15/03/2016

**FUTURE PROOFING GRAZING PROFITS**

The 2016 Grazing Forum, is on tomorrow at the MECC from 0830-1700.

Attracting more than 110 graziers keen to adopt best practice management for a sustainable future, there’ll be opportunities to speak with industry leaders and take home key messages thanks to local and national experts, who’ll present the latest information on innovation, trials, market opportunities, genetics and new pasture varieties.

Increased average saleyard prices combined with rainfall, has forecaters expecting graziers will be encouraged to restock in order to supply the domestic market, providing the perfect opportunity to increase profitability.

An expert in soil health, Bill Thompson has spent his life in rural Queensland from North Burnett on the family farm to the Burdekin and now on his own grazing property at the headwaters of the Bremer River, Ipswich.

“The knowledge and understanding of generations of our farmers and graziers who protect nurture and invest in what soils do for all of society is grossly under-valued in modern society and politics. Such knowledge is more revered in other cultures I have worked in.”

Bill will lead a field day following the forum on Thursday in a grazing paddock on Jensens Rd, Farleigh.

Dr Brian Burns will present “Application of Genetic andAnimal Breeding Principles to Northern Australian Beef Production Systems” answering the question “Why are Genetic Improvement Strategies Important to the Northern Australia Beef Industry?”

Graziers will come to understand the environmental factors, breeds and Genotypes of Cattle used in Northern Australia, Markets, the structure of breeding programs and conclude with a

summary of why Genetic Improvement Strategies are Important to the Northern Australia Beef Industry?

Amanda Bland - Reef Catchments Grazing Planning Officer is looking forward to seeing new and familiar faces. Attendance is vital to events like these continuing.

“Topics this year have been identified through conversations with our local landholders, as well as feedback from previous forums. We wanted to introduce something new this year and one area of interest has been in selling and marketing produce locally, Deb McLucas – Chair of Greater Whitsunday Food Network and Owner/Manager of Freckle Farm will present first hand knowledge.”

There will also be information from the Queensland Department of Agriculture on Giant Rats Tail, biosecurity, climate outlook and new tools for farmers to use to improve production and manage climate risk.

Mackay Regional Council will be attending with their Pests and Weeds trailer, trade displays from pasture seed supplies, QFES, Reef Catchments projects, Landcare groups will also have native plants for revegetation.

*This project is supported by Reef Catchments, through funding from the Australian Government National Landcare Programme (NLP) and the Queensland Government Qld Regional Natural Resource Management Investment Program.*

**FOR COMMENT AND INTERVIEWS**

**Contact**: Amanda Bland – Grazing Planning Officer, Reef Catchments   
E| [amanda.bland@reefcatchments.com](mailto:stefanie.wabnik@reefcatchments.com)

P| 0409 898 296

Bill Thompson – Soil Scientist

P| 0417 641 440

MEDIA are invited to attend the forum 1200-1330 for interviews.

Please call Kim 0417 882 091 if vision is required.

IMAGE supplied – Dr Brian Burns

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