

Education for our future generations

Future farming and drought proofing includes more than just hard manual work. It encompasses understanding business principles and finance in addition to learning about innovative and emerging technologies to remain competitive and viable.

I believe that reviewing the national training package in AHC (includes agriculture, horticulture, shearing etc) and adding units in STEM and basic finance/business will prepare young people for the requirements of operating a farming enterprise. [REDACTED]

Research – desalinated bore water to grow crops for fodder

Many farmers have access to bore water (particularly in south-west Queensland) that is not suitable for long term crop growth due to a build-up of salt toxicity in the soil. Further testing on new and emerging low cost desalination technology on bores would allow sufficient salt reduction, enabling farmers to grow their own crops for fodder – even in times of drought.

Research could be conducted on the types of fodder that can be grown using desalinated bore water in different areas with different conditions (soil type, temperature, UV) which would assist farmers to understand the types of fodder that can be grown without the extensive outlay for failed crop experimentation. CSIRO could potentially conduct this research in different areas. Extension of a subsidy for solar rebate for bore/desal operation would reduce associated costs.

Info on new low-cost technology below.

[REDACTED]

ABRASIVE salty bore water can be made more potable than some town water thanks to a desalination unit made by [REDACTED] engineer [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] said he had been making and repairing desalination units for many years and had developed a smaller, **cost-effective system for domestic and farm use.**

[REDACTED] desalination unit can produce between **10,000 and 15,000** litres of drinking water a day using a 1.1kW motor.

“At a site at [REDACTED], we had water purity at **37 parts per million**. Town water in [REDACTED] is more than 250 ppm — just good enough for roses.”

The cost of a [REDACTED] desalination unit is **\$4500** (+GST).

[REDACTED] [REDACTED].