

ALL ABOUT ALMONDS

ORCHARD MANAGEMENT



DROUGHT STRATEGIES FOR ALMONDS

Most growers will have a strategy in place to reduce the impact of the drought. This Fact Sheet summarises information put together during previous droughts that may assist in further building or fine tuning your drought strategy.

The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) [drought report](#) advises the 36 months, from January 2017 to December 2019, as being “the driest on record” when averaged over the Murray–Darling Basin. These extended hot and dry conditions have created additional water needs for almond orchards. The BOM [climate outlook](#) published 9 January 2020 suggests the outlooks for drier than average conditions have eased for most areas however, several months of above average rainfall is needed to see a recovery from current long-term rainfall deficiencies.

In these conditions, orchard managers are faced with some tough decisions that may impact on production for several years. Questions you may be asking:

- How much water do I purchase? and What is the highest price I can afford?
- If I can't get the water I need, which patches do I prioritise? or
- Am I better off to reduce irrigation volumes across the whole property?
- Is it a good time to abandon poor performing patches and bring-forward my redevelopment plan?

Even if you have enough water for this season, planning ahead for future years will help reduce the stress for both almond trees and managers and provide some certainty and focus. The links provided in the table presents information developed in previous droughts and research projects which may assist in developing your drought strategy.

For further information review state and federal government websites, or contact your local rural counselling service. They will provide information on any drought related grants, rebates and incentives that you may eligible for.

| Resource & Link | Author |
|---|---|
| Learnings from the past millennium drought Fact sheet | Agriculture Victoria |
| UC Drought management General information on tree stress | Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of California |
| Using the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) In a Nutshell Article | Almond Board of Australia |
| Strategic Deficit Irrigation for almonds on tree phenology, bloom, nut set and hull rot Project Report <i>Please Note: This trial was conducted from 2009-2012 with effective rainfall recharging the catchment from 2010</i> | The Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industry through a Hort Innovation funded project (AL12010) |
| Almond Production Spreadsheet Irrigation Scheduling Tool | Almond Board of Australia |
| When an Orchard needs replanting In a Nutshell Article | Almond Board of Australia |



PROJECT CODE

AL16001 - Australian almond industry innovation and adoption program

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