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**MEDIA RELEASE: 19 July 2021**

**SUBJECT:** Mobile Drip Irrigation works well and saves water.

**KEY POINTS**

- Ecoconnections publishes an occasional paper ‘Mobile Drip Irrigation in Australia – A view from 2021’ revealing opportunity for farmers, landscapes and biodiversity.
- Three Mobile Drip Irrigation systems across Australia successfully grew crops in the 2021 season.
  1. Tasmanian potato crop topped over 100 tonnes per hectare using 3.4 megalitres per hectare.
  2. Wagga Wagga corn crop yielded 16.2 tonnes dry grain per hectare using 6 megalitres per hectare.
  3. Finley cotton crop yielded 10.74 bales per hectare using 7.5 megalitres per hectare.
- For growers, agronomic and practical farming system considerations are a bigger driver of adoption than water savings.
- Government policy direction is elsewhere so farmers should consider mobile drip investments on their own merits.
- Potential water savings could be as much as 1,000,000 megalitres across Australia. This is of similar scale to water used in the cotton industry or environmental flows to support the Coorong.

**NARRATIVE**

“The paper reveals that across Australia water savings as much as a new Coorong or a new cotton industry are possible from efficient on-farm irrigation. More importantly for farmers Mobile Drip Irrigation provides system advantages in weed control, building soil structure and disease control.”  
Ecoconnections Founder Duncan Farquhar said.

Cameron Robinson, cotton farmer said “The Mobile Drip system performed well in Finley this year. We grew 1.4 bales per megalitre; saved costs in soil preparation, disease and weed management; and grew the crop 15 days faster. Measuring soil carbon over the longer term should show that we are also regenerating better soil biology.”

Irrigation researcher from Charles Sturt University said “This technology can improve water productivity (by reducing wind drift, canopy interception, runoff), improve soil physical quality by reducing soil compaction by spray drop impact, reduce disease and weed pressure, and reduce pivot track bogging.”

Mr Farquhar said “With less evaporation and leaf wetness Mobile Drip systems will also be an effective tool for managing saline water.”

Mobile Drip Irrigation is an important innovation for improving ecosystem function in catchments across the world. Said Mr Farquhar.

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