



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BRANCH

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Media Release

Trees for the future

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Esperance farmers were given a deeper understanding about the opportunities and science behind farm forestry at a recent education workshop.

Organised by South East Forest Foundation and funded by South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc., the workshop involved visits to Geoff Tidow's property, looking at maritime pine and perennial pastures, and Jim William's property, where he has sandalwood and eucalypt plantings.

Topics covered included Lake Warden catchment, understanding local hydrology to manage salinity, perennial pastures, incentive opportunities, tree farming economics for the Esperance area and the Strategic Tree Farming (STF) project being promoted by the Forest Products Commission (FPC).

Local farmer Mick Quinlivan said he was particularly interested in comments made by John Simons, Department of Agriculture and Food WA hydrologist, about the importance of understanding local hydrology as the key to managing salinity and the opportunities that the FPC offers with the STF project.

"It means that the farmers can get involved in farm forestry with minimum upfront outlay," he said.

STF is about working with landowners to integrate commercial tree species into the farm landscape to help tackle salinity, rising water tables and land degradation in medium rainfall areas in priority catchments, which currently includes Lake Warden and Young River Catchments. It is about planting trees for the benefit of farming operations and also generating a range of flexible revenue options, to create a genuine win-win for the environment and the economy.

Over 1,400 hectares have been planted in the Esperance region this season, with growers receiving up to \$1250/hectare. Farmers can also earn extra income by completing the contract work for FPC such as site preparation, weed control and planting.

For more information about Strategic Tree Farming, call the FPC's Esperance office on 9071 7255 or visit www.fpc.wa.gov.au.

Choice of pics – GHobson1 or GHobson2

Caption: “Graeme Hobson, Senior Forester, Forest Products Commission, explains suitable host trees for sandalwood plantings”.

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