

Turning Knowledge into Practice at Balala Station, Uralla

Producers and industry representatives alike enjoyed an informative and motivating discussion on Natural Capital and its potential benefits to food and fibre markets at a recent Australian Holistic Management Cooperative (AHMC) field day hosted by Richard and Sarah Daugherty at their historic property “Balala Station”

The NSW Department of Environment and Heritage says “ Natural capital is the world's stock of natural assets and includes the rocks and soil beneath our feet, our streams, rivers and oceans, the air, plants, animals and all living things.”

Increasingly, both international and domestic markets are looking to adopt policies around ensuring that food and fibre are grown with the health of these natural assets in mind.

The Australian Holistic Management Cooperative brought together a smorgasbord of industry representatives to evoke discussion amongst attendees on both the risks and opportunities this presents to Australian producers.

Speakers from a range of industry bodies including National Australia Bank, Northern Tablelands Local Land Services, Elders, Farming for the Future, and Australian Wool Innovation joined landholders



Richard Daugherty (host), Tim Wright and Michael Taylor to discuss the global and domestic market demands for more sustainably produced food and fibre and the role Natural Capital management and accounting can play in meeting these demands.

The AHMC's core activity is EOY (Ecological Outcome Verification) – a scientific measurement of the health of farmland over time. Farms are checked every 12 months for improvement in Landscape function, in order to verify that their land is regenerating. Verification can be used in marketing their food and fibre products.



Peter Steele, NAB State Business Banking Executive, NSW Regional and Agribusiness , says “Sustainability is good for business, and businesses that are sustainable are also good for NAB’s business.” NAB is upskilling their business bankers in Agriculture and Natural capital and Peter believes that other banks are doing the same. The signs are there that in 3-5 years, sustainability will be a major part of property valuations.