



Weathering the Downturn

ASVO Mildura Wine Forum | 2026 | Peter O'Donnell, Southern Cross Farms



The Industry W e're All Navigating

Export Pressure

Rising Costs

Oversupply

The Opportunity

Technology Has Caught Up Fast



Affordable Sensors



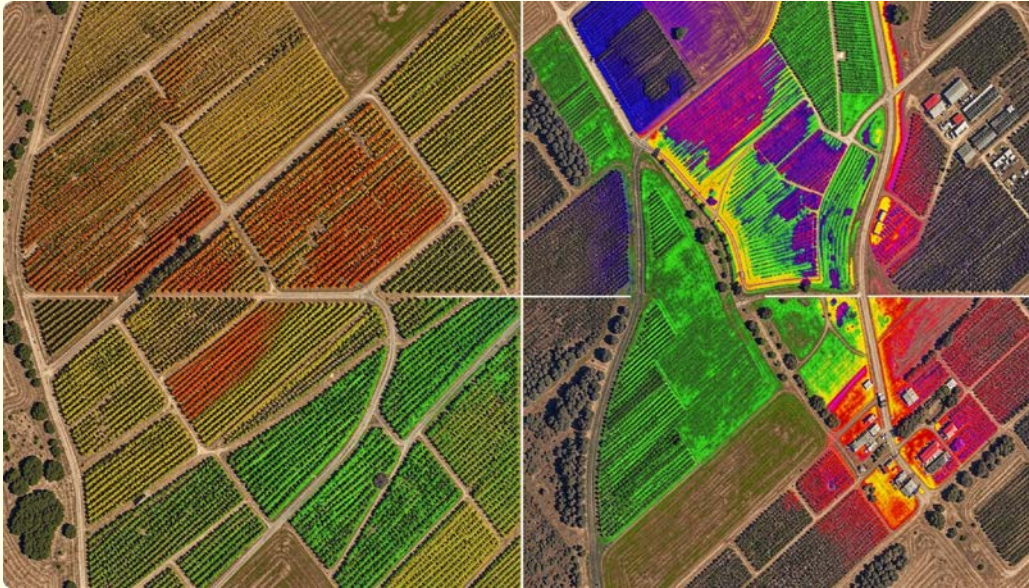
Precision Irrigation



Autonomous Equipment

✔ Growers investing in data capability now are building resilience that outlasts the cycle.

Know Your Block-by-Block Economics



The Problem

Most operations can't identify which blocks are genuinely profitable after water, labour and inputs.

The Tools

- Yield mapping and canopy sensing
- NDVI satellite imagery
- AI to organise data for decisions



Find your worst 20% of blocks — that's where the losses hide.

Water: Your Biggest Lever

10–20%

Water Savings

15%+

Irrigation Savings

Water you don't use is water you don't have to buy or can sell—a real cash position in a tight year.



Labour: Where Automation Makes Sense Now

GPS & Tractor Automation

Spray Optimisation

Rule of Thumb



📌 Labour scarcity is structural, not cyclical —this problem is not going away.

AI & Data: What's Actually Useful Today



Satellite NDVI



Disease Modelling



AI Irrigation Scheduling



Drone Monitoring

Making Every Decision Count

PROTECT

- Core profitable blocks
- Water infrastructure
- Your best people
- Critical spray programs

|| PAUSE

- Expansion plans
- Non-essential trials
- Discretionary capex
- New variety programs

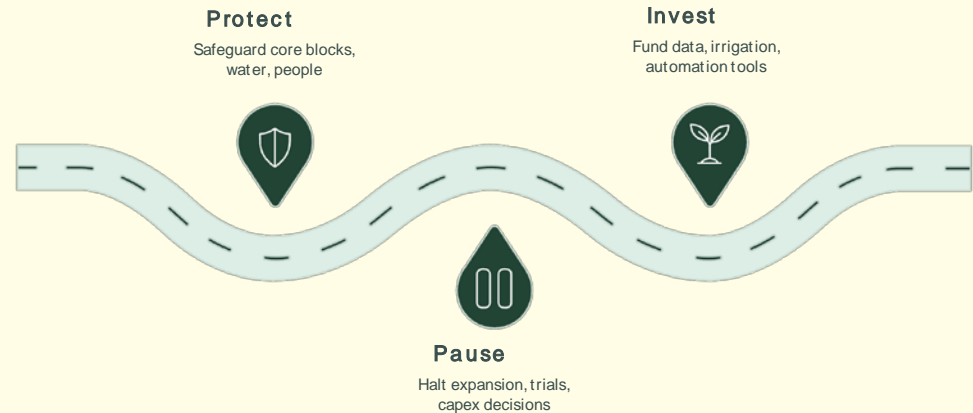
INVEST

- Data tools
- Irrigation efficiency
- Labour-saving automation
- Block-level cost insight

Does this make us stronger coming out of this cycle?



Prioritise What Matters Most



Test every decision against one question: does this make us stronger coming out of this cycle?

Thanks — Questions?

Peter O'Donnell

Southern Cross Farms

Em ail

pod@scfarms.com.au

Phone

+61429 104 225

W ebpage

www.scfarms.com.au

