



Project Snapshot

Land Manager Names:	Colin, Nat and Josh Pearse
Location:	Meckering
Annual Rainfall (mm):	350
Enterprise Mix:	100% cropping
Soil Types/Vegetation Types:	Mixed deep yellow sand, gravels, sand over gravels, loams

Key Messages

- **Select the right plant for the job.**
- **Exclude livestock during establishment phase.**
- **Assess the weed and pests at the site and take appropriate control measures.**

Their story

The Pearse's project stemmed from a conversation with their local nursery manager, discussing revegetation options and potential grants.

Following this initial consultation Colin contacted Wheatbelt NRM and submitted an application through the Soil Conservation Incentive Program.

The project was implemented across 100 hectares with a mix of oil mallee species (*Eucalyptus loxophleba lissophloia* and *Eucalyptus polybractea*) and saltbush species (Ruby saltbush, Old Man saltbush and Rivermore saltbush). The species planted aimed to act as a barrier between salt affected land and productive cropping land.

A new Chatfields Ezyplanter was initially used to plant the seedlings, but this machine struggled due to the high weed burden at the site. A small side tree planter was borrowed from a neighbour to complete the planting - which worked well. Stock were excluded from the site to ensure the seedlings had the best opportunity for survival and establishment.

Although the benefits from the project won't become obvious until the seedlings are more established, the Pearse's are confident that the fodder shrubs and trees will assist in increasing the productivity of the uphill slopes that are still in annual cropping rotations. "It is nice to revegetate the unproductive valleys to protect the productive slopes", Colin said.

Lessons Learnt

During planting, couch grass was an issue as it blocked up the tree planter, slowing down the planting process. In the future, Colin will evaluate the weed burden at a planting site and implement appropriate weed control. Another solution is to use a tree planter with mechanical weed control attachments. Rabbits also posed a problem to the *Eucalyptus polybractea* species. In the future Colin plans to plant *Eucalyptus loxophleba lissophloia* species of oil mallees as it seemed to be less palatable to the rabbit population. A continued rabbit baiting program is also planned in the future for ongoing management of the site.



Right: Saltbush planting

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