



Waimakariri water zone manager Andrew Arps, right, with Eyreton farmer Darryl Brown.

## Case Study

# Protecting environment boosts bottom line

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ZONE(S): WAIMAKARIRI SELWYN WAIHORA

Eyreton farmer Darryl Brown is discovering positive environmental and economic benefits for his farm after joining a pilot project run by Environment Canterbury to help farmers complete Farm Environment Plans (FEPs).

One hundred farmers across Waimakariri and Selywn districts are involved in the one-on-one pilot project which helps farmers without industry support to complete their FEPs.

Darryl has already started making improvements to his 1200-acre horse and dairy farm after joining the project two months ago.

“It’s a bit scary at the start but as you get into it you see that you’re making decisions which benefit your farm and the environment. We’ve already got plans to make our irrigation systems more efficient with increased monitoring. Making the entire farm more efficient means using less resources and having more money in the bottom line.”

Waimakariri water zone committee manager Andrew Arps says the project is helping farmers who might otherwise fall between the gaps to complete their FEPs by mid-2017.

“We’ve identified 50 farmers in Waimakariri with farms over 50 hectares who don’t belong to industry bodies or irrigation schemes and we’re now engaging with them on a one-on-one basis.

“Being proactive and getting to know farmers is a really important part of the process. We’re helping them to understand why it’s important to do a farm environment plan and how this can benefit their farm and the environment.”

Darryl says the process of record gathering and putting together a farm mapping system has given him a much better overview of his entire farming operation.

“Since 1968 the farm has grown from 225 acres to well over 1000 acres so we’re definitely having an impact on the environment. Looking at the farm as a whole and using the mapping system to identify areas where we’re under or over irrigating is really helpful.

“Being able to chat informally to Andrew and receiving practical advice has given Darryl a new outlook on how Environment Canterbury is working with farmers.”