

Nutrient- & Water- Smart Farms

The Nutrient-Smart Farms & Water-Smart Farms projects are working with farmers in the Hawkesbury Nepean catchment to improve nutrient management and water use efficiency.

The projects aim to help farmers improve production efficiency and reduce costs; reduce the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus entering the River; and achieve water savings.

A series of FREE training programs covering various nutrient and water management topics are being held. Landholders can also apply for GRANTS to undertake on-ground nutrient and water management works on their farms.



Nutrient Water Smart Farms



Photo: Bill Yiasoumi

Contacts

For more information, or to register your interest in the projects, please contact:

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Incentive Grants

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Background

The Hawkesbury Nepean River system is under significant stress. Water extraction, catchment development and contaminated runoff have resulted in excessive weed growth, algal blooms and elevated levels of pollutants.

The Australian Government, through its Water Smart Australia Program, has funded a Hawkesbury Nepean River Recovery Package to improve the health of the River. The Package aims to increase environmental flows and reduce nutrients entering the River system.

The Package includes various components that will be co-ordinated by state & local government agencies.

NSW Department of Primary Industries is working with the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority to implement the Nutrient-Smart Farms and Water-Smart Farms project components from 2009 - 2011.

Both projects are working with primary producers in the Hawkesbury Nepean catchment below the major water supply dams (see map).

Training Program

Training available through the Nutrient-Smart Farms & Water-Smart Farms projects will help landholders better manage nutrients and / or water on their property.

Some of the topics that are covered include:

- fertiliser use
- soil testing
- soil biology
- soil water & the water cycle
- improving pump performance
- upgrading irrigation systems
- evaluating irrigation performance
- water recycling
- irrigation scheduling

Anticipated outcomes for farmers include increased productivity and decreased costs.

Incentives Program

The Nutrient-Smart Farms project offers grants to landholders to undertake on-ground works that will improve nutrient management on their property, while the Water-Smart Farms project offers grants to undertake works that will improve water use efficiency. The Water-Smart Farms project offers free site assessments to determine the best options to improve water management.

\$15 million is available across the two projects to assist landowners undertake the on-ground works projects.

The types of works that will be funded include, but are not limited to, the following:

Nutrient-Smart Farms

- perimeter re-vegetation / buffer zones / filter strips
- erosion control / soil conservation
- mulching / incorporation of compost
- stock exclusion fences / off-stream watering
- pasture re-establishment
- upgrades to systems that manage dairy effluent

Water-Smart Farms

- installing efficient sprinklers
- upgrading pumps
- upgrading irrigation systems
- water harvesting and reuse systems
- irrigation scheduling equipment



Photo: Rebecca Coventry



Photo: Bill Viasoumi

