2023-24

Tasmanian NRM Soil Extension Program

Final Report

Prepared by: NRM North, NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM for the TAS Farm Innovation Hub
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The Tasmanian Soil Extension Program is being delivered by NRM North, NRM South and the Cradle Coast NRM, with support from the TAS Farm Innovation Hub through funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.

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Acknowledgement of Country

We pay respect to the Traditional Owners of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Aboriginal people, and acknowledge their continued survival and connection with their land, sea and sky Country that spans millennia.

We acknowledge the many Nations of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, past and present, as the traditional and ongoing owners of their respective countries within Tasmania and the islands.
We pay respect to those who have passed and acknowledge today's Aboriginal people who are the custodians of this land.

We acknowledge that all land, sea, and sky Country holds cultural values that provide strong and continuing significance to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people. We acknowledge that Tasmanian Aboriginal people are part of a continuous culture that holds traditional knowledge about the ecosystems we all depend on. The landscapes of Tasmania have been shaped by Aboriginal management of plants, animals, and water (particularly using fire).

We acknowledge that colonisation and migration has caused injustice for Aboriginal people and impacted the living cultural landscape. This has created a legacy that we seek to improve.

We are working to integrate Aboriginal cultural heritage and knowledge in natural resource management, and to develop better understanding of the cultural, environmental, social and economic dimensions of the region's natural resources from the perspective of Aboriginal people.

Through our work, we aim to reflect these values by recognising that Tasmanian Aboriginal people determine both the boundaries for the sharing of their cultural heritage and opportunities for participation in NRM activities that embrace and support their aspirations. We pay respect to Tasmanian Aboriginal people's requirements to own, care and manage Country by aligning our strategic priorities to Tasmanian Aboriginal people's land, sea and sky Country priorities.

Executive Summary

The 2023–2024 Tasmanian Soil Extension Program (SEP) was designed to build on-farm and community resilience to drought by promoting regionally relevant soil health strategies. This project was delivered by NRM North in collaboration with NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM with support from the TAS Farm Innovation Hub (the Hub) through funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund, aimed to employ adaptable extension approaches, improve access to Decision Support Tools (DSTs), and strengthen partnerships across Tasmania's agricultural sectors.

Objectives and Scope

- Enhance Drought Resilience: Equip farmers with the resources, technical tools, and expertise needed to prepare for and adapt to variable climatic conditions.
- Promote Soil Health Management: Provide tailored information on soil testing, drainage, composting, and biodiversity, supporting practical on-farm improvements.
- Foster Collaboration and Capacity: Leverage peer-to-peer learning models and strategic partnerships (e.g., Wine Tasmania, Dairy Tas, Simplot, and local producer groups) to broaden the reach and impact of sustainable practices.
- Ensure Ongoing Impact: Embed monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks for continuous learning, drive long-term support for soil health initiatives, and sustain key networks beyond the life of the project.

Progress Against Outcomes

Increased Access to Knowledge

- Over 4,000 online views of Decision Support Tools (DSTs) including Land Drainage for Farming in Tasmania, Nutrient Management for Farming in Tasmania, and the Soil Test Interpretation Guide, indicating strong demand and broad application in managing soil health.
- Approximately 77% of workshop participants reported higher confidence in soil health management, while 62% planned to adopt new practices—demonstrating tangible progression toward more sustainable and drought-resilient farming.

Strengthened Community and Networks

- Regional events, such as Diverse Pasture Field Days, Cover Crop Workshops, and viticulture-focused sessions, empowered local groups to form long-lasting peer networks. In one instance, a grower group in Pyengana/Goshen formed and continues to meet independently.
- Partnerships with peak bodies and service providers (e.g., TIA, Wine Tasmania, Soils for Life) facilitated targeted knowledge exchange, enabling regionally tailored solutions, particularly in drainage, composting, and regenerative agriculture.
- The co-design process with farmers ensured that resources like DSTs and workshop content addressed local challenges, including soil biology, compost availability, and drought readiness.
- Adaptive strategies allowed NRMs to respond effectively to congestion in schedules, climatic pressures, and varying participant needs, ensuring continued engagement across diverse enterprises and regions.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Competing Priorities: Scheduling events in drought-affected regions required careful planning to avoid participant fatigue.
- Staff Turnover: High SEO turnover highlighted the need for stronger succession planning and capacity-building support.
- Refining Broad Topics: "Soil health" proved too expansive; breaking it into focused themes (e.g., drainage, biological amendments) increased clarity and adoption.
- Demand for longer-term Investment: Short funding cycles constrained continuity. Longer projects (3–5 years) would help retain skilled staff, deepen partnerships, and strengthen outcomes.

