

Amberley Pastoral Co

East Griffith, NSW

Chris Morshead's family has been farming their property since his grandfather Bill Morshead returned from WW2 in 1949 and they currently own and lease a little over 1200Ha of irrigation country between Widgelli and Yenda, east of Griffith.

Traditionally growing rice and winter cereals, in recent years they've diversified to include corn and cotton, as well as growing seed crops such as seed canola, sorghum and sunflowers.

The family focuses on crops that will deliver the best return in any given season, but regardless of which crop is in the ground, their soil type means the enterprise relies heavily on irrigation. "We have heavy clay country, which without irrigation, would not be viable cropping country. So we very rarely produce anything that has not been irrigated to some degree."

Maximising flowrate

Like many others in the district, Chris's land forming program means they can use our water, quicker than ever before. The challenge is to get the required volume delivered on farm when its needed, without impinging on other areas of the system, to ensure the correct flowrate and efficient irrigation time, which ultimately minimises the risk of crop stress. The Morshead's have worked closely with MI to come up with solutions.

"MI has been willing to investigate any suggestion we make and implement it, providing there is a benefit for all involved. We worked with MI on a number of issues, most recently moving an outlet from a downstream pool to an upstream pool, to allow a flat section of channel to service downstream customers better and give us a much greater supply height to service one part of the farm. It also eliminated the need for an additional channel regulator, saving money and providing better flow for those downstream."



Automation investment benefits all

The automation undertaken by MI in recent years has provided farmers flexibility in ordering, delivery, ordering at short notice and shutdown times as well as a reduction in system losses which all combine to provide a more user-friendly and responsive system with less losses. Those lower losses ultimately result in more water available for production.

For the Morshead's business the investment in automation and improved operation of the system reduces costs and gives them confidence that when water is available they are able to get what they need, where and when they need to get it.

"MI are working hard to improve their delivery infrastructure, which ultimately benefits every farm business that utilises that system. Their renewal of a 100 year old system, while it has its ongoing challenges, has closely mirrored what we as irrigators have done on our side of the wheel, and going forward I can only see benefits in their ongoing investment and automation."

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Staying ahead of the game, using our modernised system to drive efficient operations and enable our region to grow in a time of less water.

