

# The Greens (WA) 2020 policy

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## Agriculture

Western Australia's rural communities are essential to our food security, economy and cultural identity. The Greens (WA) recognise the important role farmers play and also recognise that many farmers and pastoralists have adopted regenerative<sup>1</sup> and sustainable farming practices.

Farmers face many complex agricultural, environmental, economic and social challenges including climate change, declining rainfall, poor soils, salinity and increasing costs. They are already facing huge additional expenses for climate change adaptation and need more support.

We support a resilient agricultural sector and support farmers to remain on the land and earn a healthy return on their produce.

### Aims

*The Greens (WA) want:*

- to promote a greater understanding of the impact of climate change on agricultural and horticultural food productions
- to improve soil health
- resilient, well-serviced rural communities which keep people on the land and provide a future for young people in agriculture (see also The Greens (WA) [Regions](#) policy)
- better access to services for primary producers and also better access to expertise and technologies that improve the sustainability of their enterprises and communities
- protection of prime agricultural land from encroachment by urban, industrial and mining developments and stronger regulation of foreign purchasing and ownership of agricultural land
- increased research into and support for regenerative agriculture and the development of associated local value-adding processing opportunities

### Measures

*The Greens (WA) will initiate and support legislation and other actions to:*

#### Agricultural Practices

- support incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase greenhouse gas drawdown through measures including, but not limited to, regenerative farming, increasing carbon in the soil, farm forestry, changes to burning practices and the use of alternatives to fossil fuels (see also The Greens (WA) [Climate Change](#) policy)
- encourage regenerative agricultural practices that maximise nutrient recycling, water use efficiency and soil health, such as organic, biodynamic and conservation agriculture
- improve the quality and allocation of water resources within agricultural systems (see also The Greens (WA) [Water](#) policy)

- increase efforts to reverse soil degradation
- establish and restore birdlife and wildlife corridors and shelterbelts of native vegetation to ensure the continuation of Australia's biodiversity<sup>2</sup> and other environmental benefits (see also The Greens (WA) [Biodiversity](#) policy)
- support food growing, trading and processing practices that support local producers and reduce transport, packaging and waste
- ensure agricultural land zoning reflects land use capability and protects prime agricultural land and water sources
- support the growing of salt-tolerant crops, pastures and other perennial systems to provide farming options for saline lands
- make a diverse range of locally grown fresh produce available to Western Australian customers and promote Western Australian produce (see also The Greens (WA) [Food](#) policy)
- support community based food production systems including urban and peri-urban<sup>3</sup> gardens
- support initiatives that increase local product quality and nutritional value, local value-adding and local distribution, and that promote Western Australian produce to the Western Australian community
- support farmers and farming communities, particularly with the financial burden of mitigating and adapting to climate change

### **Legislation**

- ensure stronger regulation of foreign ownership of agricultural land
- increase research into sustainable agricultural innovations and industries
- support production and processing that adds value to Western Australian exports
- ensure agricultural land zoning reflects land use capability and protects prime agricultural land and water sources
- prevent any further deregulation such as has occurred in the dairy industry
- increase support for regional and local natural resource management bodies, delivering ecologically sustainable strategies
- promote and initiate schemes to implement sustainable farming systems
- protect the sustainability of local produce from the impacts of free trade agreements
- ensure resourcing of biosecurity<sup>4</sup>, pest, weed and disease control measures, to protect Western Australia's agriculture, natural systems and population
- strengthen agricultural chemical regulations, including the education requirements for the use of agricultural chemicals
- replace the live animal export industry with Australian abattoirs and transport infrastructure for chilled meat export (see also The Greens (WA) [Animals](#) policy)
- re-introduce the moratorium on all GM crops and, in the absence of a moratorium, seek to ensure effective regulation to prevent any adverse impacts of such crops on non-GM producers and consumers, including ensuring legal liability of producers of GM crops (see also The Greens (WA) [GM](#) policy)
- end the exploration for and extraction of coal-seam, shale<sup>5</sup> or tight gas<sup>6</sup> in Western Australia, given the risks to our water, land, communities, tourism and agricultural industries, and to our climate

- support farmers who wish to exclude natural gas projects from their land

(see also The Australian Greens [Agriculture](#) policy)

### *Glossary*

1. **Regenerative agriculture** is a conservation and rehabilitation approach to food and farming systems. It focuses on topsoil regeneration, improving the water cycle, supporting carbon drawdown and increasing resilience to climate change
2. **Biodiversity** - the variety of species, populations, habitats and ecosystems;
3. **Peri-urban** – land adjoining an urban area between the suburbs and the countryside
4. **Biosecurity** is a set of preventive measures designed to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases, quarantined pests, invasive species, and living modified organisms.
5. **Shale gas** - natural gas that is trapped within shale formations. Shales are fine grained sedimentary rocks that can be rich sources of petroleum and natural gas.
6. **Tight gas** - natural gas produced from reservoir rocks with such low permeability that massive hydraulic fracturing is necessary for extraction.

**Agriculture policy ratified by The Greens (WA) in 2020**

**The Greens (WA) agriculture spokesperson is [Diane Evers MLC](#)**