Dow AgroSciences

CATTLE CAN GROW ON TREES.

Extra Income. Extra Productivity.

Stocking cattle and millable timber together can diversify enterprises and deliver extra income.

Solutions for the Growing World

RETAINING TREES FOR SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION

Clearing all is not the answer

Extensive land clearing for livestock production in the past inadvertently led to land degradation. Managing regrowth for long term timber production while improving land condition has led to greater interest in the role of trees for achieving improved productivity and better environmental outcomes in pastoral landscapes.

ALLOWING REGROWTH TO CHOKE PRODUCTIVITY ISN'T THE ANSWER EITHER

Excessive regrowth often causes many timber stands on grazing properties to 'lock-up' (cease growing) and reduce the under-storey and grass cover, which can lead to increased erosion, which is to be expected from high intensity rainfall events that can occur in Queensland.

BALANCE TREES WITH GRAZING DEMANDS.

Thinning is better. Management of the extensive private native forests could be significantly improved through silvicultural treatment to improve forest condition and productivity. This can lead to better outcomes for producers.

1. Increase and diversify incomes.
2. Drought proof properties (trees can be harvested any time).
3. Increasing carbon stocks
4. Maintaining the land in a 'productive' state

Optimal stocking densities for timber production and grazing is achieved at around 7 m^2/ha basal area. Basal area is the cross sectional area of all trees at 1.3 m.

For example 100 stems averaging 30 cm basal diameter (dbh) is equal to 7 m^2/ha. In reality this may be made up of small and large diameter trees. As tree basal area increases cattle stocking numbers need to decrease to maintain land condition.

After a harvest, where for instance the basal area is reduced to 5 m^2, cattle stocking can be increased accordingly. Optimally selective thinning using Tordon™ RegrowthMaster is undertaken five years after the harvest to thin out the best performing regeneration back to optimal numbers of around 100 to 130 stems/ha. This can be achieved by spacing out trees on average at approximately 8 to 10 metres apart.

Source: Native Forest management. Implications for grazing. Bill Schulke, Extension Officer (sustainable beef production),PFSQ, Gin Gin. Acknowledgements: EDGENetwork Grazing Land Management

There are some land types that are quite productive in terms of cattle production and timber production (eg. ironbark and spotted gum on duplexes and loams and ironbarks, bloodwoods on non-cracking clays, and blue gum slopes).

This has been well recognised by some landholders who still manage quite productive native forest production in conjunction with their grazing enterprise. The challenge for managing these land types is to strike a balance between cattle production and timber production. The total basal area of retained forest may be sub-optimal for either grazing or timber production, but may provide the best economic return.

YOU KNOW THE MARKET FOR BEEF BUT WHAT ABOUT TREES?

The applicable forest products for any landowner will vary from one area to another depending upon a range of factors. Obviously species, merchantable length, available volume, and other factors all have an impact. The variable that has the greatest impact upon market access is the distance to the prospective purchasers.

Some of the forest products that may be sold in your area could include: Sawlogs, veneer billets, salvage grade logs, poles, piles, mining timber, bridge girders, and a range of fencing material (Splits, rails, caps, strainers and stays).

TWO THIRDS OF THE COST IS LABOUR

The cost of the chemical in a regrowth maintenance or tree thinning program is often the minor portion of the total cost.

Records from a single person undertaking a commercial thinning application on Eucalypt regrowth at Mundubbera, QLD carried out from 2009 to 2012 over a period of 61 days (222 hours) using 71 litres of Tordon™ DSH and costing labour at $32/hr, indicated that the labour portion of the total cost was more than 65%.

Why risk not getting the right results with the wrong choice of product, when the labour cost of treatment is your biggest single cost.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Visit these links

www.pfsq.net
(Forest management guides)

www.nrm.qld.gov.au/vegetation/vegetation-management.html
(Download the Code Applying to a Native Forest Practice on Freehold Land)

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HOW TO GET STARTED?

Look at your property vegetation mapping supplied by DNRM. If it is mapped as remnant (coloured) then you will need to submit a Notification of a Forest Practice with DNRM and abide to the Code of Practice applying to a native forest practice on freehold land. If however your vegetation is mapped as regrowth, this can be thinned under the terms of a forest practice.

It is the landholder's responsibility to ensure that they comply with the code, which details the requirements for:

- demonstrating that the forest practice is for an ongoing forestry business
- conducting harvesting and silvicultural operations
- protecting wildlife
- protecting streams, drainage lines and adjacent vegetation from the impacts of forest practice
- protecting wetlands, lakes and springs from the impacts of forest practice
- protecting the soil resource from degradation as a result of forest practice
- managing the forest practice to ensure it causes no adverse impacts from acid sulphate soils.

A field guide has been developed to help forest practice operators.
This is available from the DNRM website. www.nrm.qld.gov.au/vegetation/clearing/forestpractice.html

There is no fee to noti fy.

For more information about marketing timber on private land contact Private Forestry Service Queensland.

Do it once.
Do it right.
Tordon™ RegrowthMaster guaranteed.