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Date of submission: Sunday, 29 July 2012

Submission:

Dear sir/madame,

I'm writing as a small irrigated landholder, I'm a 3rd generation rice farmer in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area. We are very conservative with our water use and use less than the average but are penalized for using less .

I'm concerned with escalating water costs especially the fixed water charges. Being a smaller grower the continuing burden of these charges threaten the viability of our operation and I'm sure its the same is true with bigger land holders.

Maybe its time for the family farm to go?. The government has to decide to support us (the family farmers) or not. They have get smart about there own costs.

The way I see the system, there is no incentive to use less water,I feel the charges should be mostly directly connected to actual water use for the farmer.

The supply companies and state water should work within these parameters , if water use is down due to drought they should work within there means.

To pay for these high costs , farmers are forced to maximize there water use by farming every bit of land they have . This high use there fore putting the environmental health and viability of the region at risk ie, high water tables,chemical use,strain on infrastructure etc. So the true costs are shifted.

I question the sustainability of these cost burdens on irrigated farms. Sooner or later the wheels will fall off,

regards Peter Randall.