Future Directions

- Enhanced DST Promotion: Expand digital campaigns, online tutorials, and video testimonials to broaden the use and impact of these resources.
- Extended Project Durations: Advocate for multi-year funding to maintain continuity, refine extension methodologies, and capitalise on existing momentum in soil extension.
- Ongoing Monitoring & Evaluation: Integrate more qualitative feedback (e.g., follow-up interviews, mid-event surveys) to measure on-farm practice changes and inform continual improvement.

In summary, the Tasmanian Soil Extension Program 2023–2024 successfully advanced soil health awareness, drought resilience strategies, and strong collaborative networks across the state. The program's capacity-building initiatives, robust partnerships, and adaptable design not only delivered practical benefits to current participants but also laid the foundation for future growth and sustainability in Tasmania's agricultural landscape.

Background

The 2023-2024 Tasmanian Soil Extension Program (the Program) aimed to address the critical need for building on-farm and community resilience to drought through collaborative approaches that enhance soil health management and climate adaptability. It aims to further refine and build capacity in state-wide soil extension and adaptable extension approaches. By integrating learnings from the 2022-2023 program, the initiative aimed to ensure practical, regionally tailored outputs that address evolving challenges such as climate change, industry trends, and stakeholder needs. Through statewide and cross-regional collaboration among Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisations and extensive stakeholder engagement, the Program set out to deliver adaptive extension services responsive to changes in natural assets, technology, and service provider capacities.

This Program followed on as a continuation of the 2022-2023 Tasmanian Soil Extension Program, which successfully addressed region-specific soil health issues and built soil extension capacity across Tasmania. Supported by the Australian Government's Regional Land Partnerships (RLP), the initial program employed Soil Extension Officers (SEOs) in each NRM region to provide soil health testing, interpretative services, and host workshops and field days. Additionally, it developed valuable Decision

Support Tools (DSTs) including *Soil Test Interpretation Guide for Dryland Pastures in Tasmania, Nutrient Management Guide for Farming in Tasmania,* and *Land Drainage for Farming in Tasmania,* which received positive community feedback.

However, with the impending conclusion of RLP funding, there was a risk of losing progress in SEO capacity building and stakeholder relationships. This challenge prompted collaboration with the Hub to co-design a new program specification that would ensure continuity. The revised program, supported by the Hub through funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund, was designed to be scalable, adaptable to external factors, and outcome focused. It aimed to maintain capacity within the collaborating organisations while fostering flexibility for ongoing evaluation and refinement. The governance framework linked SEO and Hub efforts, facilitated co-designed content, and ensured the delivery of practical, farm-scale solutions to meet Tasmania's soil health and climate resilience challenges.

This Program brought together a diverse group of users, stakeholders, and collaborators. At its core, the program served farmers and landholders as its primary users, providing them with practical tools, extension services, and resources to enhance soil management practices on their farms. These services were designed to build resilience to drought and climate variability while fostering a culture of sustainable land management practices.

The Hub worked closely with the program team to co-design its framework, ensuring its continuity and alignment with broader agricultural innovation goals. The collaboration with regional NRM organisations, including NRM North, NRM South, and Cradle Coast NRM, ensured that the program could address the diverse needs of Tasmania's agricultural regions, offering targeted and region-specific solutions.

Collaboration and governance were central to the Program's success, with various roles contributing to its operation. The collaboration lead oversaw contractual arrangements, resource distribution, and reporting obligations, maintaining the overall governance structure of the Program. The Program Management Group provided oversight of regional extension services, facilitated adaptive responses based on feedback, and ensured that all records, including financials, were well-maintained. At the operational level, the Program Delivery Team played a key role in designing and implementing regionally tailored extension activities, while also integrating monitoring, evaluation, and learning processes to promote continuous improvement.

This Program also leveraged expertise and guidance from the Tasmanian Regional Soil Coordinator to link its activities to national and state soil priorities. This collaboration provided strategic input and fostered skill development while ensuring the Program remained relevant and scalable to meet the evolving needs of the agricultural community. This integrated approach created a strong foundation for delivering practical, farm-scale outcomes, setting the stage for the Program's evaluation and future development.

