Guide to planting trees on your farm

Step 1. Identify and map resources and assets on your farm.

Map existing and planned environmental and production assets and management (e.g. wind, water, nutrients, farm animals, native fauna, infrastructure and workers, soils, dams, roads and vegetation).

Step 2. What benefits do you expect trees to provide the farm? This informs location and design.

- shade and shelter for your livestock
- economic outcomes for you and your business
- environmental enhancement
- beauty and security.

Step 3. Decide where to plant trees on your farm.

- around the farm perimeter and on the windward side of future paddocks
- around dams and wetlands
- connecting existing patches of vegetation
- in areas susceptible to erosion
- next to farm roads and laneways.

Step 4. Determine suitable tree species and detailed design components.

For shelterbelts and shade plantings:

Design: Locate in areas most useful for shelter and shade. Aim for shelterbelt porosity of 25–50%.

Species: Trees suited to local climate and drainage conditions that grow tall, with a spreading branch structure (e.g. acacias, casuarinas). Include shrubs and ground cover.

For timber production:

Design: Need road access and conditions that promote good growth.

Species: Radiata pine, blue gum, shining gum, sugar gum or durable eucalypt species.

For carbon sequestration:

Design: Sites that promote growth. Narrow plantings (<40m) sequester more per unit area.

Species: Tall trees that grow quickly (e.g. shining gum and radiata pine).

For biodiversity plantings:

Design: Connect existing forest, dams and other habitat features. Make belts as wide as possible.

Species: A mix of native tree and shrub species, including those known for flowering.

Step 5. Develop a budget and a planting plan.

Know the costs and how to prepare the site: Labour, seeds or seedlings, tree guards, weeding and browsing control.

Know the best way to establish your trees: Plant seedlings from nurseries, direct seed, or use a combination of planting and direct seeding.

Know when to plant: Stage plantings over time, starting with priority areas. Order your seeds or seedlings through your local plant nursery at least a year before you plan to plant.

This will soon be linked to an e-learning course which provides more details. Scan the QR code to link to all project outputs.