

Media Release

\$50,000 funding to benefit local environmental and agricultural projects

Two projects improving the environmental and agricultural health of the Mount Barker region have received a funding boost of \$50,000 from Mt Barker Free Range Chicken and Plantagenet Free Range Pork, through its partnership with Landcare Australia.

The Ranges Link project, being undertaken by the Oyster Harbour Catchment Group, is protecting existing natural areas between the Porongurup and Stirling Range National Parks. 300km of protective fencing has been erected to date, allowing remnant vegetation to flourish and benefitting wildlife habitat and the health of the whole Kalgan River system.

The second project focuses on the links between soil health and innovative cropping systems and is managed by the Gillamii Centre. This three-year project measures soil health indicators to increase knowledge and the links between productivity and the sustainability of different farming systems.

David Plant, General Manager of Livestock, Mt Barker Free Range Chicken and Plantagenet Free Range Pork, acknowledged the importance of investing in local projects such as these.

"We are proud to have grown from a small base to become a major farming business in the region. We view farming holistically, with a focus on animal welfare and the environment in addition to traditional measures of production. The Great Southern is clean and green, and a great place to rear free range poultry and pigs. The quality of the air, water and soil are important to our farming business and we make sure all of our farms produce in a sustainable way. Our support of Landcare and the Oyster Harbour and Gilamii projects in particular, is a way for us to further contribute to making sure the region stays productive and pristine for future generations," he said.

Adin Lang, Landcare Australia Partnership Manager, attended the funding presentations and spoke about creating a link between business and local communities. "It's great to be able to help local businesses work directly with Landcare Groups and organisations, especially when there is such a synergy between them. Through supporting local projects, companies such as Mt Barker Free Range Chicken and Plantagenet Free Range Pork get to see first-hand what their funding achieves and how much it means to local communities and environments," he commented.

Mt Barker Free Range Chicken and Plantagenet Free Range Pork has been supporting Landcare projects through its partnerships with Landcare Australia for a number of years. The Gillamii Centre project 'Gillamii Cropping Systems Soil Health Project' received funding of \$30,000, while the Oyster Harbour Catchment Group received \$20,000 for the Ranges Link project.

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About Landcare Australia

Landcare Australia is a not-for-profit organisation, leading the promotion of and providing financial support to the Landcare national resource management programme in Australia; aligning the practice of environmental management with land productivity, and devolving governance and management to local communities.

Landcare Australia works collaboratively with federal, state and local governments, corporate partners and sponsors, and individuals, to deliver hundreds of projects annually through the volunteer efforts of local community groups, indigenous groups, and the more than 5,400 Landcare and Coastcare groups across Australia.

www.landcareaustralia.org.au