Each regional NRM organisation has collaboratively contributed to this report, reflecting a unified approach to addressing project activities and goals across Tasmania. Each NRM organisation has actively engaged in delivering relevant activities tailored to their regional priorities, ensuring that project outcomes align with the unique needs of their stakeholders. By leveraging shared expertise and resources, the NRMs have successfully addressed both localised challenges and broader state-wide priorities, resulting in cohesive and impactful project delivery.

Governance Structure

The Program established a clear governance framework designed to align with both national and regional priorities for soil health. A Collaboration Lead maintained contractual arrangements with the Hub, coordinated resource distribution among the consortium partners (NRM North, NRM South, and Cradle Coast NRM), and led reporting obligations. A Program Management Group oversaw project delivery, provided feedback on adaptive management, and ensured key records were maintained. The Program Delivery Team was responsible for designing and delivering extension activities, implementing agreed Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) processes, and contributing to reporting. Finally, the Community of Practice and Tasmanian Regional Soil Coordinator (TRSC) were intended to link the project to national and state soil priorities and guide soil skills and extension, although their exact scope was still under development.

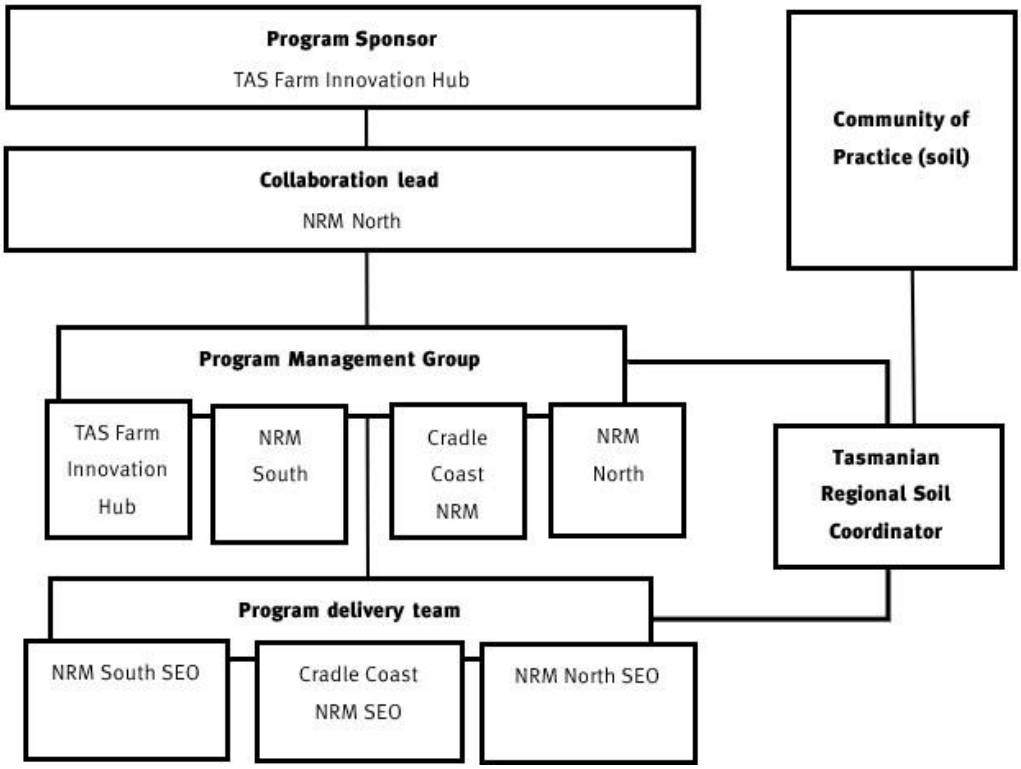


Figure 1 Program Governance structure

What Worked Well

Coordinated Delivery: The Collaboration Lead effectively managed resource distribution and reporting, streamlining project processes and ensuring consistency across regions.

Adaptive Oversight: The Program Management Group provided crucial guidance and rapid feedback loops, fostering agility in responding to local needs and emerging challenges.

Regional Tailoring: The Program Delivery Team's involvement in co-designing and delivering region-specific activities proved valuable, ensuring the project remained relevant to the local context while still benefiting from a state-wide approach.

