

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Surface water management top of the list for farmers

**(Yarrawonga, VIC):** Heavy wet weather across Southern NSW and Victoria this year has many farmers looking for ways to better manage waterlogging, according to Precision Agriculture's founding director Andrew Whitlock.

Speaking at a free workshop for local farmers "Making Big Data Pay" held at Yarrawonga Mulwala Golf Club on Tuesday, Mr Whitlock said the cost of damage done this year for some has been significant.

"We have seen some paddocks completely flooded and many others have wet areas on the side of hills and in low-lying country," he said.

"In the past we have seen this type of damage cost up to \$1,200 per hectare in lost production.

"In any season it is important to focus on the key two or three things that will have the biggest impact on production and for many farmers this year that includes dealing with excess water."

Mr Whitlock said precision farming techniques can play a role in surface water management, reducing waterlogging and improving potential yield.

"Our approach is to look for the best ways to use data to make profitable management decisions on farm," he said.

"Waterlogging is usually predictable and by collecting elevation data we can model contours and pinpoint ideal locations for drainage.

"Surface water management plans integrate upstream catchment effects, soil type, paddock layout, slope and the ability to safely direct water flows. The resulting strategic farm-through spoon drains offer a powerful insurance policy against years such as this."

Mr Whitlock also said that next to waterlogging, variable rate management of farm inputs was top of the list for farmers looking at precision farming techniques.

Earlier this year Precision Agriculture's research showed that 29 percent of land surveyed across Southern NSW and Victoria did not require lime at all but 26 percent required more than a standard traditional rate of two tonnes per hectare.

"Variable rate management is common sense farming. Using what you need and where means your land is getting what it needs for optimum productivity and you only need buy what you require," he said.

"We believe in years to come this will be standard farming practice. The results speak for themselves – while every farm is different, in our experience reduction in lime use has been as much as 60 percent and phosphorous up to 25 percent without impacting production," he said.

About 20 growers attended the workshop, which was supported by Riverine Plains through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

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#### **Note to editor**

For more information, contact Precision Agriculture Director Andrew Whitlock on 0458 312 589 or email [andrew@precisionagriculture.com.au](mailto:andrew@precisionagriculture.com.au).

#### **Precision Agriculture**

Established in 2009, Precision Agriculture is one of the Australia's most experienced providers of precision agriculture services.

With operations around the country and approximately 600 customers across primary production, agribusiness and industry, Precision Agriculture aims to help its customers improve their productivity and profitability through better, more informed decisions.

The company measures and interpret data to find opportunities to integrate spatial technologies with farm management practices and provide practical assistance to apply our findings on farm.

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