



The Salt in Our Soil - Why We Need to Know About Salinity

What is Salinity?

Salinity refers to the concentration of salt levels that can be found in our groundwater, soils, rivers, floodplains, and wetlands.

When it rains, or through irrigation practises, the salt naturally stays in the soil due to environmental factors that make up the Mallee region and its climate, setting it apart from other agricultural areas in our State.

During the early establishment of the Mallee region, irrigation, and agricultural practises like land clearing,

led to excess water draining away from the root zone of crops and causing a rise in groundwater levels, creating groundwater mounds.

This agricultural development, paired with things like high evaporation rates and free draining soils, means in the Mallee our groundwater systems are as salty as seawater.

In short, salinity affects production in crops, pastures, and trees by interfering with nitrogen uptake, reducing growth and stopping plant reproduction.

Did You Know?

Salinity has been noted as one of Victoria's greatest environmental threats and an ongoing problem for the Murray River that could take generations to fix.

Salt inception schemes have been implemented, capturing saline groundwater before it enters the Murray River and diverting it inland for harvesting and disposal.

In the 1990's a plan was developed to improve irrigation practises that would offset the impact of irrigation on salinity levels and in the generation since we've seen the modernisation and sophistication of irrigation methods improve dramatically to align with best practise models.

Since the last time salinity survey, the **irrigation and agricultural area has expanded by 42%**, meaning there's a large area of land that doesn't have sufficient Salinity insights.



Project Contact

For additional information:

MALLEE CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Phone: 03 5051 4344

Email: TBC@malleecma.com.au