

# Jim Natt Langbrook

## Langhorne Creek

*"There's more of a collaborative feel between you and your farm rather than fighting it and trying to get it to do something that you want it to do."*



**Enterprise:** Beef cattle operation



**Property size:** 200ha



**Annual rainfall:** 388mm (also irrigation)



### Why regenerative agriculture?

From 2010 -2012, various issues were emerging on the farm, including time constraints due to off-farm work, weed issues, and the development of hard pans in the soil. All these issues were leading to an increase in costs for little return.

I then discovered Allan Savory's Holistic Grazing Management and his ideas and understanding of the landscape made sense to me, but I realised I would need to make a huge change in the way I thought about my farm.

Most of what I had learnt about farming needed to change.



### What practices and principles have you introduced to make your farm more regenerative?

We no longer crop grains, and we now base our grazing management on Grazing Naturally \ Holistic principles.

We graze some paddocks quite often to try and drive the plants to produce sugars, which leads to increased soil carbon and tougher, more established plants. Then we move through to a moderate amount of grazing, or the timing of grazing. Some paddocks will be shut up for a whole year (Sabbath paddock) to let plants seed up.

We have divided the existing paddocks and developed additional mobile water troughs.

Through these grazing principles we have seen a diversity of plants coming back naturally, including native grasses.

We have also planted perennial pasture species and created shelterbelts using browse plants (i.e. saltbush and acacia species). We carefully managed the grazing of shelterbelts and riparian areas for regeneration.



## What have been your greatest challenges?

My greatest challenge has been unlearning all the teaching I have had over the years about what good farming practice is. Especially early on, one of the hardest things I found initially was that you can't really go and talk to your neighbours about this stuff, because everyone else was still farming traditionally.

Also, learning how to stand back, not doing, letting the farm have its way, and learning how to really see the farm from an ecological perspective.



## What have been your biggest successes?

Reduced stress, for me farming is so much more enjoyable now. I am seeing an increased profit margin and better soil health, particularly evident with a significant reduction in the hard panning.

Native grasses are appearing and planted pasture areas are naturally expanding through seed passing through the cattle, and implementing Sabbath paddocks into our rotation allowing plants to seed up.

Ecologically there seems to be more birds on the property, and dung beetles have increased tremendously.



## Where to from here?

We are aiming to improve grazing planning, as we continue to observe nature and adapt our strategy.

We will plant more shelterbelts with suitable browse species, giving our cattle the opportunity to graze differently, allowing them to select plants to satisfy nutrient demands.

Last year showed some promise by grazing the pasture down, then seeding directly into the pasture with a disc drill. So we will look at continuing seeding with more desirable multi-species pasture mix in the future.



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