

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE & NEW GREEN FARMING

Our plan to keep farms economically viable and environmentally healthy

Business as usual from the current government has left us facing a three-fold crisis for our climate, our biodiversity and our soil health.

But solutions exist. Organic, biodynamic and regenerative agriculture can contribute to improving both farm and farmer resilience against extreme weather events, while keeping farms economically viable and our environment healthy.

Regenerative agriculture attempts to confront the adverse environmental effects caused by industrial agriculture, maintaining agriculture productivity while striving for sustainability.

THE GREENS WILL:

- ▲ **Restore the Carbon Farming Futures grants**, providing \$25m a year to support carbon farming
- ▲ **Create a \$250m Green Agriculture Australia research centre**, developing and deploying green alternatives for farmers
- ▲ **Reform organic labelling and support organic certification**, protecting producers and consumers
- ▲ **Build an Australian hemp, cannabis and seaweed farming industry**, creating thousands of sustainable jobs

PAYING FOR OUR PLAN

By making billionaires and big corporations pay their fair share of tax and winding back handouts to big polluters, we can build a better life for all of us.

1 in 3 big corporations pays no tax and many big corporations and billionaires send their profits offshore tax free.

The Greens will tax billionaires with a new 'billionaires tax', require big corporations making excessive profits to pay a 'corporate super-profits tax' and axe billions of dollars in handouts to the coal, oil and gas giants that are driving the climate crisis.

These measures have all been costed by the independent Parliamentary Budget Office.

When big corporations and billionaires pay their fair share, we can tackle the climate crisis and support farmers.

SUPPORTING GREEN FARMING

To accelerate the transition, the Greens will create Green Agriculture Australia, a \$250 million R&D centre that will invest in researching, developing and deploying sustainable farming solutions and supporting regenerative agriculture approaches, including helping to secure properties for state-wide training farms-centres, exhibitions, research and development.

This will include organic, biodynamic and regenerative agriculture, but also research into other novel technologies such as plant-based and synthetic meat and dairy alternatives, methane reducing feed supplements for livestock, precision agriculture and new biological solutions for increasing carbon drawdown.

We will also support organic farming by reforming organic labelling laws in Australia, so that consumers can be sure that the food they

are buying is truly organic. We will also invest \$10 million in supporting states and territories to create Organic Advisory Services for farmers, which would support farmers in understanding organic alternatives and certification requirements.

Australian farmers are hampered by authorised dealers networks and major manufacturers, limiting options for timely and cheaper repairs to extend the working life of farming equipment, and avoid costly losses from downed equipment. The Productivity Commission recently called for a repair supplied obligation for agricultural manufacturing, and identified opportunities to give independent repairers greater access to repair supplies and enhance competition for services.

The Greens will support amending copyright laws to facilitate accessing and sharing of repair information (such as repair manuals and repair data). We will also amend legislation and regulations as needed to require suppliers of

agricultural machinery to provide access to certain repair supplies, reducing unnecessary barriers to farmers accessing these services.

Finally, the Greens will also restore the Carbon Farming Futures program of \$25 million per annum, which the Coalition Government axed in 2016. These grants saw over \$139 million go into over 200 projects across the country. By restoring funding to this program, we can see hundreds more carbon reducing projects get off the ground.

MARKET FOR HEMP, CANNABIS AND SEAWEED

Hemp has had multiple uses over thousands of years, including food, construction, fuels and fibre. Despite hemp containing less than 1% tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), industry growth has been stymied by the prohibition on cannabis (which is a different plant species variety). In 2017, Australia legalised hemp for food, overturning a prohibition that had existed since 1937¹.

The global hemp market is forecast to grow from (USD)\$3.5 billion to (USD)\$26.6 billion by 2025², presenting significant opportunities for Australian farmers and creating jobs.

To support jobs and farmers in regional Australia, the Greens will supercharge the growth of the hemp industry by fully funding research, development and extension for the Australian hemp industry, investing \$20 million

1

<https://www.foodnavigator-asia.com/Article/2019/12/11/Getting-the-hemp-Vegan-consumers-down-under-rapidly-making-the-most-of-now-legal-seeds>

2

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20190703005472/en/Global-Industrial-Hemp-Market-to-Grow-from-4.6-Billion-in-2019-to-26.6-Billion-by-2025-Recording-a-CAGR-of-34---ResearchAndMarkets.com>

to support partners and research. The Greens will work at all levels of Government to remove existing regulatory barriers to hemp production.

While medicinal cannabis exports are thriving, the domestic market is still under-utilised due to unnecessary restrictions. The Greens will review and remove any unnecessary restrictions on patient access to medicinal cannabis.

Seaweed farming has such enormous potential for green jobs. Seaweed can grow 30 times faster than crops onshore, and promotes a healthy environment by reducing emissions, and de-acidifying seawater. The Greens will support increased investment in accessing seaweed in aquaculture, by funding a cooperative research centre with \$50 million from the federal government.

HEALTHY RIVERS, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Agricultural run-off from fertiliser and dairy farming effluent into rivers has become a major problem and a significant political issue.

However, despite known instances of river pollution from intensive dairy farming in places like north-west Tasmania, there has been a lack of attention given to better understanding and fixing the problem in Australia.

While federal coordination for some limited farm testing programs has taken place through Dairy Australia, most water quality testing and monitoring programs are left to cash strapped state-local governments or farmers, and they lack transparency.

Furthermore, toxic 'forever plastics' called PFAS are a major concern for our waterways, potentially entering drinking water and the food chain. Yet, Australia lacks a coordinated approach to monitor the levels of these toxic plastics in our rivers.

The Greens will review legislative and regulatory instruments available, working with state governments to coordinate consistent testing across Australia, such as developing a new or updated National Environmental Protection Measure.

In addition, the Greens will undertake a review of the outdated Australian River Assessment System, to ensure that it is comprehensive and effective for monitoring water quality.

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