



WATER FOR FOOD

Midlands groundwater and land assessment



The \$4.7 million Midlands groundwater and land assessment project is investigating groundwater availability, land capability and crop suitability in the Midlands area between Gingin and Dongara. This region is one of the most economically promising irrigation zones in Western Australia. The project is being delivered in partnership between the Department of Water and the Department of Agriculture and Food WA.

Large irrigators in the Gingin area want to treble production over the next five years but groundwater in their local sub-areas has been largely allocated, meaning future horticultural expansion will lie outside their existing horticultural footprint.

This project aims to identify one or more 2000 to 3000 hectare area/s suitable for intensive irrigated horticulture within a broad 500 000 hectare envelope north of the Gingin irrigation district, encompassing the Moora Badgingarra-Dongara area (Figure 1).

- Northern corridor growth plan
- Groundwater for new projects
- 500 000 hectare investigation area
- Regional land assessment
- Infrastructure assessment
- Crop studies

The Irwin area near Dongara, and the Dinner Hill area to the east of Badgingarra and north of Dandaragan, have been identified for further investigation as irrigated agriculture hotspots. These two areas have been carefully selected with input from a Community Reference Group.

The Community Reference Group membership includes vegetablesWA, the Mid West Development Commission, the Wheatbelt Development Commission, the West Midlands Group, Irrigation Australia, Northern Agricultural Catchment Council, Shire of Carnamah, Shire of Dandaragan, Agricultural Produce Commission, Department of Agriculture and Food WA and the Department of Water.

In addition to the Irwin and Dinner Hill focus area investigations, a comprehensive regional information package is being developed, using the innovative high quality agricultural land analysis developed by the Department of Agriculture and Food WA. It will contain research and analysis on the broader Midlands water resources, soil types, crop suitability and local infrastructure, and will be made available to the community, local growers and potential investors. It is expected that the information package will be completed by mid 2018, and will support and inform local agricultural investment decisions.

Midlands Project



Figure 1

Proposed Midlands timeline:



Community Reference Group inspecting soil in the Irwin focus area

Water for Food

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