# Case study 1: Dave Reilly, date and grape farmer

Video transcript. Project funded under an efficiency measures pilot program

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## Introduction

This is the transcript of a video case study produced by the Department of Agriculture and available on the [department’s YouTube channel](https://youtu.be/jFLHtvit94s).

We have produced this video to raise awareness of the Murray–Darling Basin Water Efficiency Program and its positive impact on Basin businesses and communities.

This video is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode). We invite Basin agencies, Basin governments and our program delivery partners to share this video with stakeholders to generate awareness and uptake of water efficiency projects being delivered across the Basin to support the Murray–Darling Basin Plan’s implementation.

## Transcript

[Video begins]

**Department text overlay:** Water Efficiency Program case study: Dave Reilly, date and grape farmer.

**Dave Reilly:** Primarily we grow dates, date fruit. We have 29 hectares at home. We also have 9 hectares of wine grapes, and another 12 hectares at another property.

We draw our water from the Gurra Gurra Wetlands, which is a bit challenging because it’s quite salty.

On our other property we’ve got beautiful River Murray water.

We’re running with 25-litre-per-hour pressure-compensating drippers for the date palms, and also Netafim inline drippers for the vineyards.

The major project was modernisation of the irrigation main line and pumping infrastructure. So we now have a new high-pressure pipeline, we have a pump house, a pump motor and automatic flushing filter that can be started from home.

We’ve gone from 1970s to 2020s.

This is one of the main problems that we had: the old Fibrolight pipe couldn’t sustain pressure for the modern irrigation dripper system. As soon as we put through more than 28 psi we were having trouble with the line blowing out.

**Department text overlay:** Dave’s project saved 44.5 megalitres of water to help preserve the Murray–Darling Basin river environment.

**Dave Reilly:** This project will achieve significant water savings—44.5 megalitres of water. That water saving comes mostly through the addition of moisture monitoring probes.

We also have automation. So we’ll be able to run our pump a lot more efficiently and give our palms only just what they need, not what they want. The benefits of that we would like to see would be increased yields.

**Department text overlay:** Dave’s irrigation infrastructure upgrades were funded by the Australian Government.

**Department text overlay:** The upgrades were delivered by the South Australian Murray–Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board.

**Dave Reilly:** We supply other date farmers with plant material, and also with training and management of date palms. This gives us the ability to show a modern irrigation system that they can take away and employ themselves.

**Department text overlay:** For more information: <agriculture.gov.au/waterefficiency>.