

Cotton Farming Practices– irrigation

– a snapshot from the 2011 Grower Survey

The 2011 grower survey was done for the Cotton CRC and the Cotton Research & Development Corporation. The survey looked into features of cotton properties, farming practices in the 2010-11 season and the use of information and research. 183 growers from a randomly selected sample participated, 167 of these were irrigators and 90 of these were groundwater users.

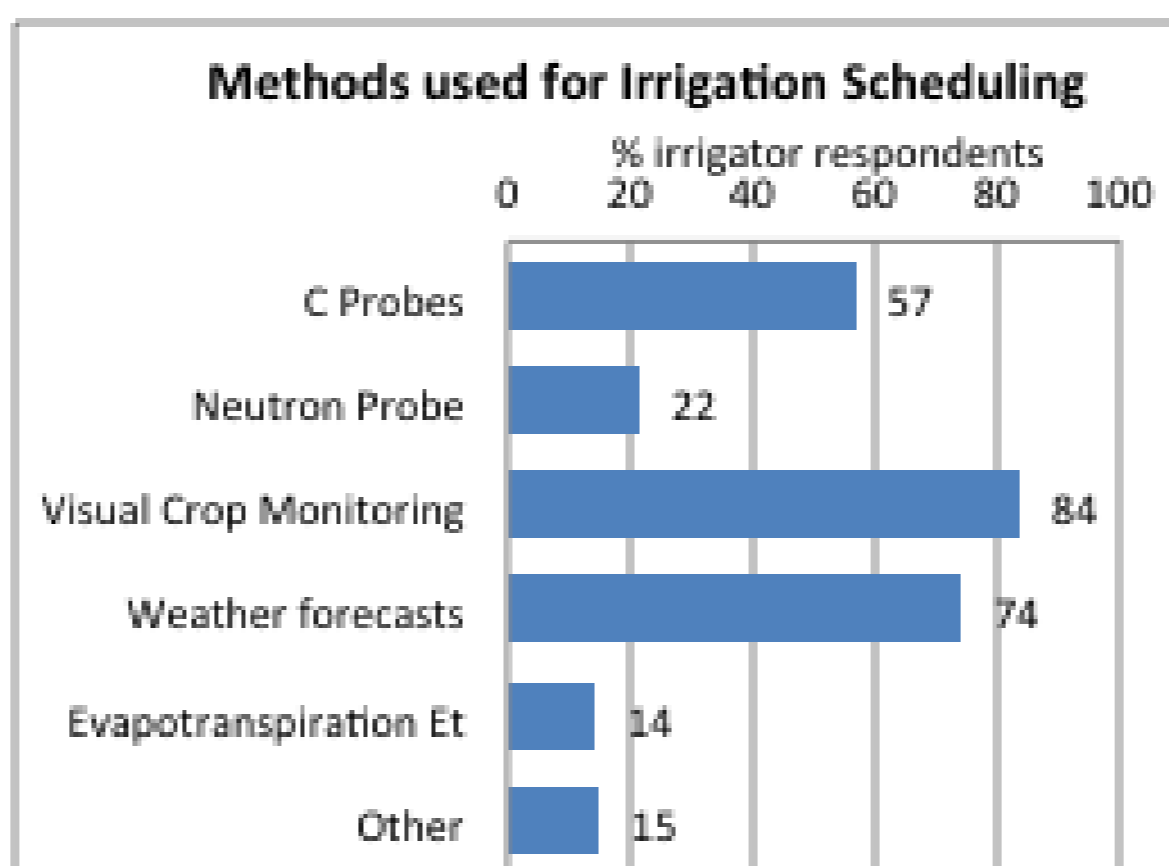
Survey information like this helps in targeting research and extension efforts for the industry and to track changes over time. This poster shows just some of the information about irrigation.

Many thanks to the growers who contributed to the 2011 Cotton Grower Survey.

A grower survey will be undertaken again in 2013 to help the industry to track changes over time.

