



AGFORCE PROJECTS - Media Release

Producers celebrate Grazing BMP milestone in CQ

15 October 2014

THE first graziers in Central Queensland to receive their Grazing Best Management Practice (BMP) Accredited Producer Certification will attend a special presentation in Emerald this month, to celebrate the incredible milestone for the Grazing BMP Program.

The event, to be held on October 16, will celebrate the achievements of the graziers, which identify them as leaders in the implementation and demonstration of grazing industry best practice in Queensland.

Grazing BMP launched in 2013 to help graziers identify steps to improve the long-term profitability and sustainability of their grazing enterprise.

AgForce-owned Belmont Research Station has become one of the first properties to be accredited under the Grazing BMP program.

Property manager Phil Orchard says the program is an excellent way to improve his impact on the environment as a grazier, and also increase profitability.

"I have been working in the rural and agricultural industry for most of my adult life. Being both a father and grandfather it's very important to me that we leave the environment in a better condition than it is at present for the next generation.

"I became involved in Grazing BMP to help me understand how I could improve on current grazing practices, as I recognise that grazing has to be profitable and sustainable or there isn't a future in the industry."

The Belmont grazier says the program has strengthened his understanding of property management, and has helped identify issues to improve on property.

"After taking part in Grazing BMP, I have a better understanding of pasture management and the importance of soil structure," Mr Orchard said.

"The rotation of cattle to fresh paddocks to save the grasses has always been practiced on the property to reduce the time it takes for the paddocks to recover from stocking but I now keep a record of pasture dry matter and keep ground cover above 50 per cent whenever possible."

Mr Orchard said that soil erosion had only been a minor issue on property but that they were currently addressing erosion along waterways with the use of rock and gravel.

Grazing BMP officer Michael Taylor congratulated Phil Orchard and the Belmont Research Station team on their accreditation.

"It's great to see AgForce, Phil and the team at Belmont and all the graziers involved in the program leading the industry by example and taking the steps to become accredited.

"The program, which is designed for producers, by producers, helps graziers self-assess and identify opportunities in their current practices to become more sustainable and also demonstrate good environmental and animal stewardship," Mr Taylor said.

"As consumers increasingly demand produce sourced from sustainable production systems, we are confident the industry can utilise the Grazing BMP tool and capture industry progression, foster and support the ongoing development of a sustainable product, and also deliver the real facts across the whole industry."

Mr Orchard said that he was proud to be one of the first accredited producers and encourage graziers to get involved in the program.



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"The time taken to complete the Grazing BMP is minimal compared to the benefits gained for the producer and the environment," Phil Orchard said.

"In my opinion BMP should be undertaken by every grazier concerned about sustainable farming, profitability and leaving the country in very good condition for future generations."

The Grazing BMP Partnership includes the Fitzroy Basin Association, AgForce and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

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