

Water consumption

Water use

More than 5 million ML of water is used in Victoria each year, 90% from surface water and 10% from groundwater. The majority of Victoria's water resource is used for irrigation (78%), while urban uses (both metropolitan and regional) account for 17% of Victoria's water consumption.

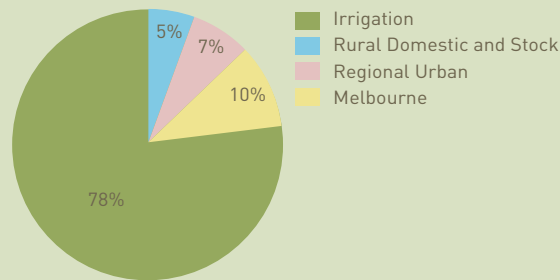
Efficiency of water use²

Sector	Litres of water per \$ of Gross National Expenditure
Rice	8,408
Cotton	1,614
Dairy & Milk	1,452
Sugar cane	1,247
Dairy products	852
Beef	731
Flour & cereal foods	618
Services to agriculture	584

NOTE: These data are for Australia overall. Cotton is not grown in Victoria and rice represents less than 1% of the State's grain production (as at 2001 Agricultural Census)

Consumptive uses of water in Victoria¹

2003-04



Making the best use of our water resource

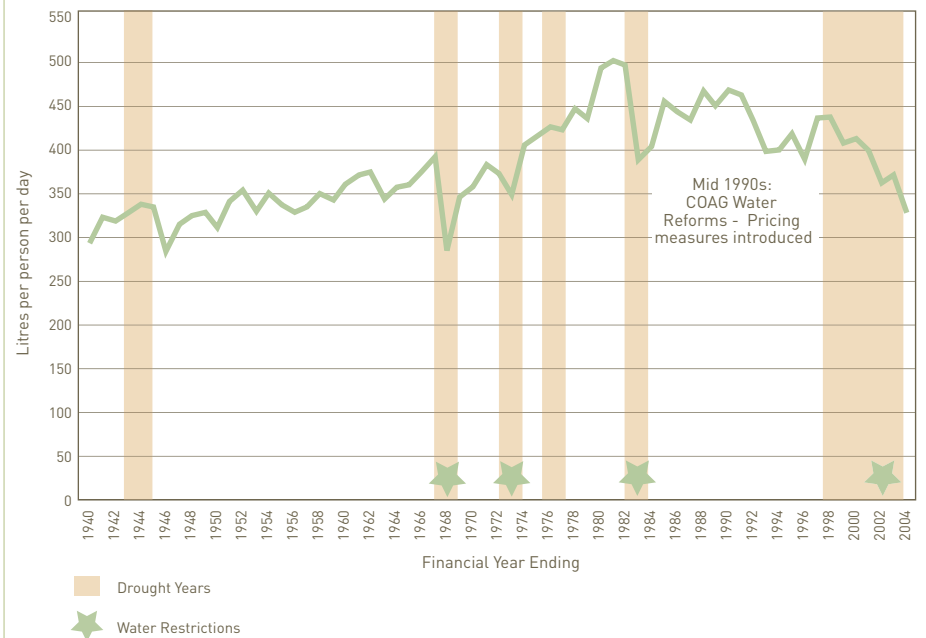
CSIRO has provided a perspective on water use which is related to the contribution it makes to Gross National Expenditure (GNE). The prices we pay for agricultural products tend not to take into account the full environmental costs of production. When water inputs are considered there is variation in the amount of water used to produce various commodities. For example, rice production uses more than 8,000 litres of water for every dollar of GNE, compared to cereal production which uses around 600 litres to produce the same value of product.²

Trends in water consumption

While time-series water consumption data are not available for regional Victoria, records for Melbourne show that per capita water consumption grew steadily between the 1940s and 1960s, with strong increases in the 1970s. Since the 1980s water consumption has been influenced by drought, and associated water restrictions, as well as by conservation and efficiency incentives and market reforms designed to reduce water consumption over the longer term.³

Average daily per capita water use⁴

Melbourne 1940-2004*



* NOTE: Figure for 2003-04 is forecasted estimation

Sources ¹DSE 2005 *State Water Report* ²CSIRO and University of Sydney 2005 *Balancing Act. A Triple Bottom Line Analysis of the Australian Economy* ³Victorian Government 2004 *Securing Our Water Future Together* ⁴Melbourne Water 2005 *A Dry History*