



Adaptation in farming system

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# Key messages

- Change is an ongoing process
- Degree/pace varies over time
- Driven by need (for most growers)
- Critical we build grower capacity to change



# Drivers for Change

- Continued decline in profitability margins
- Water policy has reduced availability and allowed changed use patterns
- Increased climate variability



# Making Change a Success

- For a few change is a challenge
- For others it's a necessary evil
- For many it's a discomfort
  - Learning new skills
  - Taking risks
  - Being analytical
  - Developing confidence



# Change occurring in the Murray Valley

- Diversification of summer crops
- Increased focus on winter crops
- Rebuilding of livestock (lambs) enterprise
- Diversification in irrigation/soil management systems
- Diversification in approach to water ownership/trade
- Changing scale increases use of technology



# Major weakness in change process

- Generation of quality information has not kept pace with needs (resourcing)
- Effective communication across research/industry/farming sectors
- Grower confidence eroded with continued water policy change and threats of more



# The organisation

- Regional grower organisation
- Facilitate generation of information to improve profitability
- Information extension
- Developed a key research hub
- Developed a core learning group, including supporting next generation of farmers
- Rebuilding partnerships across government & industry



# Research site



SOUTHERN  
GROWERS



# ***Skills, risk, analysis & confidence***

- Increased profitability of 4 key winter crops
- Demonstration/evaluation of alternate irrigation systems
- Exploring double cropping options to increase return on investment
- Evaluating fodder options – linking dairy & grain growers
- Evaluating soil amelioration strategies
- Conducting a range of extension activities

