CASE STUDY 041

2019-2023

PHCC Working Together
Peel-Harvey Catchment Council

REGIONAL GOALS

P People

B Biophysical

K Knowledge

Saltbush establishment on marginal land within the Hotham Williams catchment

Saltbush provides an economic and sustainable forage crop option for a range of soil types, environments, and animal species across the greater South West Wheatbelt. There are numerous species and varieties of Saltbush available, with a new variety of Old Man Saltbush, Anameka™, now gaining wide interest among farmers.

A number of sites have been planted to various Saltbush varieties in the Hotham-Williams Catchment in the past five years to assess how different varieties respond to local soil and climate conditions. These trial plantings show that Anameka™ and other Saltbush varieties can provide cost-effective fodder alternatives to sheep farmers in the Hotham-Williams Catchment where plantings are well planned and managed.

FUNDING PROGRAM
Australian Government's National Landcare Program

PHCC PROGRAM
Greening Farms

PHCC PROJECT
Saltbush establishment on marginal land within the Hotham Williams catchment

FUNDING

National Landcare Program	10,000
Tom Wittwer (in-kind)	$39,996

REGIONAL COVERAGE

STAKEHOLDERS
Tom Wittwer, farmer

BENEFICIARIES
Farmers, local flora and fauna

PROJECT MANAGER
Andrew Del Marco

STEERING COMMITTEE
Marilyn Gray, Andy Gulliver, Paddi Creevey, Rob Summers, Jan Star, Darralyn Ebsary

"Saltbush is a natural alternative feed source that greatly reduces supplementary stock feeding costs, especially from late summer to early winter, and there are numerous varieties to fill different farm soil conditions"

~ Dustin McCreery, Chatfield's Nursery ~

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Five (5) hectare trial site selected and fenced to assess characteristics and effectiveness of a number of Saltbush varieties including Old Man Saltbush (Atriplex nummularia), Anameka™ Saltbush (selection of Old Man Saltbush), and River Saltbush (Atriplex amnicola)
- Site preparation included spraying for weeds, planting and establishment of various saltbush varieties including Anameka™ and Old Man Saltbush; seasonal grazing is needed throughout the year to ensure plants don't get too high and become woody
- Benefits include: Increased forage throughout seasons, decreased supplementary feeding costs, increased food source over the Autumn-Winter feed gap, reduced wind and soil erosion
- Research by the WA Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development has also shown that extensive Saltbush plantings can lower local groundwater levels by 0.5 metres

PROJECT OUTCOME

Increased stock feed options through edible biomass whilst revegetating marginal land, decreasing wind and soil erosion, with both short and long term economic and productivity benefits. Animal health benefits include boosting Vitamin E intake over summer, reducing pressure on pasture emergence through forage shrub feed availability. Increased stock shade and shelter all year round.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

In 2019-20 Tom Wittwer will plant an additional 10, 000 saltbush seedlings on marginal land

COLLABORATION

Chatfield's Nursery, opportunities to support saltbush and other fodder crops delivered through Hotham Williams Landcare Centre

LINKS TO OTHER PROJECTS

An average of 25 000 Saltbush plants will be planted across three (3) farms east of Boddington through the Greening Farms project. There is also strong interest from both cattle and sheep producers for various saltbush species suitable for planting on the Swan Coastal Plain.