



Water Matters

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Water Use



Water Efficiency

- 88 percent of farmers use at least one water-saving method
- 82 percent said they were more aware of water efficiency than they were five years ago (up from 62 percent in 2001)
- 60 percent of the irrigated area is scientifically scheduled



Water Efficiency

- The survey showed 56 per cent of respondents have undertaken extra measures to increase their water efficiency.
- Over £3million was spent on extra water efficiency measures calculated from data provided by only 446 farmers, this is £7,350 per farm



Cost and Value of Water

- 46 percent of farmers pay more than £1 per cubic metre of water
- Of those that use less than 50% mains, this is 71 p per cubic metre
- Value of water for agriculture is huge
 - Irrigated agric 4% of crop area, 20% of crop value
 - Employment
 - Food quality
 - Hygiene and safety
- A Sustainable Resource

The Future

- Importance of water for agriculture and horticulture
- More 'crop per drop'
- Water Framework Directive
- Water Footprinting/ embedded water
- Climate Change
- Storing water





FARMING PERSPECTIVE WATER QUALITY

Michael Payne

Lessons so far

- Costs are higher than anticipated
- BAU + P Combined annual costs £M410 - £M480 by 2015
- BAU + P cost = **23-27% of Farm Income**

Prioritisation

- >25% of profitability is not an acceptable cost
- Farmers cannot pass through additional costs to customers
- Unless cost pass-through is resolved, prioritisation will be needed

Practicality

- Farmers have concerns about impacts of proposed measures
- For example, growing cover crops over winter is a measure proposed by Defra
- But on some soil types this prevents proper soil preparation for following high-value horticultural crops

Barriers to overcome

- Complexity of natural systems, eg nutrient cycles
- Rivalled by complexity of WFD process?
- Danger of becoming process-driven
- Polluter pays principle
- Increasing burdens on agricultural businesses, of which environmental regulation is just one part

Next steps

- Prioritise objectives
- Multiple gains
- Antagonistic effects
- Perverse effects
- Weigh net benefits, but how – valuation?

Affordability is finite!

- No cost pass through for agriculture
- Net farm income <£10,000 for lowland livestock farms for last 6 years

Participation

- A more inclusive process for agricultural stakeholders
- Consultation is not participation!