

March, 2003

RESEARCH PROPOSAL CURRENTLY UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The research outlined below is based on Expressions of Interest received by, and feedback from, the Sustainable Irrigation Program Management Committee. It may not precisely describe the final project agreement, particularly in terms of final project design, cash and in-kind contributions.

Water Reuse & Recycling in Horticulture Increasing water use efficiency through improved on-farm techniques	
Principal Investigator	To be confirmed (A large number of recycled water Expressions of Interest were received. Given the caliber of a number of EoIs it was considered that the opportunity should be given to a number of researchers to form an alliance and present a final proposal)
Host Organisation	To be confirmed
Issue or Problem to be Addressed	Australia currently sends to “waste” close to 86% of effluent water. In the past 4 years national re-use of effluent has doubled to 14% of all effluent produced, however this remains a small proportion of the amount of water still running to “waste”. The potential exists to use this water for horticultural production freeing up costly potable water. There are concerns about the use of recycled water from both a horticultural producer and consumer perspective. Participants throughout the supply chain need to be aware of and minimise the potential risks and maximise the benefits of using this resource
Objectives	• Gain understanding of the national issues facing the horticulture industry for sustainable use of recycled water • Generate practices and opportunities that will lead to increased use of recycled water by the horticultural sector • Identify climatic differences that influence the sustainable use of recycled water
Comments	A large number of recycled water EoIs were received. After review and discussion the Sustainable Irrigation Program Management Committee determined that the first step should be to gain a national perspective on the issues facing the horticulture industry (including grape) for sustainable use of recycled water. A 2 staged project, with outputs from Stage 1 including recommendations for high priority research to be undertaken in Stage 2.
Research Timeline	3 years
Proposed Funding	Sustainable Irrigation Program maximum budget \$350,000. Considerable cash and in-kind contributions from relevant agencies. Total Project approx \$1,000,000