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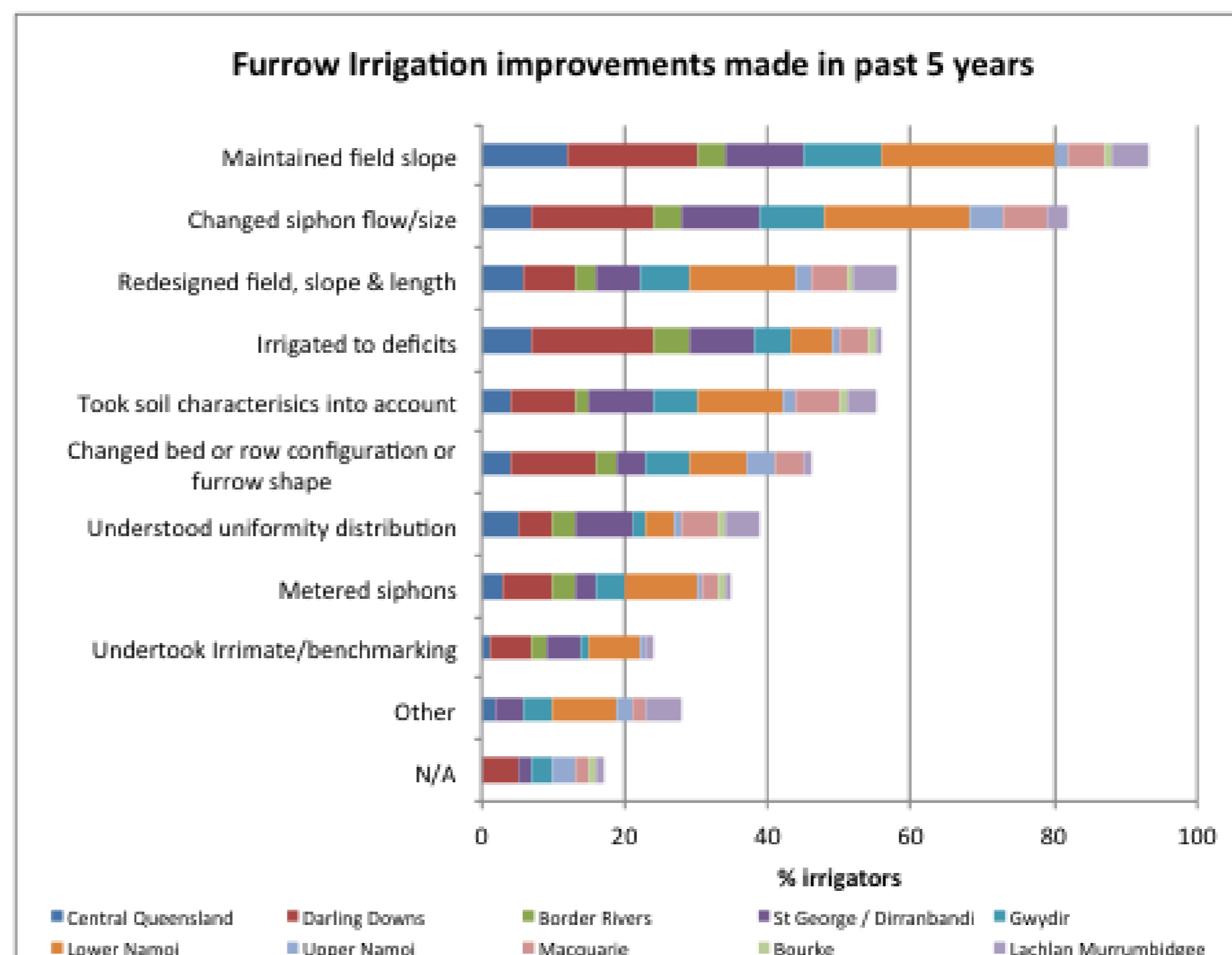


- 70% of irrigators used either a capacitance probe (C-Probe, including Enviroscan) or neutron probe for irrigation scheduling. 8.5% used both.
- 62% of groundwater irrigators regularly monitor water quality.

Cotton irrigators have improved their irrigation systems in the past 5 years:

- 96% had made improvements to their furrow irrigation systems.
- 20% had redesigned fields
- 20% had reduced storage & distribution losses
- 13% had optimised pumps
- 10% were metering water flows

Region	Avg. Yield (bales/ha)	Avg. No. irrigations/field	ML / ha	Bales/ irrigated ML
Central Queensland	6.1	3.3	2.6	2.3
Darling Downs (includes supplementary irrigation)	6.7	2.1	1.4	4.8
Border Rivers	10.1	6.6	3.7	2.7
St George / Dirranbandi	11.3	7.4	6.9	1.6
Gwydir	9.8	6.3	5.6	1.8
Lower Namoi	10.2	6.3	3.6	2.8
Upper Namoi	8.8	4.5	2.7	3.3
Macquarie	9.1	6.5	6.1	1.5
Bourke	9.9	6.0	7.8	1.3
Lachlan Murrumbidgee	9.5	10.0	3.7	2.5
ALL REGIONS	9.1	5.8	4.7	1.9



- "Other" methods for improving furrow irrigation:**
- Increased head/flow
 - Monitoring storage/water table/etc.
 - Timing
 - Use of probes
 - Channel maintenance/changes
 - Changes to water outlet (siphon/sprinkler)
 - Pipes through bank (PTB).

