

Water Talk

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November 2014

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water talk

Rebate falls 25% short

NSW farmers have called on the Federal Government to give applicants for the emergency water infrastructure rebate the extra 25 per cent contribution for which they are eligible.

The call comes following farmers in NSW receiving news from the Rural Assistance Authority, the body responsible for processing claims, that some people will not be receiving the full 75 per cent rebate they had budgeted for when undertaking works on their property.

NSW Farmers president Fiona Simson said while she understood the Federal Government had met its commitment with the funding it had provided, thousands of farmers had undertaken works and spent money on the understanding a 75 per cent rebate was available.

"In some cases, farmers have borrowed money to undertake these works.

"The highly successful scheme has attracted more applicants than was envisaged by both the state and federal governments.

"Not only can farmers benefit from these works now, it will also help farmers prepare for drought in future years," Ms Simson said.

NSW Farmers believes communications around the scheme had been poorly handled which had meant many farmers had acted on an expectation that they would receive a 75 per cent rebate (25 per cent from the Federal Government).



Peter Brunt says the T-L Irrigator's ability to respond to the water requirements of crops can't be matched by other types of irrigation.



Ian Brunt starts the T-L Irrigator, one of five he imported from the United States before becoming a dealer for the company this year.

Pictures: Cathy Walker

Walking the T-L talk

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After 100 000 hours of irrigating their own properties it's fair to say Finley cropping farmer Ian Brunt and his son Peter are experts when it comes to the United States-manufactured T-L Irrigator Systems range of lateral and centre-pivot machines.

It was because of that experience that they were invited last year by T-L to become a dealer for the company. It was a natural progression to complement their Eagle i Machinery business at Finley, where they are agents for (North Dakota-based) Kwik Klean grain cleaners and the new S3 Super Grouper product handler.

Ian imported the first T-L Irrigator into Australia in 1985. He and his wife Kathy went to the US in 1984 specifically to find an irrigator; at a field days site they saw a range of brands and were given some local advice that led him to the Thom brothers in Hastings, Nebraska and T-L Irrigation.

Ian said: "I didn't want an electric irrigator; the main priority is safety in everything we do."

Over the years he purchased several T-L models, which are powered by diesel engines, and kept in contact with the Nebraska business.

Now, the addition of the T-L agency has meant a rapid expansion for the company to a new purpose-built factory on Newell Hwy where plans are to include a mini irrigator to leave passers-by in no doubt about how the product works.

As sales manager for the products, Peter's territory is wide and this year they have provided T-L systems to clients from Swan Hill to Holbrook.

Out at their Barton farm a few



T-L Irrigation dealers Peter and Ian Brunt provide advice and design lateral or centre-point systems based on their own on-farm experience.

kilometres from Eagle i Machinery, Ian walks the talk.

There are five T-L Irrigators there, including one lateral that he turned on to show it in action towering over some late-planted wheat.

Water is sourced through Murray Irrigation and from a bore. Crops on the 1800 ha aggregate of properties this year include canola, wheat, barley and rice — there is no livestock in the mix this year but the Brunts are considering buying sheep again.

Ian stressed safety and ease of operation with the giant lateral system — which in the case of the one he turned on, can water 160 ha.

"We've made all the mistakes and gone through all the hassles. That's how we know this system works so well," Ian said.

The Eagle i Machinery name comes from Peter's wife Carolyn who believes her



A step back in time shows (from left) Ian Brunt at T-L Irrigation with the company's founders Dave and LeRoy Thom and Bob Frank in Nebraska in 1985.

father-in-law (if for Ian) has an eagle eye for machinery and problem solving.

"Dad's got a keen eye for a machine that works well and is simple to operate; we're interested in ease of management and low maintenance," Peter said.

