

## Embracing the opportunity

Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions



Central Queensland grazing property near Thangool

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Ripping and seeding works

When Leon Ward recently bought a 180-hectare property south of Thangool, with plans to run 50 head of cattle, he knew he wanted to ensure a productive, profitable and sustainable future for his land; he also knew exactly who could help.

Before securing the property in July 2023, Leon had talked with a Land Management Officer from Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA).

So with recent concerns about his land condition top of mind, he reached out again to FBA for some tailored, practical on-ground advice.

That’s where FBA’s exceptional work in grazing resilience and solutions became the much-needed step to ensure Leon’s property was productive.

**FBA delivers the Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions Program (GRASS program), which supports graziers to develop and implement a tailor-made action plan for land management.**

The Grazing Resilience and Sustainable Solutions (GRASS) program is funded through the Queensland Government’s Queensland Reef Water Quality Program and delivered by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), Fitzroy Basin Association, Burnett Mary Regional Group, and NQ Dry Tropics.

Leon was thrilled with the extra advice and chance to better understand how the action plan could help him improve and maintain his land condition with a specific focus on improving ground cover.

*“The property is ex-cultivation country that turned back into grass a long time ago. It’s had a fair bit of Indian couch on it, so grass had never really established itself,” Leon said.*

*“I was looking to reestablish some better pastures and gain some better knowledge on ways to do that, and since I’d met with FBA’s Land Management Officer Katlin Tilly earlier in the year, I thought I’d give her a call with the hope of getting some assistance,” Leon said.*

*“I’ve never done anything like this with FBA. I just took the opportunity, that’s how it started, and I was really grateful.”*

Katlin visited and assessed the property’s condition and from there developed a GRASS Land Management Plan, which they are working on together.



**“He is very dedicated to making a positive difference to his country and now has the tools and resources to do so.”**



Land Management Officer Katlin Tilly

Katlin said the property is de-stocked for recovery, with the main issues being run down pasture, scalded patches, erosion and a lack of trees in the grazing system.

*“There are currently two main scalded areas across the property and these areas would be very difficult to repair with grazing management alone. For this reason, mechanical intervention is required,”* Katlin said.

*“This project will rip and seed the scalded patches, which will help open up the soil, improve water infiltration and allow for plant germination over the wet season.”*

Katlin said the GRASS program was not only helping to repair paddocks, but has connected Leon to a wide network of resources, information and people.

*“I often find the role of a Land Management Officer is to be the guide that helps connect landholders to all of the different opportunities that are available in our region,”* she said.

*“While the on-ground project focused on the two scalded patches, the information we covered during the property visit and in the Land Management Plan will help Leon implement grazing best practices across the whole property.”*

Leon plans to use the property for backgrounding and trading cattle. He is currently about half way through the project with Katlin and hopes to start restocking by mid-2024.

*“I’m still thinking of giving the whole place a wet season spell to really give it a good kick along, with the aim to renovate the whole property, let moisture in and let grass get the chance to grow,”* Leon said.

While Katlin’s knowledge and passion helped guide Leon, she said it was great working with an excited land manager who was so eager to discover different land management techniques.

*“He is very dedicated to making a positive difference to his country and now has the tools and resources to do so.”*

**If you would like to start implementing changes on your property, contact FBA’s Acting Land Management Coordinator Annie May on 0408 574 129 or [annie.may@fba.org.au](mailto:annie.may@fba.org.au).**

The GRASS program supports good land management practices, which limits soil loss and sediment run-off to waterways flowing to the Great Barrier Reef.



The project aims to fix two scalded patches by ripping and seeding.