



A new era of agriculture



Are you striving for a healthy soil...

After more than 80 years of industrial-style agriculture dominating Australian broadacre production, a new way of assessing the land's worth is now gathering momentum: regenerative agriculture

Founded by Southern Cross University and led by Lorraine Gordon, Director of Strategic Projects, the Alliance includes leading researchers and agricultural practitioners worldwide.

The challenges ahead are enormous, but exciting, acknowledges Ms Gordon. "It won't be long before farmers who have invested in their landscape's environmental assets will see them sitting on the balance sheet of their farms.

"Properties with tree belts, fenced off waterways and mixed pastures of both improved and native species are already attracting a premium in the marketplace" she said.

Welcome to a new area of agriculture. Welcome to the era of carbon farmers.

According to a June 2019 report from the Australian Farm Institute, change is in the air. The report outlines the need for an Australian agricultural climate change strategy – supported by Farmers for Climate Action.

A triple-bottom line approach around these actions is needed: strong research, development and extension; a transition to clean energy; investment in the capture and storage of carbon.

If taken up, these can deliver real returns to farmers.

The work undertaken by the Regenerative Agriculture Alliance (RAA) is focusing on measuring carbon techniques, natural capital accounting and what is referred to as co-benefits through a collaborative approach with other organisations and researchers," said Ms Gordon.

National Farmers Federation's (NFF's) Tony Mahar supports the approach: "Farmers are at ground zero in regards to dealing with extreme weather events and climate change. I'm not sure how we put a value on the likes of clean water, fresh air and quality food from healthy soils and landscapes, but together with the Alliance and NFF, I'm keen to start."

While agriculture is responsible for 13 per cent of global emissions, it will provide the solution.

Baselining carbon isn't an exact science and it doesn't come cheap. An effective government strategy would be to pay farmers to do the initial baseline measurements or at least cover the cost until farmers start to receive an income from carbon trading in the future.

Overnight we could see real impact in the carbon capturing space and instil hope for our farmers' futures through being a market for offsets.

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<https://www.scu.edu.au/school-of-environment-science-and-engineering/regenerative-agriculture/>

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