Planning is the Key to Successful Irrigation

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Where we were

• Originally an extensive grazing and dryland cropping business

• Late 1990’s saw the development of a strategic plan for irrigation and water security to develop all areas of the then current land area

• Purchase of water rights, infrastructure and expertise
Why

- Increase in climatic uncertainty
- Limited opportunity without expansion
- Next generation meant taking productivity to the next level
- 114,000ML of water available for winter harvest on our door step (9% of Tasmania’s water)
- Opportunity could not be passed up given our farm’s strategic position in the catchment
Where we are now

• 5,000ML of available water, either stored on farm or in Milford dam

• Current pivot irrigation infrastructure of 690ha

• Further development will see an additional 1810ha of irrigation taking the total to 2500ha

• Somewhere in excess of $5.5M spent to date

• $10M still to go for full development
Where were we headed

- Next 5-8 years would the see completion of an additional 4800ML of water storage
- Completion of 1800ha pivot irrigation infrastructure
- Development of 2500 cow dairy
- Corporate agriculture?
Lessons learnt

• Draw lots of circles!!
• Maximise usable hectares – as this is the money producing area
• Get advice from designers, engineers, irrigations sales etc
• Never be afraid to ask questions OR question the advice you are given
• Don’t let obstacles get in your way, PLAN how to get around them
• Should have done the development faster
Take Home Messages

• Think strategically
• Don’t be afraid to ask
• Obtain the expertise you need from professionals
• Never abdicate the decision making
• Be a mentor for those around you as it plays a significant role in nurturing and developing ideas
• Adopt new technologies