

Producers get tech savvy in Kilcoy and Esk

Colinton grazier John Westaway is a 'computer convert' and says property mapping will make a big difference to the way he manages his cattle business.

Mr Westaway is just one of 15 producers who took their use of farm computers to a new level last week at AgForce Projects property mapping workshop in Kilcoy and Esk.

The hands-on workshops provided landholders with a step-by-step guide to creating a map of their property and using mapping software to improve productivity.

"I have been using a mapping program for a while, however I wanted to become more proficient using the program," Mr Westaway said.

"It will be great to be able to plan and manage our property from behind a computer, making general farm management so much easier. I plan to use the software to plan out watering points and to map distances to water and infrastructure."

AgForce Projects GIS technical officer Noel Brinsmead showed landholders how to use the software to map out new and existing property infrastructure and landscape information and said the map can then be used to meet environmental obligations, legislative requirements, apply for grants or for industry best practice.

"As well as financial and production improvements, a property computer map is also a useful tool to help landholders prepare and recover in the event of a natural disaster," Mr Brinsmead said.

"Having a map that identifies property infrastructure and production before and after a disaster will help you demonstrate the extent of damage when making insurance claims or applying for disaster grants.

"A property map is also vital for landholders concerned about CSG activity. Property maps that identify your farm infrastructure, productive areas or even future developments can help landholders negotiate where CSG companies can and can't conduct mining activity."

All attendees received their property's latest digital data including, Spot5 and 11 years of Landsat satellite images ranging from 1988 to 2010.

These workshops were delivered by AgForce Projects with funding support from the Queensland Government and the Australian Government FarmReady program.

For more information or to request a workshop in your area visit www.agforceprojects.org.au or call 07 3238 048. AgForce Projects will present free GPS essentials workshops in Miles, Meandarra and Millmerran from 6-8 December, visit the website to register.

More photos available by request

Photo caption: Andy Altmann, 'Nukinenda', Crows Nest, Joe Gough, Windsor Grove, and John Westaway, 'Sarner Alp', Colinton catch up at an AgForce Projects property computer mapping workshop in Esk on Wednesday 23 November.

For comment call Noel Brinsmead on (07) 3238 6041 or 0400 665 436.

Media contact: AgForce Projects communication officer Madeline Cooper (07) 3238 6060 or 0488 002 091.