

### **Cotton and Grains Irrigation Workshop Series**

A series of workshops focusing on irrigation benchmarking, budgeting, scheduling and storage & distribution systems will soon be available. The Cotton and Grain Irrigation Workshop series cover a range of irrigation related topics in a practical and informal manner. The focus is on providing skills that can be taken away and applied.

In addition to the topics above, there will also be workshops on irrigation optimisation, pumps and flow metering. A Centre Pivot and Lateral Move training course is already available.

Each workshop will typically run for 3 hours and are flexible so that they can be delivered on-farm and can incorporate local trial data or planning processes. This means they can directly support issues that may be identified through the BMP Land and Water Module.

Whilst the workshops are flexible and practical they are also mapped to national training competencies, so they can contribute towards obtaining a nationally recognised qualification if desired.

These workshops were developed following consultation with industry through the first phase of the Irrigation Knowledge Management project. A key recommendation of this phase was the development of concise, detailed, practical irrigation training, targeted at a level suitable for consultants and managers.

The workshops will be conducted on an on-demand basis, with the first delivery of benchmarking workshops occurring in early May. So if you are interested in any of these topic areas, and would like to be involved in a workshop, please contact your local Water Team Member.

### **CottBASE software**

Software developers from CSIRO Plant Industry are currently working on a new decision support tool for irrigated cotton decisions. Named CottBASE, this software interface will interrogate a database of crop simulation results and be able to graphically compare different crop management scenarios specifically dealing with irrigation and water.

It will be of most use for pre-season planning decisions where a comparison of risk is required for different water allocations, irrigation schedules, and cotton area to plant. Initially this tool will be provided to local cotton water extension staff."

### **FarmBis subsidy now 65%**

The Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries has announced that the FarmBis subsidy in Queensland has increased to 65% for all training approved from 17 April 2007, for all categories of FarmBis supported training.

FarmBis had found in recent months that while a high number of producers had signed on for training courses many enrolments had also then been cancelled. The current widespread drought has had a negative effect on the financial circumstances of a large number of producers, making it difficult to find money to spend on training. With the increased subsidy FarmBis will be meeting a significant part of the costs and training will be more affordable.

For further information about courses, training providers and training locations visit [www.farmbis.qld.gov.au](http://www.farmbis.qld.gov.au) or phone the DPI&F call centre on 13 25 23 to be put through to a FarmBis Networker to talk about your training needs.

### **Skills telegraph**

Have you identified a need for training in your primary industry?  
If so tell someone who cares; tell us; we're listening:

Log onto the Skills Telegraph [www.dpi.qld.gov.au/skillstelegraph](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/skillstelegraph) and key in your training needs! It's quick; it's easy - it will take you about 5 minutes!  
or if you don't have access to the internet or you just don't like computers [call DPI&F on 13 25 23](tel:132523) and our skilled operators will key in the information for you.

The information collected will be collated, validated and prioritised and then provided to the Department of Education, Training and the Arts in a Skills Plan. They will use the information to ensure that training that they fund is targeted directly to meet industry's needs.