Shared Learning: Even with the Community of Practice not fully established, initial collaborations with the TRSC helped align SEP activities with broader soil initiatives and prompted valuable exchanges of expertise among the NRMs.

Room for Improvement

Role Clarification: While the governance structure was sound in principle, clearer distinctions between the responsibilities of the Collaboration Lead and the Program Management Group would reduce overlaps and improve efficiency in decision-making.

Community of Practice Engagement: With the scope and timing of the Community of Practice still evolving, earlier or more structured engagement could have enhanced collaborative learning and stronger ties to broader soil skills initiatives.

Overall, the governance framework fostered a collaborative environment, successfully balancing local adaptability with a unified state-wide approach. Strengthening role clarity, formalising the Community of Practice, and refining succession practices would further enhance the efficiency and impact of future soil extension programs.

Community of Practice

The Community of Practice (CoP) is a forum linking SEOs, TRSC, and other stakeholders to share knowledge, align with state and national priorities, and support capacity around soil skills and extension. Although informal discussions and ad-hoc meetings occurred at semi-regular intervals — primarily around sharing emerging trends, coordinating on specific extension tasks, and identifying training opportunities for SEOs—the CoP would have benefited from a more structured approach with well-defined objectives.

Several important outcomes and lessons emerged from this activity:

Capacity Building for SEOs: Informal conversations with TRSC and other experts served to enhance SEOs' technical knowledge, offering insight into broader soil-related initiatives and frameworks.

Highlighting Gaps: The CoP revealed a strong need for a structured platform where SEOs and other experts could regularly exchange resources, experiences, and problem-solving approaches.

Collaboration Potential: Initial engagements underscored the value of having a dedicated space for co-designing state-wide solutions—particularly in areas like drought resilience and soil health monitoring.

Moving forward, there is broad agreement among project partners that a more formal and consistently scheduled CoP could offer substantial benefits. A well-defined remit, along with regular meeting times, would provide a clear avenue for ongoing professional development, peer learning, and resource sharing among SEOs and other stakeholders. With further planning and alignment of expectations, the CoP could

continue beyond the life of this project, supporting the long-term development of extension capacities across Tasmania.

Overall Project Outputs and Outcomes

This section outlines the collective outputs and outcomes by drawing on the collaborative efforts of NRM North, NRM South, Cradle Coast NRM, and the Hub. The program delivered a range of targeted activities and resources aimed at strengthening soil health management and building drought resilience. The following discussion highlights the key achievements, partnerships, and lessons learned from these collaborative initiatives before each region's specific activities are discussed.

Sustainability

The Tasmanian Soil Extension Program (SEP) 2023-2024 has been strategically designed to ensure that its outcomes and outputs endure beyond the project's duration. Sustainability is embedded into the project framework through the following approaches:

Project Legacy and Long-term Impacts

The program's emphasis on building state-wide capacity for soil health management and drought resilience creates a strong foundation for ongoing impact. The three Decision Support Tools (DSTs)— *Soil Test Interpretation Guide for Dryland Pastures in Tasmania, Nutrient Management Guide for Farming in Tasmania,* and *Land Drainage for Farming in Tasmania* — serve as lasting resources that empower landholders and advisors to make informed decisions about soil health. These tools have been actively promoted through events and online platforms, ensuring accessibility and sustained relevance. Over 4000 online views have been recorded for the DSTs since February 2024, coupled with targeted stakeholder engagement, highlighting their effectiveness and the potential for long-term utility.

The program's capacity-building initiatives, including workshops, field days, and collaborative events, have strengthened the knowledge base among farmers and advisors. These activities have also fostered local networks, such as the formation of a farmer group in Pyengana/Goshen, which is expected to sustain ongoing peer-to-peer learning and regional innovation.

Continuation of Partnerships and Networks

The collaboration between regional NRM bodies (NRM North, NRM South, Cradle Coast NRM) and the Hub exemplifies the program's integrative approach to governance and delivery. The alignment with state and national soil priorities, facilitated by the Tasmanian Regional Soil Coordinator, enhances the program's ability to adapt to future needs. By embedding co-design principles into the project, these partnerships are more likely to persist, creating a collaborative culture around soil health and drought resilience.

Cross-regional and stakeholder engagement activities have expanded the reach and interconnectedness of stakeholders. For example, partnerships with Wine Tasmania, Dairy Tas, and primary school communities have opened pathways for future initiatives that align with the project's objectives. Regular management group meetings and shared reflections ensure continuity and adaptability, building trust and a framework for sustained collaboration.

