

# Regenerative Ag

## A Farmer's Story



National  
Landcare  
Program



*Stephen Parish is a member of the Central Victorian Regenerative Farmer (CVRF) group. His property is located just north of Clunes on the Tullaroop Creek.*

“For some time, I was looking for options to be less reliant on hazardous pesticides and herbicides. I have been renovating my pastures and revegetating my property with more trees and shelter belts and I hadn't really done much thinking in the regenerative agriculture space. In fact, when a neighbour invited me to attend one of the early meetings of the Central Victorian Regenerative Farmer (CVRF) group, I was very sceptical and cautious.

The first meeting I attended sparked my interest around some of the possibilities of regenerative agriculture: healthy soil, improving moisture retention, healthy stock and keeping cover on the soil year-round, all without chemical input! By the second meeting and being introduced to the concept of multi-species cover cropping I was hooked!

The project has provided many benefits to me and others in the group working towards doing things more regeneratively. The workshops, seminars, farm visits, tours, shared information and advice, as well as the encouragement just to have a go, have all played a part in changing my thinking significantly. My plans now are to keep working around my paddocks slowly getting them regenerated. I have begun a more structured rotational grazing management plan and look forward to the day of not needing much, if anything, in the way of artificial inputs.

The project has had a big influence on other group members, especially evaluating their current practices and getting them to think about regenerative agriculture practices. Like myself, a few of the group members were sceptical about these techniques. It wasn't until they actually saw the visual differences in paddock trials, they thought they would need to investigate these practices further.

I am very hopeful regenerative agriculture practices will make a difference to the long-term future of my property and am confident the group will be able to quantify some of the benefits. I am already seeing increasing brix levels in the cover crops. And

in comparison, to my other paddocks, there has been an improvement in growth in the paddocks I have been working on regeneratively.

The more I read and watch, rather than just enthusiastic hype, I realise this is a process that takes three to five years to really kick in and that's depending on a number of factors including previous management practices, soil and environmental conditions. Even though results may seem slow coming I think the positives outweigh the negatives and I am looking forward to being involved with the group and observing the changes on my property over the next few years.

The project has exposed me to a great bunch of people who are all interested in leaving our planet in a better shape than we have found it, and still be productive. Without the support of the North Central CMA with funding from the National Landcare Program, none of this would have been achievable.”



Stephen Parish inspecting his multi-species cover crop, sown in Autumn 2020