



## Case Study

# Cutting edge technology key to meeting GMP

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CATEGORY: NEWS | Compliance | Environment | Water Quality | Farming | Water

Waimakariri Irrigation Limited (WIL) has joined forces with Wellington-based irrigation software provider Regen to ensure that all of its shareholders will be operating at Good Management Practice (GMP) by 2020.

WIL general manager Brent Walton says that farmers will be able to gain a complete picture of what is happening on farm and make irrigation decisions that are backed up by hard data.

“Having daily reports on current soil moisture levels and a recommendation on whether to irrigate will provide farmers the right information at the right time.

“To meet our GMP goal and to renew our consent we need to demonstrate that each irrigation event is justified and Regen’s system will provide both farmers and regulators with those facts.”

### Stage one of irrigation software

Stage one will focus on 45 farms on the south side of the Eyre River. These farms will have flow metres installed on their pivot irrigators, along with soil moisture monitors, and access to weather station data and scheduling reports.

Regen CEO Bridgit Hawkins says working with WIL is a natural fit for her company as continuous improvement is a philosophy shared by both businesses.

“WIL has always aimed for a leadership role within the industry and they have recognised the opportunity to use technology to demonstrate best practice in a highly measurable way.

“You can’t manage what you don’t know and this technology removes any element of guesswork from the irrigation process.”

Bridgit says farmers will receive an update each morning on their phone which will let them know if they need to irrigate that day.

“The data is being continuously updated so farmers will always have access to the latest information. Having that information

at your fingertips makes it easy to decide what action to take in a way that provides the best outcomes for both farmers and the environment.”

### Information sessions for farmers

Regen will be holding one-on-one and group information sessions for all WIL shareholders so they can gain an insight into how the technology works.

“We want to empower people to make the right decisions. All farmers will have access to technical support staff and we will provide training sessions so that everyone feels comfortable using the app.”

Brent says that while farmers are being asked to do a lot within a short timeframe, it is vital to accelerate progress towards GMP in order for WIL’s consent to be renewed.

“It is a lot to ask, but we’re getting good buy-in from our farmers and I think we all understand that this is the best way forward.”

“Ultimately we won’t have the nutrient loss which is important for the environment and farmers will save money on irrigation during the shoulder seasons.”

“Having that certainty around when to irrigate is a very positive move towards reaching good management practice.”

### Side bar box - How does it work?

- Soil moisture, weather, and water meter data is collected from the farm
- The data is compiled into a daily irrigation recommendation
- This information is sent to the farmer’s phone via an app
- On-farm actions are automatically recorded
- The data record provides evidence for compliance and FEPs/audits