

**Media Release
For Immediate Release
10 April, 2008**

FARMERS FLOCK TO GRAIN & GRAZE ROADSHOW

More than 115 people attended the Grain & Graze Roadshow field days held on three properties in the Border Rivers' catchment from March 31 to April 2, to learn more about growing productive, persistent and profitable pastures while better managing natural resources.

At mixed farming enterprises, 'Maneroo', Terry Hie Hie, 'Bullala', Warialda and 'Kioma', Toobeah, farmers and graziers heard first-hand about research, development and extension projects investigating the benefits and constraints of the mixed farming system.

Grain & Graze regional coordinator Kathryn Taylor said the Roadshow provided an opportunity to promote some of the Grain & Graze program highlights.

"Topics covered included pasture selection, establishment and management for persistence, biodiversity, soils and landscapes, grazing cereal crops and stubbles, the complexities of risk in mixed farming systems, feedbase and livestock management – including the use of Meat and Livestock Australia's (MLA) Feed Demand Calculator," Ms Taylor said.

"Demonstrating that pastures can be brought into crop rotations to maintain soil fertility and structure, to control weeds, pests or diseases and to reduce soil erosion and water and nutrient leakage, the field days provided farmers with information to help increase profitability while better managing natural resources."

Mixed farmer Charlie Clark of Benelawin, 65kms north west of Goondiwindi, who attended the Roadshow at Kioma, Toobeah, said he appreciated the pasture information and that it was good to have a mixed farming field day, rather than just cropping.

"I found it interesting to hear about turning marginal farming country into pasture," Mr Clark said.

"We have mainly cereal crops at Benelawin but have a prime lamb and grazing operation in conjunction with farming near Bungunya.

"The main reason we went along to the field day is because we're very interested in getting more productivity from our more marginal farming country.

"We run a zero till farming operation but do not run sheep on the fallows as the stubble is too valuable for water infiltration and erosion control, however we do have some areas that are not used for farming that we are looking to improve for fattening young cattle.

“We basically went along for background information and came away with some interesting ideas that we’ll follow up.”

With five Grain & Graze roadshows now completed (others were held in the Maranoa-Balonne catchment at Nindigully and Roma), an evaluation of how pastures contribute to the overall profitability and productivity of the regions will take place. Evaluation data will be included in a results booklet for all project partners, collaborators and farmers.

“The results booklet will provide more in-depth information from every project and while a second stage of the Grain & Graze national program is still in negotiation, mixed farming research and extension will continue to be an important focus for partners in the region,” Ms Taylor said.

Ends

The Border Rivers and Maranoa-Balonne Grain & Graze projects have been a partnership between the national Grain & Graze partners, the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee, the Border Rivers-Gwydir CMA, the Queensland and New South Wales Departments of Primary Industries, CSIRO, the University of New England and the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water.

The national Grain & Graze partners include Land & Water Australia (LWA), Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) and the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC).

For further information about the Grain & Graze Program, contact National Coordinator, Richard Price, on 02 6295 6300, mobile 0409 624 297; Gillian Stewart on 02 6263 6042; Merryn West on 02 6263 6013 or visit www.grainandgraze.com.au.

Grain & Graze Regional Coordinators

Avon Region – David Kessell: 08 9690 2000

Border Rivers Region – Kathryn Taylor: 07 4671 7960

Central West/Lachlan Region – Jodie Dean: 02 6895 1015

Corangamite/Glenelg-Hopkins Region – Cam Nicholson: 03 5258 3860

Eyre Peninsula Region – Naomi Scholz: 08 8680 6233

Mallee Region – Lance Brown: 03 5021 9100

Maranoa/Balonne Region – Nick Christodoulou: 07 4688 1450

Murrumbidgee Region – Katrina Sait: 02 6924 4633

Northern Agricultural Region – Philip Barrett-Lennard: 08 9475 0753