



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BRANCH

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Media Release

Western Blue Gum is Tops

February 22, 2006

Seeing is believing – and here is proof that Forest Products Commission’s tree breeding program is producing some amazing results.

In a demonstration plot at Dingup near Manjimup, the growth of Western Blue Gum (WBG) brand against a Tasmanian provenance of blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) wildly surpassed early predictions.

On volume per hectare WBG outperformed the Tasmanian provenance by an incredible 63 per cent.

WBG trees were also taller and straighter with double the number of straight trees compared with the Tasmanian provenance, which has been a recommended seed provenance for Western Australian plantations for a long while.

Gavin Ellis, General Manager of Great Southern Plantations Limited and his wife Penni’s personal property was used for the trial which was planted in 1998.

Mr Ellis is one of FPC’s biggest advocates and Great Southern Plantations continues to buy hundreds of thousands of our WBG seeds and seedlings each year.

Tree Breeding Manager Trevor Butcher said it really was gratifying to see that all the work over the years had made such a significant difference.

“Since this first stage of improvement from the FPC’s open pollinated seedling seed orchard, further advances have been made and we are now developing clonal orchards where the predictions are for a 25 per cent improvement.

But if history is to repeat itself then this could be a significant under estimation.”

“Seeds from our clonal orchards are currently being sold both nationally and internationally,” he said.

Pic Caption: FPC Seed Technologies Manager, Liz Barbour standing by unthinned stands of Western Blue Gum (left) and property owner Gavin Ellis with Tasmanian *E. globulus* (right).

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