Climate Positive Beef Production

STUART AUSTIN
GENERAL MANAGER
WILMOT CATTLE CO
An uncertain world...

- Managing Risk – Climate and markets
- Regenerating Landscapes – why a fundamental shift needs to occur.
- Soil Carbon – a valuable CO-BENEFIT of beef production.
A tipping point...

“What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

Dr Jane Goodall, Scientist & Activist
Managing Risk

There is no doubt that we are farming in a changing climate. Deny the evidence at our peril.

We already produce enough food to feed 10 billion people. One third of the food we produce for 7 billion people, is wasted.

Higher Production ≠ Higher Profit
Managing Risk

Through our unwavering quest for higher food production, we have inadvertently created:

- less nutrient dense food
- less healthy people
- a less healthy environment

That is all trying to be sustained by a soil that is on life support!
RESTORING THE ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION OF OUR LANDSCAPES, PROFITABLY.
RESTORING THE ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION OF OUR LANDSCAPES, PROFITABLY.
Managing Risk

What can WE do to manage risk in agricultural business?

➢ Increase our focus on PROFIT per hectare, rather than production.
  
  *Higher Production ≠ Higher Profit*

➢ Reduce costs, particularly those that add more risk, primarily inputs.
  
  *Ask yourself, “if it doesn’t rain, can I recover these costs?”*

➢ Stop killing things to grow things!
  
  *There is no profit, in death.*

Let Mother Nature self organise.
“The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself.”

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt -
Regenerating Landscapes

RESTORING THE ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION OF OUR LANDSCAPES, PROFITABLY.
WCC Intro

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAVSJlj-i00

Play – 1.16 – 1.30
## Wilmot Cattle Co

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wilmot</td>
<td><strong>Ebor, NSW</strong>&lt;br&gt;1,850ha / 4,500ac&lt;br&gt;1,150mm&lt;br&gt;Volcanic basalt soils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodburn</td>
<td><strong>Walcha, NSW</strong>&lt;br&gt;2,500ha / 6,000ac&lt;br&gt;730mm&lt;br&gt;Granite soils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td><strong>Kelvin, NSW</strong>&lt;br&gt;1,500ha / 3,700ac&lt;br&gt;620mm&lt;br&gt;Grey loam to red &amp; black basalt soils</td>
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Regenerative Agriculture

“Our vision at Wilmot Cattle Co is to restore the ecological function of our landscapes in a profitable way”

We manage to a set of principles, not practices, using animals to restore the landscape, and its biodiversity, at a low cost.

“Globally, soils have become a largely degraded resource, so why would I want to SUSTAIN that, I need to REGENERATE my soils in order to go on farming.”

Gabe Brown, Dirt to Soil
Regenerative Agriculture – Soil Health Principles

1. Plan, monitor and manage soil health.
   ➢ We live by the mantra that you can’t manage what you don’t measure.
   ➢ We acknowledge that all plants have a role to play in production.
3. A focus on biology will heal and repair soil health.
   ➢ We focus on soil biology, more so than chemistry and physics.
4. Introduce biodiversity.
   ➢ We manage for maximum diversity of plant species.
5. Maximise thickness and availability of groundcover.
   ➢ 100% groundcover 100% of the time.
6. Livestock are nature’s recyclers.
   ➢ We use animals, not inputs to restore our ecology.
1. Plan, monitor and manage grazing.
2. Rest period is adjusted to suit the growth rate of the plant.
3. Stocking rate is adjusted to match carrying capacity.
4. Manage livestock effectively.
5. Maximise stock density for minimum time.
6. Use diversity of plants and animals to improve ecosystem services.

➢ We live by the mantra that you can’t manage what you don’t measure.
➢ Rest is constantly adjusted, from 30 days, to as long as 90 days or more.
➢ Through detailed graze planning and forecasting, we make decisions early.
➢ As with all animals, a healthy frame of mind is critical.
➢ One of our most powerful tools, we use small numbers of large mobs for short periods of time.
➢ We allow all plants to grow and play their role.

Regenerative Agriculture – Grazing Principles
Regenerative Agriculture – Decision making

*MaiaGrazing is our single most powerful decision making tool, that creates the most value, and generates the highest ROI.*

It allows us to effectively manage our:

1. Grass inventory
2. Livestock inventory
3. Rest period
4. Short term graze planning
5. Longer term stocking rate forecasting
Carbon as a Co-Benefit
Carbon as a Co-Benefit

We are a beef production business first and foremost.

We do not claim to be “carbon farmers”.

Data is our greatest asset.

We manage risk through our approach to grazing management.

We have built resilience to climate extremes into our landscapes.

We believe an enlightened approach to soil and grazing management in Australia, will lead to an increase in soil organic carbon levels nationally.

Monetisation of that carbon, should be considered an incentive.
Carbon as a Co-Benefit - Wilmot

RESTORING THE ECOLOGICAL FUNCTION OF OUR LANDSCAPES, PROFITABLY.

SOC vs Rainfall

Organic Carbon %

SOC %

RAINFALL


BY3 GR1 BJW MC2 TM TE MCW Linear (Rainfall)
Carbon as a Co-Benefit - Monetisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Climate Solutions Fund</th>
<th>Regen Network</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>Public - Regulated</td>
<td>Private – Unregulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>2021 - 2031</td>
<td>2017 – 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost to Participate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Extensive sampling</td>
<td>Remote sensing Ground truthed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Validation</td>
<td>Gold Standard</td>
<td>Lower</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Extensive</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methane Emissions</td>
<td>Calculated and discounted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sequester</td>
<td>1 ton of Carbon per hectare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equates to</td>
<td>3.67 tons of CO2e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>ACCU’s</td>
<td>CarbonPlus Grasslands</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equivalent of</td>
<td>1 ton of CO2e</td>
<td></td>
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Carbon as a Co-Benefit – Opportunities for Government

Quick Wins
1. Increase upfront payments
2. Reduce discounts
3. Increase woodland limit
4. Facilitate method stacking
5. Reduce administrative and compliance burden

Embrace New technology
Carbon as a Co-Benefit – Opportunities for Farmers

➢ You can’t manage what you don’t measure – in order for you to be paid for carbon, you need to know how much you have.
  ➢ Start sampling consistently - same time, same place, annually.

➢ Focus on continuous improvement of Grazing Management – look at ways to increase **density** and **diversity**, from which will flow **abundance** and **opportunity**.

➢ Start now – the best time to baseline was yesterday!
“We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”

Native American Proverb

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