

Plant for Place, Country and Planet

A simple initiative enabling all Australians to join together in planting for the common goal to strengthen drought resilience in Australian Farming, Rural and Regional Communities and Landscapes.

The health and productivity of farms, communities, individuals and even our national economy depend on local ecology. Severe droughts impact significantly on farmers and farming communities. Decline in community and natural landscape amenity values can contribute to diminishing rural, regional and remote community wellbeing and resilience. Local economies can be impacted.

“Parks and green spaces can have a restorative effect and assist in strengthening the mental wellbeing of South Australians.” Chris Burns CSC (SA Mental Health Commissioner)

The World Health Organization (2013) defines positive mental health as: “...a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”

If every person in Australia plants one tree (or one plant in the case where space or environment doesn't support the growth of a tree) we can join together to take immediate positive action to care for our Place, our Country ... and our Planet.

- Implementation of the initiative can be creative, encouraging those involved to choose to plant in gardens, streetscapes, hanging gardens, community spaces, schools, parks, around water bodies and in local community recreational areas. Participants can choose to plant community owned forests or to get involved in natural landscape care and maintenance, grow local fresh food, or to assist farmers with selected species shelterbelt and tree planting and maintenance. Shelterbelts can increase farm productivity, and provide animals with shelter from the hot sun, winds, and cold/freezing conditions, provide habitat and green corridors which support natural biodiversity (including bees and other pollinating insects) and increase rural landscape amenity values.
- By joining together now and by maintaining and continuing the planting initiative for the next decade, we can make a difference. People of all ages Australia-wide can join in – kindergartens, primary and high schools, universities and technical colleges, businesses, Scout groups, Faith groups, Multi-Cultural and Community groups, friends, families, neighbours, whole streets or entire suburbs – everyone can play a part.

- Our children and youth can learn to connect with, and care for, Place, Country and our Planet. Elders in our communities can be encouraged to share related skills.
- With Government funding and support local provenance and park and garden seeds and plant stocks can be collected. Tube stock plants and inputs could be provided at low cost. Youth leaders could be engaged. Maintenance crews developed. Potential for creation of new jobs.
- Distribution could be arranged by local community service organisations such as Rotary, Lions and Apex – and/or through Councils and Landcare affiliates.
- There are more than 10,000 volunteer groups in Australia – they could also be invited to participate; many may wish to take part.
- Each plant, tree, forest, or even the smallest pot plant can play a part in absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. (*“Trees are the lungs of the Earth.”* Bill Neidji, Traditional Custodian, Gagudju Country)
- More extensive group plantings of local species will encourage soil organisms, micro-organisms and fungi which support local plant communities and forest systems.
- In the future, established vegetation/forest floor soil structures and root systems can help to mitigate soil erosion and assist rainwater to filter into soils and subsoils, as well as support natural replenishment of water in streams, rivers, lakes and aquifers. Established forests are natural carbon sinks.
- Local provenance trees and plants, particularly in group, forest or mass plantings, help to provide essential habitat and to support and sustain natural biodiversity.

Purified/Recycled wastewater can be utilised to propagate plants and to water and maintain farm and community planting projects. (Note: Remineralisation may be required re: purified/recycled water, depending on end use.)

Everyday Australians can join together, now, to care for Place, for Country ...and for our Planet.