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New CSIRO report backs leading edge water project

The Lockyer Valley and Somerset Water Security Scheme has been singled out for its innovation to deliver long-term sustainable food security for South East Queensland (SEQ).

The *South East Queensland Food System Strategy* was developed in partnership with the CSIRO and the Council of Mayors SEQ to highlight innovative ideas and technologies to address food security, as the state deals with rapid population growth and major global events such as the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The [report](#) identifies water availability and climate risks as the major pressures facing the Lockyer Valley and Somerset region.

Lockyer Valley Regional Council Mayor Tanya Milligan and Somerset Regional Council Mayor Jason Wendt welcomed the report's acknowledgement of the Lockyer Valley and Somerset Water Security Scheme (LVSWS) and the important role it will play in mitigating the increasing threat of drought and extreme heat.

"This region is one of Australia's most important food bowls," Mayor Milligan said.

"This project will create Australia's largest recycled water irrigation scheme to increase agricultural output by \$270 million to nearly \$1.7 billion annually."

Mayor Wendt said the project would secure 4,500 ongoing permanent and seasonal jobs, including 600 new permanent jobs.

"Our project is a game changer," he said.

"Less than two hours from Queensland's fastest growing population base, we have the opportunity to lock in the future prosperity of our regions for decades to come, while significantly enhancing food security for SEQ and Queensland more broadly."

Lockyer Valley and Somerset Water Collaborative Chair Paul Lucas said the CSIRO report was a timely call for coordinated action to strengthen the region and its growers for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

"This project will not only support growers, but the whole community will benefit," he said.

"We know that when our farming community is doing well our region does well, because a large slice of the dollars earned by growers is spent in the local community."

The project is seeking to utilise the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme, built in response to the Millennium Drought to provide Purified Recycled Water to supplement SEQ's drinking water in drought.





To-date, the scheme has never been required for drinking water.

The LVSWS forms part of the Water Initiatives in the Lockyer Valley commitment being delivered under the South East Queensland (SEQ) City Deal. The SEQ City Deal is a partnership by the Australian Government, Queensland Government and Council of Mayors SEQ.

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