

## New pipeline offers security to sheep producers at Hay

Hay district sheep producers Mark and Mischelle Schiller are investing in a pipeline and stock watering system to give their wool growing enterprise greater water security and to avoid wastage through evaporation.

The Schillers run Merinos and Dorpers on 'Woolamie' their 12000 hectare property 50 kilometres west of Hay.

They are on river floodplain with a bit of saltbush country and have traditionally filled their dams once a year from a channel scheme off the Murrumbidgee River.

To give themselves greater flexibility and confidence in their water supply, the Schillers are putting in a 25 kilometre pipeline from the creek to eight farm dams.

"After 10 years of drought followed by two floods, we are now back in drought after missing out on an early break to the season," said Mark.

"It looked good here in April but there has been no follow up rain.

"We have culled 3000 sheep and all our cattle to get through.

"We'd normally run about 2500 Merinos and 5000 Dorpers – but we've reduced carrying capacity to 2500 Dorpers and 500 Merinos.

"At least this time we don't have to panic as much. With the pipeline, stock and domestic water is always available."

Mark said the \$150000 loan from the Farm Innovation Fund used to purchase the pipeline and watering system would more than pay for itself through improved farm efficiency.

"If there's no stock in the paddock we don't need water, if there are stock in then water is available," Mark said.

"It's a very reassuring feeling and means we don't have to move or sell stock because of a lack of stock water in a paddock any more.

"We can manage our grazing system the way it should be managed without being disrupted by any stock water shortages."

Mark said they are probably halfway towards setting up their entire stock watering system.

"We thought we'd chip away at it and do more with tanks and troughs when the season is a bit better," he said.

