



Chairman's foreword



There is renewed confidence for the coming year. Full allocation this year and carryover! All positive signs for 2011.

Despite floods, rain and locusts across south eastern Australia, in the southern irrigation areas, we have been fortunate to escape major flooding, and locust damage to crops and pastures

has been limited. However, things are shaping up as a bad season for mice plagues. High rainfall during harvest caused problems, but high yields and good prices were promising for most farmers.

The Murray-Darling Basin Plan is far from complete. We still need to maintain the rage for the future of region. We need to get our message across that significant quantities of water cannot be sold from our regions (or removed otherwise) without serious and long-lasting impacts on rural economies and communities. We need to support our representatives in this fight and contribute to the process in every way possible.

The challenges for IREC still remain. Your executive continues to look for the best way to fund the *Farmers' Newsletter* and other activities that IREC is well positioned to facilitate. More details about this in the spring edition.

This autumn edition of the *Farmers' Newsletter* brings to readers, a benchmarking report on irrigated durum wheat – showing excellent yields and quality being achieved in the Hillston district. With the prospect of wet conditions ahead of us, a comparison of the economics of different irrigation regimes in wet and dry seasons will be relevant, as will a research report on recommended opportunity times (the time the soil surface is under water) for crops grown in contour irrigation systems.

Other articles include reports on research conducted in the Snowy Mountains using geological history to understand and predict climate patterns; a farmer's study into opportunities for carbon trading; and a new project to help irrigators understand and manage climate variability and change.

Coping with change, be it the weather or policy that affects water allocations, is given attention with articles on low interest loans for irrigation infrastructure, a NSW State Government pilot project on an 'infrastructure for water' deal with irrigators; and attitudes and adoption of precision agriculture.

Thank you to our editor Lucy Kealey and administration officer Hayley Wordsworth, for their hard work; and to our advertisers for their continued support.

I wish you well for what is promising to be a good season.

Alan Walsh
Chairman IREC

