

NEWS RELEASE

Regenerative farmers say 'Yes' to the demands of mindful consumers

12 March 2018 - A group of Australian farmers is taking up the challenge to show consumers just how well they're managing the environment.

Knowing that consumers now demand proof that farmers are putting land regeneration at the heart of their operations, the group has created a program of farmer support and environmental monitoring to do just that.

Backed by the Federal Government's Farming Together program, the group ranges from NSW, South East QLD and northern Victoria, managing 47,000 ha between them.

The new initiative, called *Land to Market*™ will use scientific rigour to show improvements to biodiversity, soil health, and ecosystem function. This in turn is designed to help consumers choose which food or fibre to spend their money on.

'A key feature of the idea is that it avoids prescribing a set of farm management practices' said project lead, Braidwood beef producer Tony Hill.

To join the scheme - farmers will be supported through scientific monitoring towards an Ecological Outcome Verified™ seal (or EOVTM). 'This process will capture trends in soil health, biodiversity, and ecosystem function over time and importantly for time-pressed farmers, the approach is designed to be robust but simple, inexpensive and rapid' he said.

'It's an idea whose time has come' said governing committee member, Ian Chapman, cattle and pastured pig producer of Stuart Town, NSW. 'Consumers want to be proud of the impact of their purchases and farmers want their environments improving while they're producing a great quality product. This verification program will help both achieve that outcome.'

Tony Hill added "We hope that this move will be welcomed by the broader farming and scientific communities since we are all, consumers and farmers alike, seeking answers to some of the most pressing challenges of our times."

The group is welcoming farmers to join the program. Email tony@holisticfarms.com.au

The Land to Market Australia program has been launched today at <http://www.landtomarketaustralia.com.au/program.php>.

ENDS

NOTE FOR EDITORS / PRODUCERS:

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Photo caption: Farmers undertake transect training
Photo by Judith Crispin, with permission

ABOUT FARMING TOGETHER:

The 'Holistic Land Management Cooperative Project' gratefully acknowledges the financial and other support it has received from The Farm Co-operatives and Collaboration Pilot Program (Farming Together Program) which is supported by a \$14,934,000 (incl GST) grant auspiced to Southern Cross University to administer the Program by the Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources.

Farming Together is being delivered by Southern Cross University on behalf of the Australian Government. It comprises a highly experienced senior team drawn from a wide range of commodity groups from across Australia and is backed by an industry advisory group representing experts from Western Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales.

ABOUT LAND TO MARKET AUSTRALIA:

The **Land to Market Australia™** program has been developed and is being managed by a group of 31 farmers who practice holistic land management. Between them they manage farms totalling 47,000ha. Altogether, they manage nearly 20,000 head of livestock (mainly cattle, also sheep and pigs) and each year produce 3.7m eggs and 162 tonnes of horticultural products. The group - headed by a governing committee comprising Tony Hill, a beef and garlic producer from Braidwood, NSW; Anna Coughlan, a beef producer from Holbrook, NSW; Ian Chapman, who runs beef and pastured pork at Stuart Town (NSW) and beef producer, Brian Wehlburg of Kindee Valley (NSW) - is currently exploring the opportunity to form a Co-Operative.

ABOUT SAVORY INSTITUTE'S LAND TO MARKET™ PROGRAM:

Savory Institute's Land to Market™ is a grassroots program that allows every participant in the agricultural supply network to regenerate the land on which we all depend. This program brings together leading ecologists and soil scientists, farmers and ranchers who produce food and fibre, brands and retailers who source livestock-derived supply, and consumers who buy food and fibre products at retail. The program has three areas of emphasis: recognising farmers and ranchers for their positive ecological outcomes; providing sourcing solutions for conscientious brands and retailers; and empowering consumers to "vote" for a regenerative future through their purchase power. When embraced at scale, Land to Market offers an adaptive solution to the issues of climate change, carbon sequestration, water infiltration and food security. For more information visit: <https://www.savory.global/landtomarket>.