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Call for sugar marketing regulation

YCS research report



Ian and Elizabeth Shepherdson have signed up to a project which will assess the energy use and irrigation systems of 220 farms and then find efficiencies. The results will be shared as case studies with other irrigation regions.

Seeking to save \$\$\$ in irrigation

The energy use of 220 farms in the Burdekin will be analysed soon and the results used to help irrigators across a number of districts get better water and power bill outcomes from their systems.

The project is being run by BBIFMAC (Burdekin Bowen Integrated Floodplain Management Advisory Committee) which believes that a lot of information that's available about improving energy efficiency is not utilised or understood, for one reason or another, by farmers.

With funding from the Department of Industry's Energy Efficiency Gains for Australian Irrigators program, BBIFMAC aims to develop, demonstrate and promote a systematic procedure for the delivery of energy efficiency information to irrigation decision makers.

BBIFMAC will work with Burdekin, Bowen and Gumlu growers and promote the findings through those irrigation areas along with Mackay, Bundaberg and Childers. There are three parts to the project which is due to finish in mid-2015.

Farm-scale benchmarking

Farm level information on energy usage and costs will be collected from 220 Burdekin properties. BBIFMAC says it's had a good response so far from growers and anyone who is interested in being involved can register at www.bbifmac.org.au/

Individuals will be able to compare their energy use with that of other irrigators. Once an irrigator has made an assessment of their energy efficiency status, a closer look can be taken at where efficiency gains can be made.

Pump or irrigation system assessments

From the benchmarking exercise, a number of individual pump or irrigation system assessments will be conducted to provide irrigators with a better understanding of the benefits of pumping evaluations.

Pumping infrastructure will be scrutinized to identify options and opportunities for efficiency gains, water use and application efficiencies

will be reviewed using appropriate tools and technologies and a review will be conducted of options for more efficient energy use.

The program aims to increase the skills of local industry representatives through a training program in the fundamentals of understanding pumping efficiency.

Workshops, Case studies, fact sheets, web site

A number of individual irrigation managers will work closely with the project team to develop case studies of the adoption of the most appropriate information tools and technologies. These irrigators will be supported by mentors (project team and contractors) to implement on-ground actions aimed towards energy efficiency gains.

Case studies and fact sheets demonstrating energy efficient opportunities will then be tailored to suit each region and sector. Field days and workshops will be held to share the results.