



Moore Catchment Council

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Farmer ploughs wheat crop for elite saltbush trial

Aaron Edmond of Calingiri is one of three farmers helping CSIRO to trial elite Oldman saltbush in the paddock and offered a corner of wheat crop to plant the 1,000 seedlings. The Moore Catchment Council (MCC) obtained funding through the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council's (NACC) Caring For Our Country (CFOC) devolved wind erosion grant scheme and CFOC's Community Action Grants scheme to carry out the project. In partnership with the Moora-Miling Pasture Improvement Group (MMPIG), three different project sites were chosen at Miling, Namban and Calingiri to ensure widespread testing of the shrubs.

Rachel Walmsley of MCC says 'Dr Hayley Norman, CSIRO has been running the project funded through Future Farm Industries CRC to find an Oldman Saltbush cultivar with higher digestibility and palatability than the average Oldman saltbush on offer at nurseries. The project has involved narrowing down the original 80,000 cultivars to just 12 and has relied on sheep to do the majority of the selection through their grazing preference at the research sites. These 12 remaining cultivars will be trialled at ten sites across WA including the three in the MMPIG region.'

The MMPIG and MCC have had a long involvement with promoting saltbush as a sustainable fodder shrub. As well as providing energy, protein and vitamin E, they also have a great environmental role in rehabilitating saline lands and provide habitat for native animals. CSIRO will monitor the sites over the next couple of years to measure growth and adaptability in the paddock, and also rate preference by the local sheep. Rachel concluded 'Thanks to the farmers who offered a trial paddock and their assistance for planting – Aaron Edmonds, Dan Hastie and Ken Seymour. Thanks to all the funders, and to Hayley and Matt for planting the seedlings.'

For more information, please contact Rachel at MCC on 9653 1355



Above: Matt Wilmot, Aaron Edmonds and Hayley Norman plant elite saltbush at the Calingiri site

13th
Aug
2012



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY



MOORA - MILING PASTURE
IMPROVEMENT GROUP



CSIRO



The Moore Catchment Council is an important sub-regional contributor to the Northern Agricultural Catchments Council.

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