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Innovative drought relief project in Junee District is awarded Landcare Australia Woolworths Sustainable Farming Program Grant

An innovative drought relief project in the Junee district is one of the 45 projects selected from around Australia by Landcare Australia to receive a Woolworths Sustainable Farming Program grant.

There were almost 400 applications for the grants and Jim and Jeannette Gummer's project at their property, Posetto, is just one of 20 projects to win a grant of \$5,000 in the "Innovation Grants" category to help develop or implement good ideas to improve the sustainability of farming practices and overcome the impact of droughts.

The project is designed to establish test plots of two selected forage plants (Biserrula and Rhagodia) that are not currently grown in the local district and that may have the potential to:

- Provide a reliable source of stock fodder during dry periods
- Help prevent erosion by improving ground cover and providing wind breaks
- Are fire resistant, and
- Improve the farm environment and biodiversity

"We're very grateful to Landcare Australia and Woolworths for giving us the funding for our project which we believe will really help in tackling drought conditions," said Jim Gummer.

Landcare Farming Program Manager Shane Norrish said he was impressed with the quality of grant applications received by Landcare Australia.

"We received almost 400 grant applications for the Woolworths Sustainable Farming Program for small projects and many were of a high standard," he said.

"The number and quality of proposals goes to show that many places around Australia are struggling with the drought and that the best ideas on how to adapt to our increasingly



unpredictable climate come from the farmers who have to tackle tough conditions on a daily basis.”

The grants form part of the \$1.5 million dollars donated to Landcare projects from the Woolworths Drought Action Day in 2007, which raised over \$4.7 million.

The grants have been awarded to farmers in areas declared eligible for “Exceptional Circumstances” assistance.

Funding for the Innovation Grants category was open to farmers (groups and individuals) to develop good ideas covering drought management strategies in areas like technology, machinery, farm layout and new crops.

For more information please contact Jim Gummer on 02.6924 2197 / 0417 075 655 or Peter Scott, PR Manager, Landcare Australia on 02 9412 1040.