

# BEEF AUSTRALIA 2009

## ROCKHAMPTON



# Prior Park

Westpac Property Tours - Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2009



*Prior Park* is 8000 hectares of aggregated rangeland and Blue Gum flats, 65 kilometres south of Rockhampton. Owned by Gordon & Anne Stunzner, *Prior Park Pastoral* runs a 1200 head Droughtmaster cow herd for store production.

*Prior Park* is a great example of how holistic resource management can add value to an agricultural enterprise.

Combining pasture production and cattle grazing in a broad scale silvopastoral system, Gordon & Anne have embraced the challenge of managing and marketing their natural resources for both ecological and financial benefit. Pastures and native vegetation compete with the trees and the cattle for limited space and water. Anne and Gordon will explain their logic for the management and balancing of these three spheres via pasture and forest management, fencing, and grazing techniques that work with, rather than against, the environment.

The forests on *Prior Park* are a combination of Iron Bark, Blue Gum, Spotted Gum, and Moreton Bay Ash. These forests have been harvested and used to build housing, yards and fencing in the area for over 140 years.



*Prior Park* timber

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The tour will particularly visit "Eulimbi" paddock where the standing price of the timber has been used to offset the pasture renovation and environmental preservation costs of sustainably and profitably managing cattle production.

### The heritage listed *Prior Park* homestead

"Eulimbi" is a 485 hectare forested paddock running 160 first calf Droughtmaster heifers and contains a large wetland area of significant environmental importance. The individual identification and preparation of the available products from the paddock including split posts, saw logs, milled timber, veneer logs, and poles & girders will be demonstrated. There will also be an example of the on farm value adding attainable using a Lucas mill.

Timber produced and milled onsite at Prior Park adds approximately \$50,000 of annual income to the Prior Park enterprise. The sustainable management of the existing forests ensures an ongoing timber and ecological resource for future generations.

The value of the timber will be contrasted with the cost of ripping, pasture renovation, weed control and off stream watering points. A section of unmanaged forest and degraded pastures have been retained as a control to monitor the production contrast. Pastures included in the ripping and renovation were USA & Gayndah Buffel, Gatton panic, Kattambora Rhodes, pitted blue grass, mega stylo mix (Seca, Omega & Syran) & Burgundy Bean. The staggered protein maturation of the pasture mix provides an optimal nutritional plane for second calf conception rates.



*Prior Park's* paddocks and timber



*Prior Park* Droughtmasters

