



## Efficient water management system pays off

**Growcom's Hort360 program, the best management practice program for horticulture, provided water use efficiency information that assisted in the design of an irrigation and drainage system on a Harrisville farm in the Fassifern Valley.**

Water is the most critical part of any farm according to property owner Tony Gibb.

Whether it's managing too much water, too little or just the right amount, Mr Gibb aimed for versatility when designing the property's irrigation system, with the capacity in place to use drip irrigation, overhead or a combination of both.

"Growcom helped us work out correct sprinkler patterns. We injected dye into the system so we could see how long it took to get the dye to certain points on the farm, to ensure the fertiliser was going where it was meant to be," Mr Gibb said.

"It was really helpful and reassuring to see that."

Mr Gibb said in terms of the irrigation system, he was happy with where they were at.

"We have the capacity as technology advances to update and upgrade the computer system to measure and help us become more efficient with our use of water in the future," Mr Gibb said.

Perhaps even more critical was the planning that went into the drainage system.

"When we designed the drainage for this block, we worked out how much water we would get in a 100 mm rain event, and we built the drains big enough to hold that amount of water, which is about six megalitres in the top part of the farm," Mr Gibb said.

In early June 2016, the new drainage system was put to the test when 136 mm of rain fell in a very short space of time. While providing a stern test for the new drainage system, a mark of its success was the return to harvesting just days later.

"We had 136 mm fall in six hours on Saturday and were able to resume harvesting three days later," Mr Gibb said

"We made a little bit of a mess but the crops were all good. Getting water off is just as critical in those types of events as it is putting it on when it's dry."

Mr Gibb said the key to success was a design process with the entire system in mind.

The soil management and water quality modules are currently being delivered in south east Queensland and all horticultural growers in the Lockyer, Bremer, mid-Brisbane or Pumicestone sub-catchments are invited to take part in identifying areas of high risk in soil and water quality management. As part of this process a free property map will be provided.

*Watch the video online now!*

<http://bit.ly/2dceDMN>



### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR TO BOOK A PROPERTY VISIT, PLEASE CONTACT:

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The SEQ water quality program is conducted in collaboration with the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.