Evaluation and Adaptation

Key evaluation questions (KEQs) have guided the program's adaptive management, focusing on outcomes such as increased capacity among farmers to improve soil health and climate resilience. Reflective discussions aimed to capture lessons learned and refine practices for future initiatives. This ensures that adaptive methodologies and insights gained through the project will inform ongoing soil health programs.

Key Evaluation questions and responses

KEQ1. Are the program activities and outputs (to date) been delivered successfully and within timeframes and budget? If not, why not?

All program activities and outputs have been successfully delivered on schedule and within budget. There have been no delays or issues encountered in the implementation of workshops, field days, or webinars with support from landholders and industry stakeholders.

KEQ2. To what extent has the demand for DST's increased because of SEP promotion and provision of the resources?

There has been a significant increase in demand for DSTs, particularly for the Soil Test Interpretation Guide. Due to increased awareness, DSTs were reprinted with 250 copies of each produced. These copies were then distributed at workshops held throughout the state to further promote the materials and engage participants. Among the online DSTs, Land Drainage Tool has the highest number of views, surpassing 2,200, followed by the Nutrient Management Tool and the Soil Test Interpretation Guide.

KEQ3. Are the farmers and advisors engaged in the program reporting an increased capacity to use knowledge to improve soil health management and climate resilience?

It's encouraging that the majority of workshop attendees reported an increased ability to implement soil health practices and climate-resilient strategies, indicating that the program is effectively enhancing participants' skills. The increased capacity also implies that participants are better prepared to face climate challenges, such as droughts or heavy rainfall. Over time, this feedback could offer insights into whether the knowledge is leading to measurable improvements in farm productivity and environmental health. Additionally, the participants shared what they've learned with others, this showed positive impact on the program further.

KEQ4. Have the NRM's maintained and improved their understanding of regional interest and opportunities for soil health management and climate resilience support through SEO networks and engagement activities?

SEOs from all three NRM regions maintained the Soil Extension Service and Stakeholder Engagement Log, which contains details of NRM's engagements with landholders and industry stakeholders. One-on-one interactions with the landholders improved the NRM's understanding of regional interests, followed by advisory engagements with industry stakeholders. These engagements among SEOs and stakeholders provided an opportunity to successfully facilitate workshops. Feedback surveys from the workshops indicate that the majority of attendees have improved their understanding of soil health management and climate resilience.

KEQ5. What, if any, unintended outcomes (positive and negative) resulted from the program?

Positive unintended outcomes have resulted from the SEP2 program. Examples of this is enhanced cross-organisational communication within NRMs when engaging with key industry stakeholder contacts.

The program has shown the SEOs that key points of contact, who are often time-constrained, prefer a single NRM representative to coordinate event planning and manage their industry networks during state-wide projects. The NRMs were able to strengthen cross-organisational communication with CSIRO, enabling them to contribute services and expertise for the National Soil Monitoring Program (NSMP). This collaborative environment will not only bridge local on-ground needs with national research efforts but will also ensure that Tasmanian agriculture benefits from soil monitoring training, capacity building of the SEOs and shared knowledge in soil health.

KEQ6.What have been the main barriers to engagement (both internal and external) with the program?

The main barriers to engagement, both internal and external, with the program have been staff turnover across the three NRMs. This issue can be partially attributed to inconsistent, short funding cycles from federal and state governments, as well as agricultural research and development corporations. Additionally, community-based feedback suggests that there is a need for longer-term investment in soil extension. Such investment would help consolidate and increase the capacity and capability of both soil extension staff and landholders across the state.

KEQ7.What key knowledge and training gaps still exist in the SEO team that have become apparent during the program development and delivery?

The high turnover of staff across the NRM regions on short-term contracts makes it difficult to ascertain staffing levels. In general, there has been a continuous need to build staff capacity throughout both iterations of the Tasmanian Soil Extension program, driven by high turnover and the challenges faced by all three NRM regions in recruiting experienced soil professionals since the program's inception in 2022. This reflects broader industry issues related to capability and capacity. It was suggested that recognised soil practitioner accreditation, along with knowledge of sustainability frameworks concerning soil health or carbon sequestration, would be a suitable benchmark for future programs.

KEQ8. To what extent will the program partnerships, collaborations, and/or networks created continue? And how?

