

# Grazing for Growth

Rob & Sandie Read's Pasture Journey

Rob & Sandie Read operate a beef cattle trading enterprise near **Mundubbera** in the inland Burnett region of Queensland. With more than 30 years of experience managing landscapes for pasture & cattle production, Rob is passionate about growing lush, nutritious pasture & is always seeking new knowledge to **improve the productivity & resilience** of their land.

## The Opportunity

Keen to deepen his understanding of grazing systems, Rob attended an introductory **Grazing Naturally** fundamentals workshop at Beeron in the Central Burnett hosted by the **Burnett Catchment Care Association (BCCA)** & funded through the **Queensland Government's Natural Resources Recovery Program**. The workshop was led by internationally recognised grazing educator **Dick Richardson** of **Natures Equity** & introduced landholders to grazing practices that improve soil health, water retention, biodiversity & livestock production.

## The Learning

Describing it as the **"best ever"** workshop he'd attended, Rob felt the **Grazing Naturally** approach strongly aligned with his own practical experiences. The core message—that livestock are vital tools to drive healthy soil-plant-animal processes—resonated deeply with him. Rob was particularly drawn to the method's emphasis on using real-time **pasture observations** (like plant stage and height) to guide **grazing timing & intensity**, rather than relying on rigid schedules.

## On-Ground Insight

Rob has long used observation as a core **decision-making tool**. His shovel, he says, is his most valuable asset. By digging into pasture soils, Rob assesses structure, compaction, colour, smell and root depth—factors that influence water retention & plant health. Across his property, he regularly assesses both what's working & what isn't, using strategies such as controlled grazing, seeding, fire, paddock subdivision & new watering points as tools for improvement.

Rob also brings a business mindset to land management. He carefully weighs the cost & benefit of every decision, factoring in short & long term production outcomes & ensuring that all actions offer a **return on investment**.

### The Grazing Naturally Approach

The system supports:

- Rational grazing -stock moves based on observation, not fixed timelines
- Matching stocking rates with available pasture
- Varying grazing intensity across paddocks
- Strategic spelling & recovery periods for plant recovery
- Using livestock to promote carbon transfer to soil & boost biological activity

*This flexible, observation-driven system aims to keep plants green & productive, supporting long-term pasture & soil health.*



Dick Richardson of Natures Equity

## The Next Step

Rob's next move is to return to a **Grazing Naturally** workshop, this time with his partner Sandie, to build on their understanding & prepare for full implementation on their property. He's eager to adopt the system, evaluate its success under their specific conditions & tailor it to meet their business goals & long-term vision.

## The Bigger Picture

This case is just one example of the impact BCCA's **Sustainable Landscapes project** is having across the Inland Burnett. By providing practical learning opportunities & supporting landholders like Rob & Sandie, the project is helping producers build **resilience**, improve **land condition** & adopt **better practices** to strengthen their agricultural enterprises in a changing climate.

Sustainable Landscapes  
across the inland Burnett

 **BCCA**  
BURNETT CATCHMENT CARE ASSOCIATION

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