

vineyards - the benefits of DELTA technology



DELTA technology provides vital boost to Aussie wine industry

Grape growers in SA's productive Riverland are turning to the technology of Newcastle-based company DELTAwater solutions to drastically cut maintenance and improve performance in their vital irrigation systems.

Denmark-based irrigation agronomist Trevor Sluggett says some growers are so pleased with the results after installing the DELTA technology, they've returned for more units.

Trevor, who works with Riverland-based firm River Rain Irrigation, says grape growers have recognised the potential the technology can deliver to drip irrigation systems. And he says interest in the DELTA product is increasing as growers hunt for ways to boost irrigation system efficiency, lower water use and improve yields.

Trevor says some growers plagued with clogged dripper irrigation systems due to algae and other biological activity have reported substantial maintenance savings after installing a DELTA unit.

"All these systems in the lower part of the Murray River need a stringent maintenance program or the performance of these systems declines over time," he says. "Growers pumping water from backwaters off the main river stream have been the keenest to install the technology as they find their water is harder to filter and drip systems block up very quickly.

"These growers have had amazing results, such that even growers pumping better quality water are showing interest."

The DELTA technology, a water treatment system that incorporates high density magnets, is used extensively across Australia and overseas and addresses problems including scale, iron, salinity and corrosion in irrigation, industrial, mining, domestic and garden systems.

Trevor Sluggett encourages grape growers to embrace the sophisticated technology to help improve their business.

"Are you talking hard water and a need to stop or reduce scale, are there salinity issues, high-salt issues or biological activity?" Trevor says. "Then get quality advice from the DELTAwater team who do a water test in their own laboratory then provide advice on your best option in terms of the grade of unit.

"The good thing about dealing with DELTA is they have a range of units with different strengths for particular situations. A DELTA unit needed for softening hard water on the Darling might be a different grade to a unit needed to minimise biological activity and sludge build up in drip-hoses in Renmark. DELTAwater solutions caters for that."

The agronomist says DELTAwater solutions also keeps in touch with clients, check that the unit has suited the client's needs and make sure their clients get results.

"Many of DELTAwater's sales are repeat sales," Trevor says. "One client bought one a few years ago and now he's back to buy four more."



Riverland grape grower Dino Sigismondi, right, starts to install a DELTA SU450 SL501 onto a 450mm pipeline on the Murray River 30 kilometres down river from Loxton, SA. The pipeline irrigates a 121-hectare vineyard.

CASE STUDY

Grape grower Louis Curtis believes his irrigation system is cleaner and more efficient since he installed three DELTA magnetic water conditioners to treat river water supply.

Louis, who runs second-generation Curtis Vineyards at Pike River in SA, says he turned to DELTA technology about two years ago after becoming frustrated with having to clean filter systems at his pump stations so regularly.

Louis installed three DELTA units - two 200mm grade-four units and a 300mm grade-four unit - at

pump stations before the automatic flushing filters and waited to see what happened.

“Over time I noticed the automatic flush filters weren't flushing as often and that tells me the system's running much cleaner,” he says. “I pulled the filters down a few months later and they were cleaner. It has cut maintenance of the filters at the pump station by at least 30 per cent.”



Alex Panov from DELTAwater solutions talks to Norbet Wende from South Australia at a recent field day. DELTAwater solutions regularly attends the Riverland Field Days to catch up with a growing client base in the wine-growing area. Photo by David Fletcher

CASE STUDY

Grape grower Dino Sigismondi reckons it was a “very good day” when he first installed the DELTA technology on his drip irrigation system about five years ago.

Since then Dino, from SA's productive Riverland, has added another five DELTA units to his vineyard operation after the technology proved resoundingly successful in banishing algae from irrigation systems.

“The units keep the dripper lines very clean,” Dino says. “Since installing them I haven't had to chlorinate the drippers and I used to do that twice a year. We've now got a clean irrigation system, a more efficient system, the pressure is higher and I think the vines look a lot healthier too. Since we installed the first DELTA we haven't looked back.”

Dino and wife Veronica grow grapes on about 250 hectares of land, split between Lyrup and New Residence districts on the Murray River. While they produce the bulk of their harvest under contract to big wineries, the couple also run their own boutique winery, Sigismondi Estate Wines. All irrigation supply comes from the Murray River.

“Our six DELTA units are spread right across all our properties,” Dino says. “I've only just installed our biggest one, a 450-millimetre diameter grade-three unit (DELTA SU450 SL501) on 450mm pipe this year. There are a quite a few DELTA units around here now and more and more growers are starting to put them in.”