The program has reinforced the role that NRMs play as independent extension deliverers, acting as a trusted interface between private, commercial, and public landholders and extension funding bodies. The partnerships, collaborations, and networks established through the program are likely to continue due to the strong relationships built between these key stakeholders. These connections may persist through ongoing collaboration, with NRMs maintaining their role as essential facilitators and intermediaries in the extension process. The continued relevance and trust in NRMs as independent entities can support the longevity of these partnerships, ensuring that they remain effective in future initiatives.

Futureproofing Through Flexibility

The program has been designed with scalability and adaptability in mind, enabling responses to unforeseen challenges such as staff turnover and changing climatic or market conditions. Mechanisms such as the Soil Extension Service and Stakeholder Engagement Log ensured that the insights gained from individual interactions and larger-scale initiatives were captured for future use. Additionally, this

mechanism ensured key points of contact were maintained to reduce engagement fatigue. These documents were compiled and maintained by SEOs throughout the project, capturing instances of soil extension that occurred outside specific SEP event activities. The type of engagement, stakeholder type, and activity description were recorded by each SEO throughout the project. This document also tracked collaborative stakeholder engagement within the project delivery team, particularly targeting agricultural advisors/consultants and industry bodies. This stakeholder communication tracking ensured more effective coordination of stakeholder engagement cross-regionally.

In conclusion, the Tasmanian Soil Extension Program has positioned itself to leave a legacy by embedding sustainable practices, fostering enduring partnerships, and creating adaptable tools and networks that extend the program's benefits far beyond its formal timeline. These measures ensure that the program not only meets immediate objectives but also lays the groundwork for continued impact in advancing soil health and drought resilience in Tasmania.

Project Activities, Outputs and Outcomes in each region

Project activities were delivered by each region through their SEOs according to regionally specific needs, and collaboratively across Tasmania where the need arose.

The SEOs played a pivotal role in delivering tailored support to landholders, translating the project's vision of improving soil health and drought resilience into practical on-ground actions. Their direct engagement with farmers through workshops and regular stakeholder consultations proved invaluable in ensuring that project activities remained targeted, accessible, and responsive to regional needs. By fostering relationships with industry groups, local experts, and broader networks such as CSIRO, the SEOs facilitated knowledge exchange that helped align local extension efforts with national initiatives like the National Soil Monitoring Program (NSMP). This alignment not only strengthened Tasmanian agriculture's link to cutting-edge research but also contributed to securing the CSIRO Soil Monitoring Project for Tasmania.

Project activities, outputs and outcomes are described below by each Tasmanian NRM region. Project activities undertaken collaboratively and delivered on a statewide basis are also described in this context.

NRM North's Regional Activities

Figure 2: Depicted in dark grey, the NRM North region covers the north east area of Tasmania and includes the Furneaux Island Group.

NRM North engaged with the farming community to co-design and deliver fit-for-purpose information that has lasting impact. This resulted in tailored activities and resources that addressed specific regional needs, such as soil drainage and sustainable farming practices. This process fostered peer-to-peer learning, strengthened relationships, and improved resource allocation by ensuring solutions were practical and relevant. Key learnings included the importance of aligning activities with farmers' time constraints, refining broad topics like "soil health" for actionable outcomes, and leveraging existing networks to extend the project's reach. Co-design not only enhanced engagement but also built ownership among participants, highlighting the value of participatory approaches. Program staff engaged directly with landholders to provide soil health related advice and connect farmers to resources. Through funding and on-ground assistance, the project supported events to raise awareness of soil related issues, promoted DSTs, and engaged with landholders to discuss soil related issues.

Schools were engaged throughout the project to raise awareness of the importance of soil health in Tasmania. Extensive engagement with industry stakeholders and farmer groups was also undertaken to understand community needs, promote programs and collaborate to deliver targeted events. The engagement efforts resulted in several key outcomes and learnings that highlighted the value of collaboration and community involvement. Engaging schools raised awareness about the importance of soil health, creating an educational ripple effect that reached broader community networks. Collaboration with industry stakeholders and farmer groups provided a deeper understanding of community needs, enabling the co-design and delivery of events tailored to regional priorities.

The engagement revealed the importance of addressing local challenges, such as sustainable potato farming and soil drainage, through practical, region-specific solutions. It also underscored the value of fostering partnerships to enhance program reach and impact. The process reinforced the need for a participatory approach in designing initiatives, ensuring relevance, and building trust among stakeholders.

