

Wastewater matters

With drought crippling many parts of the nation and the environment top of mind, Aerofloat's managing director **Ray Anderson** talks about the need for better wastewater management.



THERE is increasing pressure on our food and beverage industry to show its commitment to keeping Australia's waterways clean. An up-to-date and efficient wastewater treatment system minimises risks of harmful pollutants entering the environment and ensures businesses meet strict regulations.

Change can seem daunting, but the sector is capable of creating sustainable solutions to meet rising environmental concerns.

Adding to our already stretched water supplies, our capital cities are experiencing significant population growth. In September 2018, the Australian Bureau of Statistics released figures that showed Melbourne's population grew at 2.5 per cent every year between 2011 and 2017, and Sydney 1.8 per cent.

Melbourne is in the top five growth rates in the world, on par with cities in China, India and South America.

operations, such as food production, cleaning and sterilisation, boiling, chilling and even transport. For example, a prominent dairy plant in Australia has a peak flow of around 48 cubic metres per hour of wastewater – which is around 450,000 litres per day.

Ensuring sewer discharge meets or exceeds targets will become even more important to the industry as the nation strives to meet its environmental targets for the coming decade.

WATER SCARCITY

Increasing severe drought and other weather events have highlighted we cannot take water for granted. It is more vital than ever that the Australian food and beverage industry make smart choices about wastewater management.

It is good for business as well as the environment, but also for brand reputation. Australians are acutely aware of the need to actively respect

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This growth puts further pressure on industries to meet strict environmental regulations and to recycle wastewater and food waste wherever possible.

Finding affordable and reliable wastewater solutions is vital to businesses in both regional and urban centres.

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our environment. Prior to the recent federal election, polling by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation showed the environment was the number one concern for most Australian voters.

There was also a 20 per cent increase in interest in the environment as an issue compared to the 2016 election.

There were 17 food and beverage manufacturers in IBISWorld's Australia's Top



LEFT: Aerofloat's patented world-first technology Dissolved Air Flotation (DAF) technology is compact, affordable, low maintenance, odourless and self-cleaning.

BELOW: Wastewater from the food and beverage manufacturing sector is not pretty, but it is an important issue and valuable resource for business and the environment.

OPPOSITE: More frequent, intense droughts and other severe weather events are making all types of water management critical.



100 Manufacturers 2019. We have an obligation to protect our environment for future generations.

The wastewater industry must be committed to creating sustainable solutions through innovative designs and ongoing improvements in technologies.

For us, finding opportunities to recycle wastewater and food waste to positively impact the environment is a continual process. Wastewater treatment is complex and perhaps not that glamorous, but worth it, whether it is sludge de-watering, physical chemical separation, biological treatment or pH correction.

Our own sustainability starts at home, with all products manufactured locally to reduce our own carbon footprint.

WASTE AS A RESOURCE

If treated correctly, wastewater and waste bi-products can become a valuable resource for food manufacturers.

Food waste can be recycled back into the early stages of food manufacturing such as crop growth and providing

food for stock. For example, treatment processes for our customers in the dairy and cheese-making industry use whey bi-products for pig food, creating a sustainable food production circle.

In a Sydney yoghurt manufacturing business, the food waste from our treatment process is used for soil injection to improve pastures for growing crops.


Wastewater can also be re-used within the factory, allowing savings on water bills and ensuring sustainable operations. *

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ray Anderson is managing director of Aerofloat, an industry leader with more than 50 years experience in wastewater management. Aerofloat has a number of patented product designs as well as access to third party products. Its treatment range is applicable across the food and beverage industry including dairy and milk products, breweries, poultry, meat processing and packaged or processed food production.



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