

Farm forestry courses show ways to fight salinity

THE Farm Forestry Courses continue to attract lively interest from people looking for ways to grow trees as a cash crop or as a means of fighting the grim fight with salinity. The possibility that they might combine the two makes the proposition even more attractive.

The recent Midwest Introduction to Farm Forestry Course was held to introduce commercial farm forestry concepts to those in a position to advise farmers on their revegetation options.

The 17 participants in the three-day course were mainly from the Midwest Region, within the rainfall zone up to 300 mm.

They included community landcare co-ordinators, revegetation or bushcare officers, agribusiness consultants, CALM and Agwest development officers

Participants visited demonstration sites on farms, where they had the opportunity to closely question and learn from practicing farmers.

The emphasis was on commercial tree-cropping options such as maritime pines, oil mallees, and



Inspecting treated bluegum posts at Bunning's Mundijong premises are, left to right, CALM Sharefarms assistant area co-ordinator Eliza Cummings, Moora farmer and business consultant Will Easton, Calingiri farmer and agricultural contractor Rob Anspach, Bunning's Mundijong manager John Fletcher, Bridgetown farm forester and course co-ordinator David Jenkins, Gingin plantation manager Bruce Janieson, AgWA's Gingin development officer Tracey Gianatti, Central Coastal Districts Business Enterprise Centre manager Norm Skoglund. Photo by Bob Hingston

species of eucalypts that produce quality sawlogs. All grow well in the medium-to low-rainfall zones. They examined a range of farm forestry

designs in the Gingin region. They included a paulownia plantation; two-row irrigated belts of Sydney bluegum between wildflowers and

horticulture; a 'spider web' belt-planting layout of commercial eucalypt species, with other crops in between; and a eucalypt sawlog plant-

ation near Chittering. This was followed by a demonstration of the farm forestry cycle by following the various stages on two properties

in the Badgingarra and Dandaragan areas from planning, implementation and silvicultural management. Course participants were

also introduced to various aspects of the forestry industry and its markets, visiting several industry processing plants.

Networking is an important facet of these courses, where informal discussions can lead to closer interaction between the agencies serving farmers.

While participants and co-ordinators spent their nights in the comfort of Club Capricorn in Yanchep, the days proved to be a test of endurance, due to the long distances covered in the bus, the hot weather and late nights.

Notwithstanding these trials, the course was hailed as a success by participants and course co-ordinators alike.

The co-ordinators were Bob Hingston of CALM's Busselton Farm Forestry Unit, David Jenkins of Jenkins Agroforestry Developments, Bridgetown, and Agriculture Western Australia (AGWEST) Gingin farm forestry advisor Tom Mitchell.

Speakers included Clayton Sanders of CALM's Softwood Business Unit, Wanneroo, and CALM Sharefarms manager John Kaye.





