

Mallee trials on EP farms

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Local farmers and FREE Eyre are trialling a series of oil mallee plantings on Eyre Peninsula.

Local farming cooperative FREE Eyre currently has three trials in place near Kimba on David and Leah Jericho's property, at the Minnipa Ag Centre and between Wharminda and Arno Bay on Jeff and Jodie Jones' property.

"FREE Eyre is in well along the track of developing local opportunities for farmers which offer conservation benefits such as reduction of salinity and cover for livestock while bringing in a complimentary and additional income as a carbon offset for a company," FREE Eyre director Susi Tegen said.

Oil mallees produce an oil called 'cineole' which is used in a variety of everyday products including pharmaceuticals. Cineole provides the basis for many of the solvents used in everyday cleaning products and industrial-strength detergents, offering income opportunities for FREE Eyre farmers.

Harvesting of oil mallee seeds promises a sustainable industry for the local community.

As well as combating rising salinity, oil mallees also offer the opportunity to create a carbon sink offsetting carbon emissions.

FREE Eyre is now sourcing a property near Wudinna to trial another six hectare trial of plantings in both blocks and strips between crops.

The trials are being conducted by FREE Eyre members, Greening Australia, Primary Industries and Resources SA (PIRSA) and the Oil Mallee Association with the support of Minnipa Ag Centre which has attracted national expertise to the project.

FREE Eyre is currently planning a field trip to WA in February to view oil mallee plantings, cropping and grazing systems.

For more information, telephone 8363 5010.

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