

**Opportunities for Native Trees on Farms
Sustainable Farming Fund Project 03/204**

Final project Summary Report
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Sustainable Farming Fund Project Report “Opportunities for Native Trees on Farms”

Summary

This document is the final summary report for the “Opportunities for Native Trees on Farms” Sustainable Farming Fund Project (#03/204). The project was led by Tane’s Tree Trust members and supporting agencies and ran from October 2003 to June 2007. The total cost of the project was approx. \$164 000, including cash and in-kind contributions. Most of the cash funding (\$57500) was provided by the Sustainable Farming Fund, but other significant contributors included the Northland Regional Council, Environment Waikato, the New Zealand Forest Owners Association and the Forest Industries Training and Education Council. The project gathered information on the useful functions and management requirements of native trees within farm systems, mainly from Northland and Waikato farmers and relevant agencies, through workshops and interviews. Approximately 230 practitioners (farmers, rural landowners, enthusiasts etc.) participated in this process. Out of this information and experience, the book “Farming with Native Trees” was published and distributed to project participants and Tane’s Tree Trust members. Further copies are available from Ensis in Rotorua.

Introduction

This project arose from several strands. The pressing need for the enhancement of indigenous biodiversity throughout New Zealand has been clearly outlined in various recent agency publications. These reports have highlighted the role that the rural sector should play in achieving this goal and have prompted valuable discussion on the potential for native plants to fulfill various functions within rural landscapes to improve sustainability. The Trust recognized that there is already a substantial pool of experience and knowledge in rural communities about how to successfully establish and manage native trees on farms, hence there was an opportunity to capture and spread their knowledge more widely. In addition, an increasing level of collaboration between research agencies around the enhancement of indigenous biodiversity on farms ensured a technical underpinning. Two previous Sustainable Farming Fund projects, “Trees on Farms” (led by Environment Waikato) and “Tools for Farmers” (led by the Farm Environment Award Trust), provided useful models for a project focused on developing a package information on: a) ways of minimising the cost of indigenous biodiversity enhancement on farms; and b) maximising the benefits to farmers – incorporating a range of factors considered valuable to their business and lifestyle.

The original objectives of the project, as outlined in the Sustainable Farming Fund proposal, included work in Northland and the Waikato aimed at:

- 1) Engaging specific land managers and professionals with experience in biodiversity integration to document their knowledge and experience with using native trees on farms.
- 2) Incorporating wider community knowledge and experience in the context of a workshop series.
- 3) Applying the knowledge gained to regular farm systems.
- 4) Disseminating of all the information gained from both regions to the wider rural community and policy agencies.

The project was led by Tane’s Tree Trust and managed by a team of representatives from AgResearch, Environment Waikato, Forest Research (now Ensis), Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research, New Zealand Landcare Trust, and the Northland Regional Council.

Project activities

The first series of workshops to compile information on the use of native trees on farms from ‘expert practitioners’ was held in April 2004 (Parakao, Kaitaia, Kerikeri) and May 2004 (Te Kuiti, Whitehall, Waihi, Hamilton). In total 60 people participated, 25 in Northland and 35 in the Waikato. All of the participants were very enthusiastic about sharing their experience, and supportive of the project. The workshops were held from 10am-2pm on each day, though in most cases the participants remained afterward for discussion. Nardene Berry of the NZ Landcare Trust facilitated all the workshops.

The information from the farmer workshops comprised three parts: a) reasons why farmers are managing and planting natives; b) helps and hindrances that farmers experienced managing and planting natives; and c) site specific information on native tree management activities farmers had undertaken on their properties. The information in (a) and (b) formed the basis of a chapter in the final publication. The information in (c) formed the basis of the case studies in the final publication, for which more detail was sought from individual participants.

The second series of open-invite workshops were held in April (Paeroa, Otorohanga, Whangarei and Kaeo) and included the following:

- Presentation of some results from the 2004 workshops around the motivations and information sources for farmers using native trees. This was followed by a group breakout session to validate those results and seek any additional information.
- Presentation of a case study as a demonstration of the practical aspects of using native trees on farms. At Paeroa, Brian Harrison (a RSNZ teacher fellow who studied riparian management on farms) led a practical exercise and discussion on riparian planting. At Otorohanga, Allan Bullick gave a presentation on the native tree plantings at Waikeria prison, and Jackie Carter gave a presentation on the native tree plantings on their King Country hill farm. At Whangarei and Kaeo, Paul Quinlan gave a presentation on the management of regenerating totara stands on farmland.
- A group breakout session to seek quantitative information on the benefits and gains resulting from farmers activities in managing or planting native trees.
- A research presentation by Greg Steward of Forest Research on growing native trees for timber production at the two Waikato workshops; and a research presentation by Chris Phillips of Landcare Research on the effectiveness of native trees for bank stabilisation in riparian areas at the two Northland workshops.
- A presentation from MAF Indigenous Forestry Unit staff on the recently developed Permanent Forest Sink Initiative.

Attendance at the workshops was approx 20 at Paeroa, 30 at Otorohanga, 70 at Whangarei and 50 at Kaeo.

