



This project is part funded by the European Regional Directive (ERDF) as part of the South East ERDF Competiveness Programme 2007-2013

ERDF 'WATERR' Project

Project Update : December 2014

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Project Manager

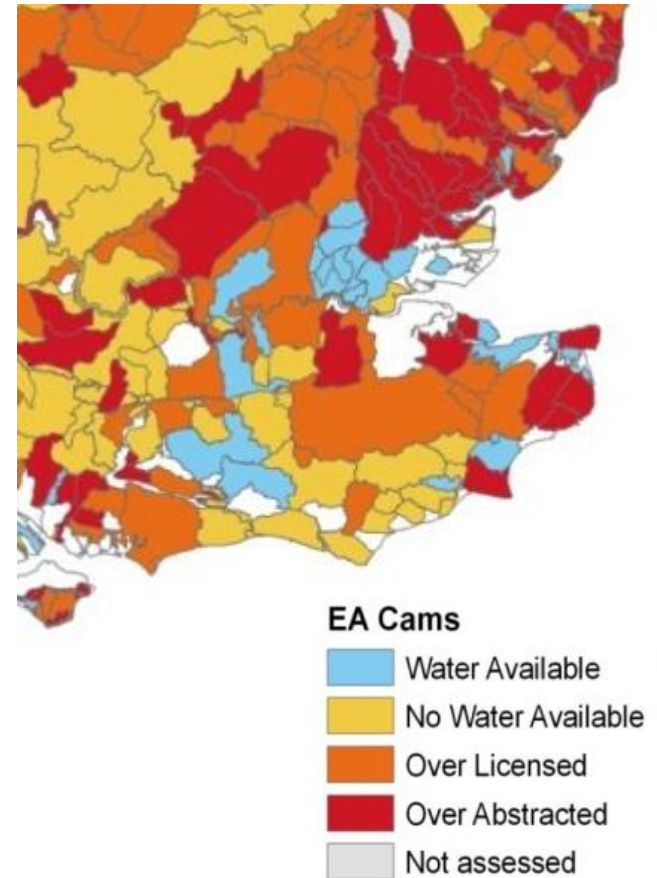


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'WATERR' Project

Why This Project is Needed

- Water shortages impacting growers
 - 50% affected in past 5 years (KCC)
- South East catchments under pressure
 - Most 'over abstracted' by 2050
 - Significant threat to environment and river habitats
 - Licensing system reform from 2015
- Major scope for improvements in water use
 - 3-5 fold difference in irrigation use efficiency (EMR / Cranfield)
- Advice on water use efficiency is limited and fragmented (House of Lords Report 2012)





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'WATERR' Project Objectives



To support South East irrigators to improve their profitability and competitiveness by improving water availability and use efficiency

- Lower water consumption / costs
- Improved yields
- Better produce quality / prices
- Secure business with retailers / processors requiring sustainable production
- Improved water availability and environmental footprint in South East river catchments





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'WATERR' Project Irrigation Business Reviews



In depth interviews involving 125 irrigators / 25% of South East licenced irrigators to :

- ◆ Assess Current irrigation water availability and use efficiency
- ◆ Impact on production / yields, pricing and financial returns
- ◆ Identify 'Best Practice' technologies and techniques
- ◆ Improvement Opportunities / Barriers
- ◆ Grower Support Needs, and Priorities
- ◆ Confirm 'WATERR' Project Support Programme

Initial Findings : Irrigator Support Needs / Priorities

Ranking / % of Irrigators Rating Important or Very Important

1. Learning about planned changes to Abstraction Licensing System (85%)
2. Understanding which technologies/ techniques have the most impact on irrigation water use efficiency and financial returns (70%)
3. Collaborative opportunities to improve catchment management and water demand / supply balance (63%)
4. Understanding how own water use efficiency compares with other abstractors (60%)
5. How to improve own water availability e.g. build reservoirs, rain water harvesting (55%)
6. Visits to sites which demonstrate irrigation Best Practice (54%)
7. Direct 1:1 support from irrigation specialists (53%)

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Irrigation Business Reviews

Initial Findings: Water Use Efficiency and Financial Impact

Potato Irrigators

- **Irrigation Water use** : typically 750 to 1500 cubic metres per hectare
- **Yields** : 32 to 56 tonnes per hectare
- **Water Use Efficiency** : 15 to 45 cubic metres per tonne produced
- **Impact of Irrigation** :
 - Typically 30 to 35% increase in yields (range 25 to 50%)
 - Typically 30 to 35% improvement in prices due to better produce quality (range 10 to 50%)
- **Net Financial Benefit of Irrigation** :
 - Additional yield + Improved Price – Cost of Irrigating
 - Typically £2,000 to £3,000 per hectare (range £1,000 to £7,000)

'WATERR' Project Planned Support Programme

Workshops

10 workshops across South East in period to June 2015 covering:

Water Availability :

- ◆ Abstraction Licensing Reform
- ◆ Collaborative opportunities to improve catchment water availability/management including growers, EA, water companies, KCC
- ◆ Options to improve own water availability – New Reservoir Guide

Irrigation Use Efficiency

- ◆ Learnings from IBR surveys/current Best Practice and information on leading edge technologies and techniques from researchers /suppliers
- ◆ Crop / sector specific covering : potatoes / field vegetables, top fruit, soft fruit, salad crops, protected / glasshouse crops, and nurseries .



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'WATERR' Project Planned Support Programme



Best Practice Demonstration Visits

- See leading edge technologies / Best Practice techniques in commercial use

Specialist Advice

- EMR expertise and Water Management Demonstration Centre
- Workshops to include leading technology suppliers and water management advisers

Best Practice Dissemination

- Case Studies , Fact sheets , and Guides





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Thank You

Any Questions ?



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