

MEDIA RELEASE

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Thinking holistically way forward for farmers

Farmers from the Tara and Glenmorgan districts recently completed a holistic grazing management training course, which was part of a project supported by Landcare and natural resource management group, the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC).

Brian Wehlburg and Helen Lewis, of Inside Outside Management, led the group of nine farmers through their Holistic Management course over the past 10 months. The course expanded on a whole-of-system approach to decision-making frameworks, grazing land management and financial management.

The group spent five days with Brian and Helen reviewing the training, and travelling around each property to begin applying the training on the ground.

“Although the season has been extremely difficult, most of the farmers had begun to implement changes to their practices, which were already showing signs of improving the soil surface and biodiversity,” said Tara Landcare Coordinator, Andy Gunther.

“Every business was now studying plant growth rates to allow for maximum recovery of plants, maximising carbon capture and creating as much ‘winter hay stack’ as was possible with the very limited season,” he said.

Farmers had already established monitoring sites on their properties, using the training to measure the effects of their management decisions, and make management changes as needed.

The training was part of a bigger project with QMDC, and funded by the National Landcare Programme. This project supported groups of farmers through different grazing management training programs. The project, through feedback, will compare levels of knowledge and the success of each course, allowing QMDC to provide better advice to other farmers seeking training.

“A lot of farmers have been investing in training to help them adapt to, and manage their way through the current harsh seasons,” said QMDC’s Bob Walker.

“But there are a lot of training courses out there, and many groups of farmers are not quite sure which one would suit their needs.”

“The project isn’t about determining which course is best, though”

“We just want to provide better advice to farmers about which course might best meet the needs for their specific industry, locality and environmental challenges.”

Farmers who participated in the holistic management course were certainly satisfied.

“It was certainly the best I have attended,” said Glenn Telford. “These were totally new ideas, which were passionately promoted by the facilitators, with lots of reinforcement.”

“It gives me great hope and motivation for the future,” he said.

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Media contact/s

Released by: Amelia Radford, Communication Officer, 07 4637 6234

More information: Andy Gunther, Tara Landcare Coordinator, 07 4665 3133

Bob Walker, Land and Soils Regional Coordinator, 0427 056 440

Images



Andy Gunther and Wayne McNalty working on their Holisticgoals



Identifying plant species with Greg Coase and his father



Greg and Carol Hoadley setting-up a grass growth cage to monitor plant recovery