



Case Study

Recording Irrigation Data Using a Smart Phone App



LANDHOLDER	Joel Rennie
LOCATION	Maidavale
CATCHMENT	Burdekin
RAINFALL	984mm
PROPERTY SIZE	56ha
ON-GROUND PROVIDER	Farmacist-Burdekin

Project Catalyst is a grower led, sugar cane innovation and adoption project that explores, develops and validates farm management practice change to improve the enduring water quality of the Great Barrier Reef.

BROADER ADOPTION VALIDATION & GROWER SUPPORT

Founded in 2009, the project operates in the Mackay Whitsunday, Burdekin and Wet Tropic regions to deliver valued practice change outcomes and develop methods for industry adoption. Under the Broader Adoption and Grower Support program, professional on-ground service providers assist selected growers to adopt and validate appropriate change practices. Service providers continue to monitor implementation benefits and derived environmental performance improvements. Through targeted extension activities, the program seeks to accelerate the uptake and broader adoption of improved farming practices at local, regional and industry levels.



Great Barrier Reef Foundation



●●●● Goal

To set a grower's farm in a smart phone app to assist them in collecting irrigation record data.



●●●● Overview

The Farmacist Irrigation Record App has been trialled on a number of different farms and used to record irrigation data over a season. The growers who have used the app have found it easy to use and appreciate the “start, stop” function for creating irrigations. This suggests that the app can be installed on other growers’ phones. Growers need to have base line irrigation data in order to benchmark themselves and identify where they may be able to improve their practices. Using the app to record irrigation data can help growers develop this baseline. From there, they can identify where they may be using too much or not enough water and adjust their practices.



●●●● Action

The Farmacist Irrigation Record App is ready to be installed on Joel's phone. The app has been set up to reflect his current irrigation management zones and sets. The areas of Joel's blocks and sets have been calculated using spatial data - this takes the error out of calculating the area of sets on oddly shaped blocks!

When we go out to set the Irrigation Record App up on Joel's phone, we will also measure the flow rate of all of his pumps using an ultrasonic flow meter to ensure that the flow rates being used to calculate irrigation volumes are accurate. If we can't calculate use the flow meter to measure the flow rate, we will conduct bucket and stopwatches instead.

Joel is keen to get the App set up on his phone so he can start making records and measure his water use over the season!

●●●● Outcome

Joel has been using the Farmacist Irrigation Record App to record his irrigation data over the last 12 months.

He's found it to be a very easy process - his wife Trish looks after the farm when Joel is away and Trish has also been using the app to record data! They have laminated a copy of their irrigation management zone and irrigation set map so they can regularly refer to it when creating records!

The irrigation volume data that has been recorded in the app has been useful to Joel and Trish, especially when remembering when and where they last irrigated. They will be able to assess their water use over time and use this data in making decisions in the future.

