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Call for innovation to link farm profitability and ethical production

In our submission on the draft National Food Policy (NFP) we highlighted the need for innovation to enable the farm sector to raise profitability through meeting emerging consumer demands in higher priced differentiated markets. Past reliance on increasing production at lower product prices has not been sufficient to maintain aggregate farm profitability. This situation and associated structural adjustment have contributed to reduced environmental and social resilience.

The draft NFP highlights that consumers are increasingly seeking information about the attributes of their food; including the nutritional benefits, production methods and environmental sustainability; and that empowered and informed consumers drive innovation and competition in well-functioning markets.

The integrative and market-based themes underpinning the draft NFP provide sound foundations for re-balancing the policy instruments used by governments for securing environmental and related profitability and social outcomes. In particular governments could consider supporting market-based systems that enable informed communities and consumers to drive improved environmental outcomes. [More](#)

Inaugural Bob Hawke Landcare Award to ALM Group Board member

With the award in September of the Bob Hawke Landcare award to Lynne Strong, the ALM Group takes on another unique feature in that it has on its Board recipients of both the Bob Hawke Landcare Award and the McKell Award which it replaced.

Lynne received the Bob Hawke Landcare Award for individual excellence in sustainable agriculture and her commitment to the Landcare ethic. [More](#)

Jock Douglas, inaugural ALM Group Chair, was awarded the McKell Medal in 1996 for outstanding contribution to soil and land conservation in Australia.

In commenting on this situation ALM Group Chair Nelson Quinn said that it is the calibre of these and other board members, the dedication of participating landholders and the vision of ALM Group Foundation Partners, Elders and the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee that augur well for the next phase of the ALM Group Certified Land Management (CLM) system.



Dusty remembers

You will recall in the last *VOICES* we left Dusty on the verandah wondering why land degradation continues notwithstanding the annual Caring for our Country expenditure of a quarter of a billion dollars plus, according to the ABS, another \$3 billion from landholders on NRM. Like a flea in his ear it continued to worry him until in frustration he revisited the days way back when he was learning about creativity and constraints on insight. Then like an electric fence hit he realised he had been trapped by the ABS stats. He had fallen into premature problem definition of thinking it is just about the \$0.25b plus \$3b. What about the other \$30 to \$35b spent annually by land managers? Now he sees it clearly. It is like being on a see saw with half a bull - well no - if you do the sums properly, it is actually four whole bulls.



Essentially, he realises that it does not matter a buried bone what you do with \$0.25b unless you are positively affecting the impacts of the \$30-\$35b. At last he understands what he has heard time and time again in his sleepy 'under-the-desk' days - NRM is not about managing resources - it is about managing impacts, the impacts of land managers.

Insightful chap our Dust, pictured here with one of his four playmates.



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