



## Sustainable Agriculture

Policy Category: B. Agriculture and Natural Resources

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### Principles

*The Australian Greens believe that:*

1. the long-term sustainability of agriculture is essential for Australia's society, economy and environment.
2. sustainable agriculture is fundamental to supporting rural communities, which are a vital part of Australian society.
3. rural Australia faces complex agricultural, environmental and social challenges; many farmers and pastoralists are actively seeking sustainable practices, but struggle to contend with increasing financial pressures.
4. the combined problems of salinity, water quality, soil degradation and habitat fragmentation require an integrated approach at the farm enterprise, catchment and landscape scales.
5. ongoing research, development and extension are essential to both improve the sustainability of Australian agriculture and to maintain its competitiveness.
6. we must plan and manage for the likely impacts of climate change, increasing climatic variability and oil scarcity on Australia's agricultural industries.

### Goals

*The Australian Greens want:*

7. sustainable land management.
8. improved water efficiency, water quality and conservation within agricultural systems.
9. to work with the farming community to address the critical issue of soil degradation and loss of soil health facing Australian agricultural industries.
10. an end to broad-scale native vegetation clearing and, where possible, restoration of native vegetation and biodiversity.
11. the identification of damaged landscapes and those at risk, and the implementation of remediation strategies for these areas.
12. increased support for research into sustainable agricultural innovations and industries.
13. an increase in new sustainable industries, including biofuel and bioenergy production, provided that they do not endanger food security.
14. improved protection for pastoral and leasehold lands, waterways, roadsides, travelling stock routes and other key public assets.
15. better biosecurity through effective management of invasive species, pests and diseases.
16. prime agricultural land protected from urban developments and other encroachments, and support for community-based food production systems.
17. regional communities to be prepared for the impacts of oil scarcity, climate change and increased climate variability.
18. the promotion of Australian produce to the Australian community.
19. the protection and enhancement of crop diversity and resilience.

## Measures

### *The Australian Greens will:*

20. foster cooperative partnerships between governments, agribusiness, landholders and managers, and communities, to implement sustainable agricultural systems, methods and industries, and to undertake landscape restoration.
21. revise and improve existing strategies for natural resource management at both farm and catchment levels.
22. work for community consultation and participation in policy and decision-making in agricultural landscape management, with legislation, where appropriate.
23. address climatic variability and climate change through risk management strategies that minimise the adverse impacts of weather extremes, and encourage the adaptation of agricultural processes to climate change.
24. extend incentive schemes to landholders implementing sustainable farming systems.
25. review exceptional circumstances criteria which permit the continuation of degrading practices.
26. strengthen national research and development coordination and funding for new industries that deliver environmental and community benefits.
27. structure tax incentives to encourage private sector investment in sustainable new agricultural industries.
28. regulate for sustainable use of irrigation water and groundwater, including transparent pricing to promote efficient water use.
29. ensure agricultural land zoning reflects land use capability and protects prime agricultural land.
30. support initiatives that increase local product quality and nutrition, local value-adding and local distribution, and promote Australian produce to the Australian community.
31. support further research into alternatives to, and fund the transition from, the use of non-renewable energy, and agrochemicals such as pesticides and artificial fertilisers.
32. ensure better access for primary producers to services, expertise and technologies that improve the sustainability of their enterprises.
33. support food trading and processing practices that reduce transport, packaging and waste.
34. resource international and intranational biosecurity, pest, weed and disease control measures, to protect Australia's biodiversity, its agriculture, and people.
35. fund research into social and economic factors associated with changes in land use, transport and energy costs, and climate risk.
36. provide long-term funding for successful programs of sustainable landscape use.
37. promote ecologically sustainable approaches to land use to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon in soil, and offer incentives for implementation.
38. seek and support fair trade and biosecurity in international trade agreements.
39. address soil degradation and soil health as key funding priorities for natural resource management programs.
40. promote organic agriculture.