

# Upgrade saves time and water

By Alexandra Bathman

The Shannons' new irrigation system is saving them labour and producing more feed.

About 50 dairy farmers and industry professionals gathered on the Katunga farm last week to take a look at the 80 ha irrigation upgrade.

The new pipe-and-riser system with computer-based automation was part of the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program and the Goulburn-Murray Water Connections project.

The farm is owned by Bryan and Lyndy Shannon and operated with the help of their son Nathan.

"It's been a long and challenging process and it's taken a lot of planning — but the rewards at the early stages are there," Nathan said.

"I believe the labour savings and

productivity are providing the farm return on investment to justify the upgrade."

Planning of the new system began in 2010 and the first excavator came to the property in December 2011.

Water started pumping to the new system in May 2013 and Nathan said he finally saw the system he envisioned just before Christmas.

The irrigation upgrade provided a new outlet located on the backbone channel capable of delivering up to 20 ML/day.

The water is sourced through the outlet and directed through a 1.5 km farm channel to a 7 ML farm drainage reuse sump where water is then effectively pumped to the pipes and risers.

The new system will increase the amount of dry matter they produce

by 415 tonnes/year, save 176 ML of water a year and save a lot of time.

Nathan said with the new system it took him 400 minutes a year to irrigate 80 ha; the On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program estimated the system would save him 180 hours a year in chasing water.

The Shannons milk about 600 cows on the 400 ha property and plan to expand the herd to 700.

"There were three obvious things that stood out to me — if you want to make money in dairy you have to have good hectare efficiency, good cow efficiency and good water efficiency," Nathan said.

The On-Farm Irrigation Efficiency Program predicted the Shannons would see a full return on their investment in eight years.



Field day . . . Katunga dairy farmer Peter McIntosh, Tongala dairy farmer Ernie Cooke and Tongala dairy farmer Josh Gillie.



Worth the effort . . . Katunga dairy farmer Nathan Shannon explaining the property's new irrigation system.



Learning more . . . Pine Lodge dairy farmer Brad Church and Katandra dairy farmer Rob Church.



Checking it out . . . Katunga laser grader Peter Hendy who worked on the new irrigation system, Katunga dairy farmer Grant Oswald and Danish backpacker Thomas Hinnerup, who is working on a Katunga dairy farm.



Audi Vorsprung durch Technik 

## Audi Open Haus

Open Doors. Open Negotiations.  
Sales Event now on.

Let the conversation begin with financial incentives across the entire Audi range.

**Complimentary stamp duty, registration and CTP\***  
across all new and demonstrator Audi models.

**Complimentary stamp duty\***  
on all Audi Approved :plus pre-owned models.

Sound enticing? Negotiate a new way forward with our most progressive offers ever.

**Visit Audi Centre Shepparton to talk about your new Audi.**

325-329 Midland Hwy, Shepparton | Tel. 5822 5811 | [audicentreshepparton.com.au](http://audicentreshepparton.com.au)

\*Complimentary stamp duty, registration and CTP offer applies to new Audi stock vehicles and Audi demonstrator vehicles purchased and delivered between 1 December 2014 and 1 February 2015. While stock lasts. +Complimentary stamp duty offer available on all Audi Approved :plus (pre-owned) vehicles purchased and delivered between 1 December 2014 and 1 February 2015.

\*+ Offers not available to fleet, gov't or rental buyers, or with any other offers. Audi Australia reserves the right to modify or extend both offers. LMCT9883