Summary of NRM North's regional outputs

Thirty landholders were engaged directly in one-to-one interactions, providing tailored advice on a range of topics, including sampling for pH testing, soil sampling methodology, laboratory options, LISTMap, diverse pasture mixes, and managing pasture and soil structure.

The project directly supported three events to engage landholders and stakeholders on soil health topics. Events included:

- Grassroots Festival (trade table with Cradle Coast NRM promoting DST resources)
- Tasmanian Garlic and Tomato Festival (interactive soil health station)
- Agfest (display with all Tasmanian NRM's, showcasing Tasmanian soil orders, erosion control, and DST promotion)
- Conducted over 30 stakeholder meetings to understand community needs, promote programs, and foster collaboration. Discussions covered sustainable drainage planning, soil carbon projects, composting opportunities, and viticulture-focused soil health.

Additionally, the project:

- Supported educational initiatives at Hagley Farm School and provided feedback on their soil science curriculum, focusing on activities in protecting natural resources and emphasising the importance of soil health.

- Represented NRM North at professional forums, including the Soil Science Australia Tasmanian Branch Committee, fostering knowledge sharing and collaboration.

- Facilitated access to biological fertiliser resources and linked landholders with grower groups, including connecting to the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture's diverse pasture 360 trial.

- Delivered three workshops in the NRM North region: Diverse Pastures for Soil Health; NRM Viticulture Series - Enriching Our Soils and Elevating Our Vines with Compost; and Balancing Drainage and the Environment.

Brief case studies are provided which describe the need, impact and outcomes of the events:

Workshop: Diverse pastures for soil health

Figure 3 Farm Ecologist and key presenter, Robin Tait, shares her knowledge with attendees on diverse pastures.

Objective: To empower farmers in the Georges River Catchment with practical knowledge and tools to improve pasture resilience and soil health.

Why did we engage with these stakeholders?

This event was driven by the expressed interest of farmers in the Georges River Catchment, who identified the need for practical advice and support to enhance pasture resilience and soil health. Engaging these stakeholders allowed the project to address specific regional challenges, such as degraded pastures and low species diversity, while also supporting the formation of a grower group. These farmers provided valuable insights into the local farming context, ensuring that the event's content was relevant and tailored to their needs.

Where did the need come from?

The need originated from ongoing conversations with local farmers, who highlighted two major challenges: managing established pastures with limited species diversity and navigating the constraints of traditional fertiliser use on soil health. Farmers expressed interest in exploring alternative strategies, such as biological fertilisers and incorporating diverse pasture species, to improve resilience and productivity.

How did this enhance community relationships?

The event, attended by 20 farmers, significantly strengthened community relationships by fostering peer-to-peer learning and collaboration. Open discussions and the sharing of personal experiences created an atmosphere of trust and mutual support, laying a solid foundation for collective problem-solving. As a direct outcome, the attendees established a grower group, formalising these connections and providing a structured platform for ongoing collaboration. A recent follow-up confirmed that the group continues to meet independently without the need for external facilitation, driven by shared interests and the supportive relationships formed during the event. According to the hosting farmers, the group has convened several times since its formation and plans to hold additional meetings throughout the year. Their most recent gathering took place in Pyengana on October 15th, where they engaged in discussions with fellow farmers, further strengthening their network and collaborative efforts.

What's the legacy of this event and relationship?

The legacy of this event lies in the formation of a grower group, which provides a sustainable platform for resource-sharing, collaboration, and ongoing learning. This group ensures the knowledge and tools shared during the event continue to have a long-term impact on farming practices in the Georges River Catchment. Additionally, the event demonstrated how farmer-led initiatives can drive engagement and

foster ownership of agricultural challenges, setting a precedent for future events. It also initiated a shift towards greater adoption of diverse pasture species and biological inputs, contributing to improved soil health and farm resilience.

"Great to gain an understanding of options & costings. Planting selection & importance was very useful information" – workshop participant.

What were the outcomes?

Survey results for the Diverse Pastures for Soil Health workshop indicated the content was both relevant to participants needs and effective in fostering social connections and organic support networks. Additionally, results indicate a continued need to support farmers with tools and expertise in managing soil health and risks associated with increased frequency of drought conditions. Figure 5 describes the survey results for this workshop.

