



Horticulture

Industry Network

# Vegetable IDO Update



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## Bunyip Food Belt

Melbourne's South East contains some of Australia's most fertile agriculture land and produces fresh food for Melbourne's rapidly growing population.

As urban growth takes over existing farmland, new food production areas will need to be developed.

Cardinia and Casey Councils and South East Water, are leading a project to divert recycled water from the Eastern Treatment Plant to irrigate high value food crops in the region.

The project will see the development an intensive irrigated food production zone on Melbourne's south-eastern fringe, to be known as the **'Bunyip Food Belt'**.

The proposal focuses on food security, using the best soils to grow fresh food with safe "Class A" recycled water and creating job opportunities in our fresh produce industries.

**Garry McQuillan**, CEO of Cardinia Shire Council says the area in the Bunyip Basin is well set up for intensive horticultural production with good access to markets in Melbourne, good soils and a good climate.

The only missing link has been a reliable water source and that will available by 2013. He added the project could re-use up to 26 gigalitres of recycled water each year.



The Proposed Bunyip Irrigation District

VGA president **Luis Gazzola**, believes the project will attract irrigated food production to the Lang Lang sand belt and beyond.

The project will seek preliminary expressions of interest as part of a feasibility study.

Local governments would welcome growers from other areas coming into the Bunyip Food Belt and setting up their farms.

Please contact your Industry Development Officer if you require further information or would like to attend an Information Session.

### Your Industry Development Officers

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