



Optimising Fodder Options in Mixed Farming Systems Project 2018-2023

PROJECT CODE: MU33P4

Overview of Progress: April to June 2019

The Wheatbelt NRM team have progressed the project well and completed all of the deliverables in year 1 of the project. We have expanded on the community of practice with over 85 grower group and individual members.

A second community engagement event was held in Corrigin. Contracted 12 farming businesses as project demonstration sites

Project planning documents have been completed including:

- Monitoring plan
- Internal Meri Plan

52 surveys assessing knowledge and skills have been completed

Baseline survey data set has also been compiled to measure movement towards adoption of increased summer ground cover.



At our recent community engagement event held in Corrigin we had 34 attendees, as part of the event we visited Simon Wallwork of Julcintra farm, who farms 3700 hectares with wife Cindy in Corrigin. Julcintra farms has a mix of merino's, cattle and cropping.

Event attendees visited a section of Simon's farm that had been planted to Millet and Sorghum. It was of particular interest due to the amount of growth of the plants in comparison to the very dry summer. The Millet and sorghum also provides excellent cattle feed during the autumn feed gap where stubble begins to lose its value and the livestock are looking for green feed.

Lessons Learnt and Improvements

The project design has been very popular with the community, with many farmers showing interest and wanting to be involved.

We had really good feedback from the Corrigin event despite a power outage at the venue which meant speakers weren't able to use their power point presentations. The format of the workshop worked well and the field walk component of the day was well received.

One of the important aspects of this project is the importance of promoting the message that summer ground cover and increased soil carbon reduces wind erosion and has potential to supply feed for livestock over the summer/autumn feed gap.

With the project commencing later than originally anticipated, it meant that the period for farmers to apply to be demonstration farms was relatively short and took place when many Wheatbelt farmers were seeding. We did receive some feedback from farmers that suggested we may have received a higher number of applications had this not been the case.

Despite this however, we were still oversubscribed for the places we had available and the standard of applications were exceptional.

Acknowledgement

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