



Project Snapshot

Land Manager Names:

**Corrigin Farm Improvement Group:
Craig Larke / Callan Hewett / Richard
Guinness**

Property Size:

**3500 ha, 3035 ha and 2300 ha
respectively**

Location:

Corrigin

Annual Rainfall (mm):

280 mm

Enterprise Mix:

**100% Cropping, Cropping and Sheep,
Cropping and Sheep**

Soil Types/Vegetation Types:

Medium loam country

Key Messages

- **For best results develop a revegetation plan.**
- **Tree plantings are great for stabilising eroded areas and to reduce the impact of salinity.**
- **Work together with your neighbours to consider tree plantings at a catchment level.**

Their story

The Corrigin Farm Improvement Group lead a revegetation project involving three neighbouring farmers in the Corrigin shire in 2010. This project was funded by the Wheatbelt NRM Soil Conservation Incentives Program. The Larke, Hewett and Guinness families all had previous experience planting trees, but had more areas on their farm that needed revegetating. "It's good to get trees back into the landscape", Craig Larke said. "If we had to buy the trees it probably wouldn't happen". Using a hired Chatfield tree planter the farmers either block or belt planted saltbush, oil mallees, brushwood and/or sandalwood. Richard Guinness said, "We needed to get help to continue our revegetation work, so the timing of the funding was ideal". He also mentioned, "We were able to establish trees on our ridge lines to reduce wind erosion and provide shelter for livestock, and the results have been aesthetically pleasing".



The plantings

Larke

Site 1: A block planting of 4,500 saltbush (*Atriplex* sp.) seedlings and 4,000 brushwood (spp.) seedlings on a sandy, slightly saline area.

Site 2: Two rows, two belts of 1,800 oil mallee (*Eucalyptus loxophleba lissophloia*) seedlings along a gully.

Site 3: A block planting of 1,200 oil mallee seedlings on a sandy slope above a creek line and another 3,000 oil mallees in two, two row, belts.

Hewitt

Site 1: Two rows of oil mallees along the fence line of a paddock and two belts along drainage lines in the same paddock. **Site 2:** Two row, two belts of 5,000 oil mallees along a waterway. A total of 5,000 seedlings funded.

Site 3: Two row, two belts of oil mallees on either side of a drainage bank near a gateway and a four row belt of oil mallees on the lower side of the drainage bank. **Site 4:** A two row belt of oil mallees on both sides of a waterway. A total of 5,000 seedlings funded.

Guinness

Site 1: Two row belt of oil mallees on an exposed hill slope, connecting remnant vegetation.

Site 2: Two row belt of oil mallees on an exposed hill top, connecting to remnant vegetation.

Site 3 and Site 4: Four belts of oil mallees (two rows/belt) in two paddocks along drainage lines. A total of 4,000 oil mallee seedlings funded, plus 5,000 sandalwood (spp.) seedlings planted in blocks at the four sites.

Lessons Learnt

Craig Larke's sites established very successfully. The only comment he made was about spraying the weeds between the trees. "Weed control is important but you need to use small implements rather than a big boomspray", he said. From discussions with his neighbour Richard Guinness he also learnt that having a revegetation plan for the farm is the key.

Unfortunately Callan Hewett did not share Craig's luck, with his plantings dying due to a lack of rainfall in 2010. Callan's previous experience with tree plantings had been with fodder shrubs. "The appeal to plant oil mallees instead was that the areas couldn't be fenced off around the eroded gully", Callan explained. "As I carry stock, the low palatability of oil mallees was an important factor in this case".

For some time Richard Guinness has been an advocate of tree revegetation programs and he, like Craig had a successful establishment. Given his knowledge on the subject he would have liked to pursue some ideas of his own during the project that were unfortunately not funded. "I found the tree options a little restrictive, as I would have liked to plant more biodiversity species". He also mentioned, however, "We actually got a few more trees than were anticipated, but in my opinion there is always plenty of room for trees".

Future plans

From taking part in the project, Craig Larke has decided to continue making productive use of land that is at present not offering any source of farm income. In addition he also plans to revegetate some inconvenient parts of the property to trees. "I would hope that the kids will take on farming the land but will have to wait and see what they want to do," Craig said. "The trees should help to manage salinity into the future".

Callan Hewett has no plans to change his farming operation, but is pleased to have had the opportunity to plant the trees. He explained the value of trees to him, saying, "It makes a nice change in summer to see the trees growing. It makes you feel better".

As for Richard Guinness he loves seeing the results of his labour. "It's great to look at the plantings a few years down the track. It's rewarding and that's what keeps you going". He plans to revegetate another 60 ha in 2013.





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