

Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper – Submission IP05-02
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Commercial Green houses – Great Artesian Basin

Technology exists and has been proven in Spain over decades for the use of large scale greenhouse in more hospitable environments. Australia has plenty of barren available land and the area with agricultural potential at low land value, lies above the Great Artesian Basin. This body of water, about 65 million gigitalitres over 1.7 million square kilometres and around 95% of leaked water is left to waste in these conditions.

Almeria, Spain has a greenhouse economy spread over 200 square kilometres and economy in the Billions of dollars. The conditions here have similar attributes, harsh winds, high temperatures and minimal rainfall. Modern agriculture techniques such as drip water irrigation, high water retaining fertilizer the use of perlite has allowed a large barren areas to become a vital supplier of fruit and vegetables to Europe. I am proposing the same commercial scale greenhouse be developed along the Great Artesian Basin for the population growth about to hit Asia.

Initial invest well be used for data gathering, land research, farmer interest and potential customer demand. China have already proven there is a growing demand by the middle class for safe, high quality agriculture. Large amounts of land with unused bores already exist in outback Australia. Current farmers with traditional European farming techniques, struggle to break ground for crops. The potential for farmers to diversify their agriculture and protect them from droughts and floods can be realized through Commercial greenhouses.

The early stages will identify construction of modern commercial greenhouses, labour and running cost. Water usage and volumes of production from various crop types will allow for future planning and projections of profits. A review is required to identify information of The Great Artesian Basin, bores, weather and land conditions. Added to this is the amount of available land and distances to export hubs.

The potential for growth in Asia is huge and the need for food will only continue to grow. Most agricultural land in Australia is used and is left to the elements of floods, fires, droughts and pest. Greenhouse allow for more control conditions and less us of pesticides and insecticides, cutting down on overlays for crop growth.