

Media Release



FUTURE FARM
INDUSTRIES CRC
PROFITABLE PERENNIALS™ FOR AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPES

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Biodiversity guide shows native pastures could be the way of the future

Native pastures can be more profitable than establishing and maintaining sown pastures is one of the good news messages to come from the Future Farm Industries CRC's (FFI CRC) latest publication, *Biodiversity in the Paddock: A Land Managers Guide*.

The new guide has been created to help livestock producers throughout southern Australia assess the different approaches to managing native pastures to improve biodiversity and productivity.

Guide co-author and CSIRO researcher, Josh Dorrough, said the publication reflects the growing recognition of the role native pastures can play in landscape health, such as providing year-round soil protection, improving water quality and increasing general biodiversity.

"Their low-input requirements for water and fertiliser have also increased their appeal as Australian farmers look for new ways to remain productive in a drying climate," Josh said.

The direct experiences of farmers in the south-western slopes of New South Wales and the inland slopes of Victoria were used in formulating the key messages and conclusions given in the guide.

"The publication is well stocked with direct quotes taken from farmers who have shared with us their first-hand experiences in making native pastures work for them," Josh said.

"In general, they have told us that diverse, low-input, native pastures cannot support high densities of livestock, but if managed appropriately to maintain high plant cover and diversity, they can sustain grazing animals indefinitely, reduce the risk of soil erosion and respond to rainfall all year round."

Gross profit margins on native pastures can range from \$30 to \$250 per hectare. They can also be profitable in areas where persistence and profitability of sown pastures is poor.

Besides providing a sustainable food source for livestock and grassy woodlands are well positioned to become an alternative source of income through biodiversity management, ecosystem services and carbon capture and storage.

Biodiversity in the Paddock: A Land Managers Guide can be downloaded from the Publications page of the FFI CRC website (www.futurefarmcrc.com.au) or email gmadson@fnas.uwa.edu.au to have a copy posted out.

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Future Farm Industries Cooperative Research Centre aims to transform Australian agriculture and rural landscapes by developing and applying Profitable Perennials™ technologies to innovative farming systems and new regional industries.
