

Irrigators welcome AgDay 'Leadership Program' boost

The National Irrigators Council (NIC) has joined celebrations of the first National Ag Day by highlighting the contribution Australian Irrigators make to our national economy and by welcoming an announcement of a grant under the 'Leadership in Agricultural Industries Fund.'

NIC CEO, Steve Whan, says "the first National Ag Day is a great initiative from the NFF and it is an opportunity to acknowledge the role of the irrigated agriculture sector in producing the food we love to eat and the cotton we wear. Irrigated agriculture provides Australian jobs directly in the sector and through downstream processing industries and important export income with goods such as milk, fruit, vegetables, rice, grains, sugar, nuts, meat and other commodities like cotton.

In 2015-16, the total Gross Value of Irrigated Agricultural Production (GVIAP) for Australia was \$15 billion. Total GVIAP represented 27% of Australia's total Gross Value of Agricultural Production (GVAP) of \$56.0 billion in 2015-16.

As Australia's population continues to grow, demand for Australia irrigated agriculture product will also continue to grow.

"From the irrigators growing sugar cane, cotton and horticulture in the north to the nuts, grapes and vegies in the South Australian Murray, Australia's irrigators are continuing to adapt, to change and to modernise.

"Australia's irrigators are among the worlds' most efficient; they extract a small portion of our rivers' flows and use it to produce \$15 billion worth of product per annum.

"Our irrigators understand that they must continue to work to maximise their efficiency and productivity and that is one reason why NIC is pleased to have been awarded a grant under the Turnbull Government's 'Leadership in Agricultural Industries fund'.

"NIC's member bodies are mostly not for profit and member owned organisations and this grant will help to build the leadership skills that are so vital to well-run organisations and to engaging in rural community leadership.

"We thank the Government and Minister Hartsuyker for the announcement today.

"National Ag Day is a great opportunity for all of us to acknowledge Australia's farmers and to build appreciation in the wider community that without our primary producers we wouldn't enjoy fresh food on our tables, nor would we have the ability to provide thousands of processing and manufacturing jobs in rural communities."

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