

Victorian irrigated agriculture industry

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

Fast Facts
January 2023

5,400

↑ 5%

Irrigating farm businesses
(2020-21)

490,000

↑ 23%

Irrigated agriculture
area (ha) (2020-21)

\$5.24B

↑ 1.4%

Gross value of irrigated
agriculture (2020-21)

1.64M

↑ 21%

Irrigation water used (ML)
(2020-21)

Irrigated agriculture farms facts and figures

- In 2020-21, 5,400 farm businesses irrigated in Victoria, accounting for 25 per cent of Victoria's 21,600 farm businesses.
- There were 20,700 irrigating farm businesses in Australia, with Victoria accounting for 26 per cent of these farms.
- The total area irrigated in Victoria was 490,000 hectares or four per cent of Victoria's total farming area of 11.4 million hectares. Victoria accounts for 25 per cent of Australia's irrigated farming area (1.9 million hectares), second to New South Wales (NSW) (34%).
- Most of the Victorian irrigating farm businesses are in Goulburn Broken (25%), North Central (20%), and Mallee (1%) Natural Resource Management (NRM) regions.

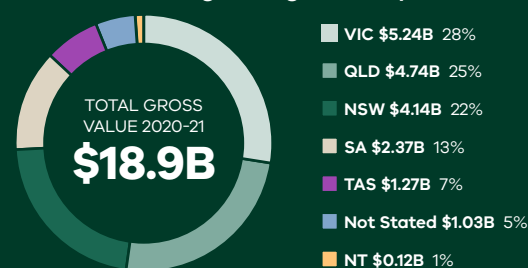
Irrigation on Victorian farms

- Irrigated agricultural land:** In 2020-21, 490,000 hectares of crops and pastures were irrigated, comprising 234,000 hectares of pastures and cereals used for grazing, 85,000 hectares of pastures and cereals used for hay and silage, 57,000 hectares of fruit and nuts, 47,000 hectares of cereal crops (excluding rice), 27,000 hectares of grapevines, 22,000 hectares of vegetables, 15,000 hectares of other crops and 4,000 hectares of nurseries and floriculture.
- Applied irrigation water:** In 2020-21, 1.64 million megalitres were applied for irrigation, comprising 908,000 megalitres to pastures (55% of all water applied) and 735,000 megalitres to crops (45% of all water applied). Of the water applied to pastures, 675,000 megalitres were used for pastures and cereals, and the balance (234,000 megalitres) was used for pastures and cereals cut for hay and silage. Water applied to crops was directed to fruit and nuts (398,000 megalitres), grapevines (125,000 megalitres), cereals for grains (93,000), vegetables (76,000 megalitres), other crops (30,000 megalitres) and nurseries and floriculture (12,000).
- Water sources:** Victorian farms sourced a total of 1.7 million megalitres of water in 2020-21 taken from various sources,

including 1.1 million megalitres from irrigation channels or pipelines, 320,000 megalitres from rivers, creeks or lakes, 218,000 megalitres of groundwater, 47,000 megalitres from recycled or reused water from off-farm sources, 38,000 megalitres from on-farm dams or tanks, and 8,000 megalitres from town or reticulated mains supply.

What is the value of irrigated agriculture production?

Gross value of irrigated agriculture production



- In 2020-21, the total gross value of irrigated agricultural production (GVIAP) in Victoria was \$5.24 billion, an increase of \$70 million (1.4% on the previous year).
- Irrigated production accounted for 30 per cent of Victoria's total gross value of agricultural production (\$17.54 billion).
- Victoria's GVIAP was the highest of all states, accounting for 28 per cent of Australia's GVIAP of \$18.9 billion.
- The highest value of Victorian irrigated commodities were fruit and nuts (excluding grapes) at \$1.52 billion, dairy products at \$1.19 billion, vegetables at \$717 million, and grapes at \$539 million, accounting for 76 per cent of the total GVIAP for 2020-21.
- By value, Mallee tops all the NRMs with a GVIAP of \$1.29 billion, followed by Goulburn Broken (\$1.23 billion) and Port Phillip and Western Port \$761 million).

Irrigation on Victorian farms by Natural Resource Management (NRM) regions. 2020-21

Natural Resource Management Region	Area (hectares)		Number of businesses		Total volume of water (ML)		Irrigated agriculture value	
	Total agricultural land	Irrigated area	Total agricultural businesses	Agricultural businesses irrigating	From all sources	Applied for irrigation	GVIAP	GVIAP share
Mallee	2,155,401	65,265	1,758	774	470,283	461,397	\$1,289M	24.6%
Goulburn Broken	1,195,060	145,927	3,176	1,352	438,390	420,412	\$1,234M	23.6%
Port Phillip and Western Port	282,484	18,113	2,402	748	51,119	50,806	\$761M	14.5%
North Central	1,967,448	161,903	2,908	1,090	444,811	428,636	\$716M	13.7%
West Gippsland	571,487	49,861	2,456	492	164,681	158,768	\$522M	10.0%
Glenelg Hopkins	1,773,434	16,691	3,119	249	48,758	46,002	\$265M	5.1%
Corangamite	716,093	9,533	2,114	227	26,350	25,286	\$185M	3.5%
North East	647,599	12,212	1,677	323	28,493	26,600	\$165M	3.1%
East Gippsland	275,171	3,902	486	61	7,955	7,548	\$58M	1.1%
Wimmera	1,807,155	6,706	1,497	63	19,281	17,246	\$40M	0.8%
VICTORIA TOTAL	11,391,333	490,112	21,592	5,379	1,700,120	1,642,701	\$5,236M	100.0%

Data attribution: Sourced from publicly available data published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) | Agriculture Policy and Programs analysis. Data in this snapshot are the latest available as of December 2022.