

Sample Itinerary – Farming in the Riverina - A three-day tour.

Talk to us about shortening or extending this tour, according to your requirements.

Day 1

Visit Yanco Agricultural Institute. View research facilities in the company of local staff and visit nearby historical rice industry monument.

Established in 1908, Yanco Agricultural Institute has been instrumental in developing many of the plant varieties and farming techniques utilised so effectively in the Riverina. The Institute covers 800 hectares of which 50% is irrigated alluvial flats and the remainder dryland cropping or conservation areas. Used as a Prisoner of War camp 1942-1947.

Visit irrigation regulator on Regulator Road. The Murrumbidgee Irrigation area is fed from the Main Channel we cross. 3,000 farms covering 173,000 hectares (within an area of 660,000 hectares) grow food and fibre of enormous value.

Leeton Visitor Information Centre has a small collection of short, high quality videos on the region's agriculture.

Lunch.

Investigate the region's rice industry with an industry consultant before travelling to a commercial rice farm where you meet the farmer and visit parts of his farm (dependent upon weather and seasonal activities).

Cotton is a fast growing industry in the MIA. If your tour occurs between April and September we visit a cotton farm and Southern Cotton's modern gin near Whitton. In other seasons we visit a large irrigated vegetable farm.

Day 2

Gogeldrie Weir helps distribute water to the Coleambally Irrigation Area, created in the 1960s. Here we deliver a talk on the MIA and CIA history, operations and other details.

Table wines are a huge industry in the MIA. A typical vigneron will mix say, 50 hectares of wine grapes with another crop and / or with contract harvesting or related services to his neighbours. Grapes are harvested in February and March each year but there is always something of interest occurring on a commercial vineyard.

We then visit a winery for a tour of the winemaking facilities and a brief tasting.

Almonds and walnuts are relatively recent additions to the region's major industries but now constitute an important part of the total rural production. We visit an almond orchard to meet the farmer and learn of his annual pattern of activities.

Finally we visit another tree crop industry in the area. It might be olives, prunes, apricots, jojoba, farm forestry depending upon the season and availability of site managers.

Day 3

Citrus has been important to the MIA for more than 100 years. Vast quantities of citrus are variously packed or juiced for metropolitan and international markets. We visit an orchard and packing shed and meet the farmer.

The MIA is home to a huge variety of crops. Our next visit will be to a farm growing maize or soybeans or Lucerne or wheat or barley or oats or any one of a number of crops. The farm will be chosen according to season and availability of site managers.

Irrigated agriculture requires specialists in irrigation techniques. We visit an irrigation equipment retailer and irrigation system designer to hear of some of their latest technologies and projects.

Finally we visit a rural engineering works to learn of some of the specialist equipment required by farms in the area.

Tour ends at 4.00pm.