

Activity at Ashben, Farming for the Future



Photo to left: The Combes extended family relaxing on the verandah of their shed after a bout of hard work on the property

Photo below: the balanced mix of bush and pasture on Ashben

Ashben is the property of Heather and Mick Combes. With the help of members of their families, the Combes' have been developing the site for productive farming for several years, working towards a sustainable balance between farming activities and the needs of the natural environment.

The property is situated in the hills east of Donnybrook, surrounded by large tracts of natural bush with production areas confined to specific paddocks set among remnant bush areas and creeklines. Revegetation of degraded areas and improvement of pasture paddocks are high priorities.

Heather attended a BestFarms EMS workshop in 2007 in Boyup Brook to assist with their aim of minimising the impact of production on the surrounding environment.

Heather found the process very useful in planning and prioritising the development of the property. With input from Mick she set objectives, targets, actions and monitoring methods to manage soil health, biodiversity, and resource use efficiency for the property.

One year later, with assistance from her BestFarms facilitator, Heather reviewed her planning process to ensure that her written plan was being effectively enacted on ground. Once she was happy that the written system and actual works were on track Heather applied for BestFarms Certification and also used the EMS to obtain funding for on-ground works.



Heather and Mick Combes achieved BestFarms Certification in October this year.

Heather says

“Our foundation priority is building our soil, securing our future. We believe that our adoption of this system will prove that the products we produce satisfy the environmental requirements of our customers.”

Heather believes in trying farming practices that are innovative, being prepared to take a risk and to learn, adapt and change. The Combes Farm Action Plan includes flora, fauna, microbiology, water and soil health, as interconnecting, integral elements, to secure a sustainable future for their farming enterprise.

The BestFarms team congratulates BestFarms Certification Number 010, Heather and Mick Combes.

For more information on BestFarms Certification contact the BestFarms Team on 08 97651555 or bestfarms@westnet.com.au