During 2005 the project team decided to publish the final booklet for this project as a continuation of the recent series of Forest Research/Tane's Tree Trust booklets written by David Bergin and others (see www.tanestrees.org.nz/pubs.php for details). This series has focussed on managing native tree species for mainly production purposes, and has set a high standard for quality of presentation and content. The Forest Research (now Scion) publications team facilitated the production process, led by Judy Griffith. Between late 2005 and early 2006 the project team focussed on gathering information and commencing the compilation of articles and photographs for the final publication, contracting Helen Ritchie to oversee this process and Jonathan Barran to provide photographic services. The team conducted a number of personal interviews with farmers who attended the previous workshops, to gather more in-depth information on their use of native plants on farms and engaged a number of agency experts to contribute scientific and technical articles (e.g. regional councils, MAF Indigenous Forestry Unit, Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research, Forest Research/Ensis, AgResearch).

The first draft of the bulletin was completed in April 2006 and circulated to reviewers for comments and feedback. This was received by July 2006 and the revisions processed during the latter half of 2006. Given that the original project proposal had a completion date of June 30, 2006 the project by this stage was running significantly behind schedule. However the major funder (Sustainable Farming Fund) agreed to a one year extension in order to complete the publication. In addition, a significant amount of supplementary funding was obtained by Tane's Tree Trust from the NZ Forest Owners Association (NZFOA) and the Forestry Industry Training and Education Council (FITEC).

Publicity

A press release on the project was prepared by AgResearch communications staff and released in July 2004. In response to this, a short item aired on Radio NZ's Rural Report on July 14, a live interview was aired on Hamilton's Community Radio station on July 15 ("Environment Matters" show), and a newspaper article appeared in the Waikato Times on July 27. An article on the project appeared in the February issue of "Coast & Country" rural newspaper, distributed through the Waikato and Bay of Plenty. The project was also mentioned in a New Zealand Herald article (22/6/05, pE8) based on an interview with Nardene Berry.

Project outputs

The first newsletter for the project was produced in February 2005 with the assistance of NZ Landcare Trust and Environment Waikato staff and mailed to approx. 200 farmers in the Waikato & Northland. The mailing list was made up of Tane's Tree Trust members, and contact lists sourced from the NZ Landcare Trust, Environment Waikato, the Farm Environment Awards and Northland Regional Council.

The 2nd project newsletter was produced in September 2005 by the NZ Landcare Trust and circulated (~300 copies) to Tane's Tree Trust members in the Waikato & Northland regions, and to others on our contact lists of those invited to previous workshops. The newsletter focused on a Northland case study of managing totara for timber, the recently announced Permanent Forest Sink Initiative, and the use of flax, linking to another current SFF project. Both newsletters were placed on the Tane's Tree Trust website.

The final bulletin was published and printed at the end of June 2007. It is entitled "Farming with Native Trees", somewhat a play on words from other rural media, with a subtitle "A guide for farmers from Northland to Waikato". However the project team would be disappointed if its value was restricted to only farmers or only northerners. We believe it has much wider applicability, and its compilation style should reflect this. But the subtitle is intended to recognise the strong geographic focus of the "Opportunities for Native Trees on Farms" project. The bulletin is Number 5 in the indigenous tree bulletin series produced by Forest Research/Scion and supported by Tane's Tree Trust.

An initial print run of 3000 copies was ordered and delivered. Copies have been sent to all Tane’s Tree Trust members (316), and the farmer participants in the initial series of workshops (~70) will also receive copies shortly. EW and NRC have ordered 500 copies each and the other agency participants and sponsors will also get a number of copies for their own distribution. Further availability will be initially advertised through the Tane’s Tree Trust website www.tanestrees.org.nz and the Sustainable Farming Fund website.

Project financials

A summary of the financials for the entire 4-year project is provided in the table below. The total cost of the project was ~\$164 000, approx 42% higher than the original budget. This extra cost was largely covered by the Trust being able to source additional cash funding of ~\$25 000 from industry and regional councils, and the extra in-kind contributions of the regional councils and CRIs valued at ~\$22 000.

Table 1: Financial summary for the project

2003-07	Budget	Actual	Variance
Cash revenue	70500.00	95975.00	25475.00
Cash costs	70500.00	96993.23	-26493.23
In-kind costs	45500.00	67442.50	-21942.50
Total costs	116000.00	164435.73	48435.73

Cash funding support for the project was received from the following agencies (in alphabetical order):

Environment Waikato
 Forestry Industry Training and Education Council
 New Zealand Forest Owners Association
 Northland Regional Council
 Ron Greenwood Environmental Trust
 Sustainable Farming Fund
 Transpower Landcare Trust Grants

In-kind funding support for this project was received from the following agencies (in alphabetical order):

AgResearch
 Environment Waikato
 Ensis
 Manaaki-Whenua Landcare Research
 New Zealand Landcare Trust
 Northland Regional Council
 Scion

The contributions from numerous farmers and practitioners that formed the basis for this project are also acknowledged.

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