

# New farm forestry in Great Southern

**FIVE** hundred hectares of eucalypts for high-grade timber will be planted on farms in the catchments of the Warren/Tone and the Kent Rivers this winter.

The New Eucalypt Sawlog Industry (NESI) project provides a commercial driver for combating salinity, erosion and threatened biodiversity.

Under a partnership between the Department of Conservation and Land Management, the Forest Products Commission, the Water and Rivers Commission, the Department of Agriculture and farmers, NESI is going operational.

Michael Power from the Department's Farm Forestry Unit, Dave Guille from the Forest Products Commission and Brett Ward from the Water and Rivers Commission are working with farmers in the Kent Catchment to implement this year's plantings.

In the Warren/Tone Catchment, Glenn Batty from the Forest Products Commission is the person on the ground, with support from Bob Hingston from the Farm Forestry Unit and John Platt from the Water and Rivers Commission.

The project will provide a range of benefits including improved water quality, timber for a new

by Richard Moore

hardwood industry, and a contribution to more productive and sustainable methods of farming.

For example, tree planting can increase wildlife habitat and lower salinity levels in streams, thereby reducing degradation of native vegetation.

The Forest Products Commission has developed a joint venture agreement for the project.

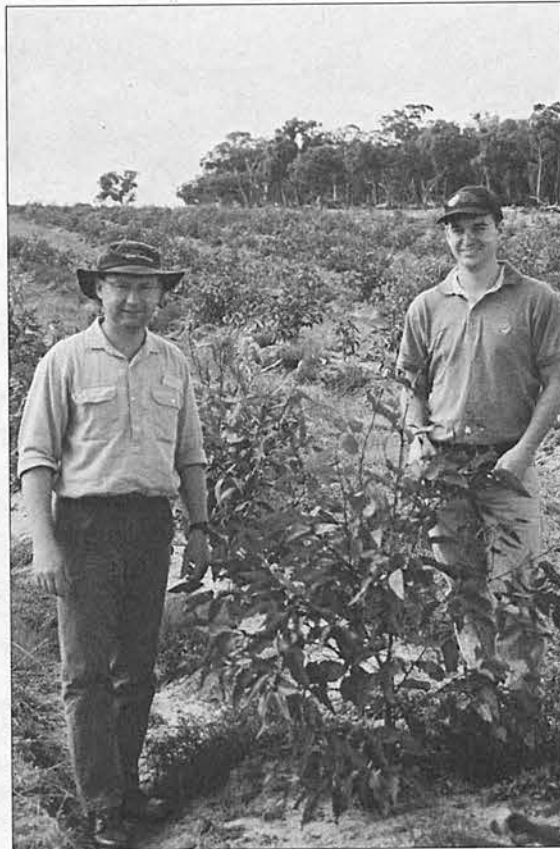
Under the agreement farmers receive an up-front payment and a share of returns from timber at harvest – after about 20 years.

The Department's Farm Forestry Unit is working with farmers to plan species selection and tree placement.

The Unit is also continuing its program of research and development work to support the project.

NESI is the outcome of more than 20 years of research and development by the Farm Forestry Unit to develop eucalypts for timber in the 450 to 650 mm rainfall zone.

It greatly broadens the range of commercial solutions available to farmers to combat salinity and degradation of natural resources.



*Michael Power from the Department's Farm Forestry Unit in Albany and Dave Guille from the Forest Products Commission in 10-month-old Eucalyptus maculata (spotted gum) on the Gillam Family farm in the Kent catchment. Photo by Shane Kirkwood, FPC.*