

**Queensland Government
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries**

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Central highlands graziers lead the way in best management practice accreditation

Adele and Dave O'Connor are the first graziers in Queensland to have their Grazing Best Management Practice (BMP) accreditation renewed.

DAF extension officer Matt Brown welcomed the accreditation and congratulated the O'Connors on their achievement.

"Adele and David first got involved in the Grazing BMP program in 2010 and were part of a group of ten producers who trialled the original modules," said Matt.

"We are absolutely delighted to see them grow from strength to strength and come back for a second audit to gain a renewed accreditation. This shows the benefits of Grazing BMP accreditation to graziers, with the O'Connors leading the way and now gaining access to new markets" he said.

Adele O'Connor's family have held the property 'Mountain View' near Springsure for over 100 years. The 6474 hectares property is used as a breeding and fattening operation and is currently stocked with 600 head of cattle, which includes 300 breeders.

"The Grazing BMP modules cover a wide range of topics and over the years we have found them to be really useful. So we had no hesitation in going back this year to complete our second accreditation process, which is required every three years," said Adele.

"Not only have we learnt more about our land and how to plan grazing management, but we have been able to collect the evidence required for animal welfare and grazing land management practices that are required for organic certification and we now have a doorway into this market."

Being accredited as organic producers has allowed the family to supply the premium organic market with beef, as well as supplying local buyers with organic lamb.

"Since becoming involved in Grazing BMP seven years ago, we have seen our business expand into a number of new markets. By utilising the tools we have gained through Grazing BMP we are also able to identify future growth opportunities and plan and budget accordingly."

One of the key learnings for the O'Connors was the importance of good documentation in the grazing business.

"We keep very detailed records on pasture monitoring and feed budgeting, occupational health and safety procedures and animal welfare statements," said Adele.

Matt Brown explained that producers have to nominate themselves to go through the accreditation process and that it is entirely voluntary.

“Graziers who wish to utilise the Grazing BMP accreditation to endorse their performance need to have completed the modules to benchmark themselves against industry standard. We can then work with the individual grazier to help them meet the requirements of an external auditor,” said Matt.

“Gaining Grazing BMP accreditation helps graziers with supply chain opportunities and it provides formal recognition that the business and natural resources are being managed to a high standard,” Matt explained.

The Grazing BMP program was developed by Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA), AgForce Queensland and the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), supported by Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP).

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