

GRAINGROWERS' CASE STUDY



Simon Wallwork and Cindy Stevens have a mixed farm operation (80% crop and 20% livestock) in Corrigin, WA and have been working with their farm advisor to calculate their current carbon emissions. Simon and Cindy are involved in the AgZero2030 movement

www.agzero2030.org

"We wanted to know where we are at the moment and then work out what we need to do to reduce our emissions and think about how we might use offsets.

We don't see lowering GHG and productivity as mutually exclusive. We want to leave our farm in better shape for the next generation and make money now. We're always looking at ways to improve our soil - we need fertile and productive soils for our business to be sustainable and we want to consider the possible opportunities to get a return from carbon.

To us it looks like 1000ha is about the amount of land that makes sense to get a return at current carbon price. Basically, we can't do that ourselves and so it's likely several farmers would need to pool together. It's a long term commitment but there are big companies out there who need offsets and

potentially we can offer that. We are also looking at planting multi purpose trees we can use to graze sheep or where we can earn a biodiversity premium.

The need for consistency with carbon calculators and models is one of the biggest issues we've found. The whole ag industry needs to have a carbon calculator which works for mixed farms like ours. That's the only way everyone can get a clear picture about how the whole sector is tracking.

Education is also one of the huge needs at the moment. It's important farmers have a whole lot of information about carbon, emissions and offsets so they can think about what is useful to their individual situation.

Investment, development and adoption of innovation and technology which enables farmers to mitigate and adapt to climate change."

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Wayne Pech from North Stirling Downs Agriculture in the Great Southern Region of WA has a similar message about carbon calculators and education.

"I'm involved in a DPIRD / MLA pilot group looking at opportunities to reduce emissions and its been hard to find a calculator that's useful and simple for my whole operation. I need something that has a range of in-built assumptions so I can just add my data into it and get an idea of where the numbers sit for my whole farm - both cropping and livestock.

I also think having a simple tool will help those people who are sitting on the fence about their current carbon levels and emissions and give them a good read of their baseline numbers as I often wonder if farmers are taking out more carbon than they think. Croppers tend to see themselves as not big emitters but we have to also understand the full supply chain and where emissions

may be created. We're seeing more markets like the EU asking about our sustainability and wanting us to prove our product. It's a sign of things to come and we've already seen CBH set up sustainable segregations to cater for certain market, so why not get invested in carbon?

I'm also looking at other opportunities to benefit from carbon. I've planted 100 hectares of trees for carbon credits through "Outback Carbon". I provide the land and get 50% of the ACUUS and the investor stumps up for the planting costs. This is only a small parcel of my 13,000ha property and I picked country that had lower productivity or was just easier to fence off. It's early days and I'll look to put more country aside over the next few years. I believe the opportunities will outweigh the benefits."