supplies.

GMW app or by phone, effectively allowing a farmer to manage his or her irrigation remotely while on holiday in the Gold Coast.*

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

Committee for Greater Shepparton Chief Executive Sam Birrell said the Goulburn Valley and wider region is a vibrant place to live, work and invest, with modern infrastructure on hand.

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Managing Director Pat Lennon said the region also features Australia's largest irrigation system, as delivery of the \$2 billion Connections Project continues. Funded by the Victorian and Federal Governments, the project is modernising the region's irrigation infrastructure to create a more efficient water delivery system.

"Where else in Victoria – or Australia – can you find an irrigation system of this scale?" Mr Lennon said.

"Farmers in our region also have the ability to order water anytime, from anywhere. This can be online, through the

"Farmers in our region are using innovative practices and world-class irrigation systems to create a thriving economy."

Mr Lennon said there was also an optimistic outlook for irrigators this spring.

"Our water storages have been at healthy volumes with good inflows recorded in early spring. After favouring a dry spring from September to November, the Bureau of Meteorology is now forecasting no strong signal towards a wetter or a drier next three months," he said.

Mr Birrell said the Committee and GMW are working alongside one another to ensure positive outcomes for those in the region.

Victoria's primary production of food and fibre was worth \$12.6 billion in 2013-14, the highest of any state or territory. Irrigated agriculture in Victoria was worth \$4.4 billion in 2013-14. Source: *Water for Victoria Water Plan*.

INFO

For more information, please visit gmwater.com.au and c4gs.com.au.