

IREC Chairman Report 2007

For organisations to be ongoing and effective they have to manage change. IREC has now been operating for sixty years and has again seen major change this year. Changes include the retirement of part time employee Judy Lasscock as well as long term employee Nell Snaidero after eighteen years. We wish them well in their retirement and welcome Hayley Wordsworth to full responsibility after spending time with Nell and Judy learning the intricacies of IREC and helping the changes to computerised accounting.

Other changes include the transfer of responsibility for Tri state fruit fly committee to Riverina Citrus. For many years IREC and Nell have been the secretariat in the battle to keep the area fruit fly free and horticulture export options open.

As well as staffing changes the place we have called home for so long has been leased to Country Energy. Options are currently being examined as to what is best for IREC as we say good bye to Siberia. I would like to thank CSIRO for their long term support providing office facilities to IREC and the benefits of close interaction with scientists. Murrumbidgee Irrigation has continued the generosity and I thank them also.

More change to challenge us relates to IREC's financial funding. The continuing drought has impacted severely on the levy income for RIRDC which has provided funding for IREC since RIRDC's inception. We are continually exploring other funding options.

Our irrigator members have experienced unprecedented change this year with unheard of opening water allocations which threatened horticulture with tree and vine losses and broad acre irrigators still have no water allocation and will miss a year of summer production.

IREC has had many successes this year as you will hear from the committee reports. I would like to sincerely thank all committee participants for their contributions which are critical for the ongoing success of IREC. I would like to pass on my sincere gratitude to the government agencies, irrigation companies and agribusiness and most importantly our sponsors for which we are very grateful.

The IREC Farmers Newsletter continues to draw high praise and I thank the contributors and Editor Lucy Kealey for this high class, essential reference which is delivered to more than four thousand recipients from northern Victoria to the Lachlan River.

In the office we are fortunate to have the highly competent skills of Hayley Wordsworth and Bryan Clark. IREC is in good hands for the future going forward and I thank them for their professionalism and dedication to our organisation.

Peter Draper