

How to become involved

Each of the industry groups involved in the SEQ-IF program will conduct its own promotional and awareness campaign. Contact your industry representative if you want some information on the program or want to investigate how you might make your irrigation system more efficient. Contact details for relevant organisations are outlined overleaf.



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SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND IRRIGATION FUTURES SEQ-IF

Rural Water Use Efficiency for South East Queensland

Benefiting from water-use efficiency

The Queensland Government is taking further steps to encourage irrigators to adopt more efficient water-use practices with the introduction of the South East Queensland—Irrigation Futures program (SEQ-IF). The program is part of the government's commitment—outlined in the *South East Queensland Regional Plan 2005–2026*—to address the needs of rural water users in the region.

SEQ-IF is modelled on the highly successful Rural Water Use Efficiency initiative, which has run since 1999. The Department of Natural Resources and Water (NRW) will work in partnership with five major irrigation industry groups, including Queensland Dairyfarmers' Organisation, Growcom, Nursery and Garden Industry, Queensland Turf Producers Association and Flower Association of Queensland, to deliver the program. South East Queensland Catchments Limited, the natural resource management group for the region, will also be a partner.

Initiatives and incentives that lead to irrigators adopting more efficient water-use practices will be funded for an initial period of four years, starting in 2005–06.



Aim of SEQ-IF

The aim of the program is to help irrigators meet the challenges of water reform, increased competition for water supplies and environmental management. To meet this aim, each industry partner has agreed to targets in water-use efficiency improvements through the implementation of better irrigation and water management practices. The adoption of Farm Management Systems (aimed at improving farm business and managing risks) and irrigator involvement in priority natural resource management issues will also be promoted. It is expected that there will be a water-use efficiency gain across all irrigation sectors of at least 10 per cent by 2009, equivalent to an estimated 15 000 megalitres per year.

Who is involved?

Landholders who operate an irrigation enterprise within South East Queensland are eligible to join the program. This area extends from Noosa Shire in the north, Toowoomba City to the west and the Queensland/New South Wales border to the south. You do not have to be a member of your industry association to take part in SEQ-IF.

Each of the industry groups that are partners in the program will be running initiatives tailored to suit a range of irrigation methods and types. South East Queensland Catchments Limited will ensure activities with a similar focus are coordinated, integrated and accessible to all irrigators in the region.

Activities will include:

- field demonstrations on better irrigation management
- irrigation system efficiency assessments
- field trials and workshops
- extension services
- development of information packages
- financial incentive schemes where appropriate.

Other initiatives

SEQ-IF will be supported by a range of other initiatives including a research and development program, regional audits and data management, the collective purchase of irrigation scheduling and other necessary equipment, and cross-industry activities.

The research and development program will provide the knowledge and tools to help irrigators to decide what best suits their business. The projects to be funded will be determined in consultation with industry groups, and their delivery facilitated by the Cooperative Research Centre for Irrigation Futures.

Regional audits and data management will provide information on water use and identify those areas requiring most attention. This work will be linked with the South East Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy.

Equipment, which will be used across industries to assist irrigators to monitor and collect crop and water information, will be bought and shared across the region. Cross-industry activities will also be considered to ensure an efficient delivery of service to irrigators.