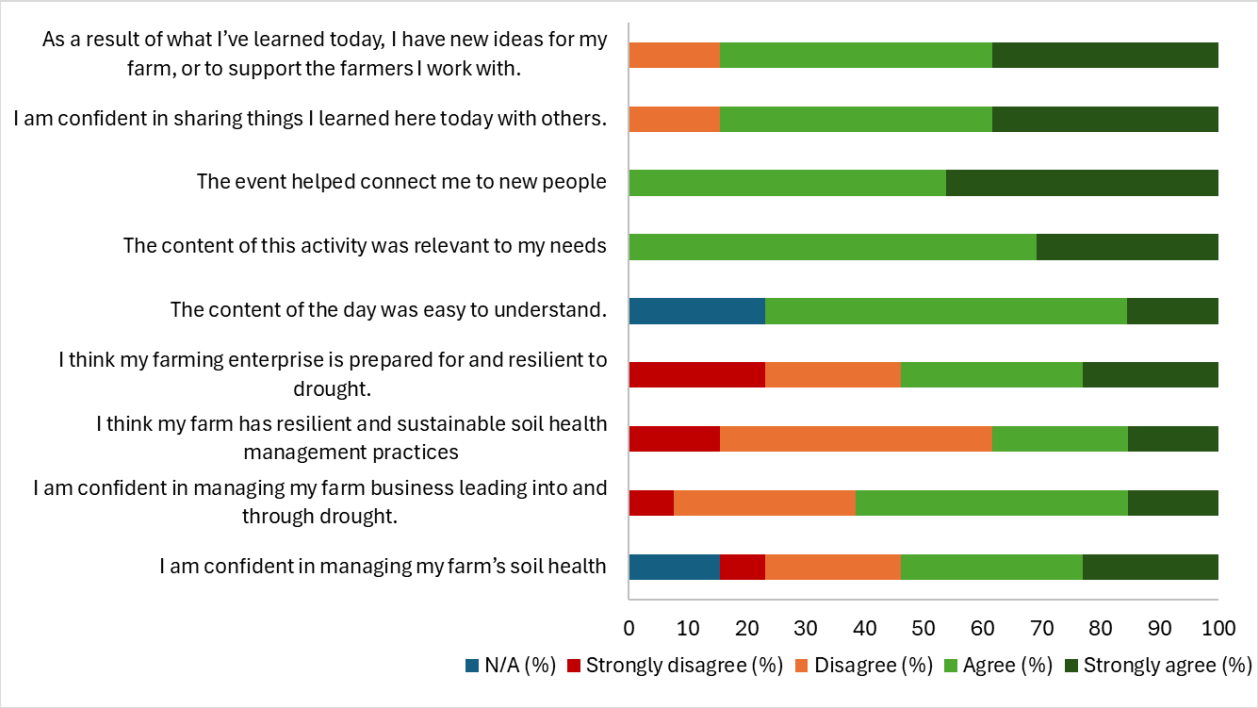


Figure 4 Diverse Pastures for Soil Health workshop attendee responses (13 responses) to survey questions (%).

Key reflections/themes from the event were:

- Importance of farmer-led initiatives for sustained engagement
- High interest in tools and techniques for introducing species diversity in pastures
- Recognition of the value of biological fertilisers and in-field soil health indicators.

Workshop: NRM Viticulture Series - Enriching Our Soils and Elevating Our Vines with Compost

Figure 5 Attendees sharing lunch together and engaging in conversations around composting for viticulture.

Objective: To foster sustainable soil health practices by educating Tasmanian wine producers on the benefits of composting and circular nutrient economies.

Why did we engage with these specific stakeholders?

This event, developed in collaboration with Wine Tasmania, aimed to address a critical knowledge gap in the Tasmanian wine industry: circular nutrient economies on farms. Engaging stakeholders such as agricultural peak bodies, viticulturists, and composting experts allowed for an exploration of sustainable improvements to vineyard soil health and fertility through composting, particularly by utilising grape production waste. The event aligned with SEP's goal to strengthen relationships with agricultural organisations and enhance engagement with NRM initiatives.

Where did the need come from?

The need for the event emerged from discussions with Wine Tasmania representatives who highlighted the need for practical education on composting and sustainable soil health practices in viticulture. An "NRM Viticulture Series" was created with NRM South and NRM North both holding an event. This series also supported the SEP objective to address industry-specific challenges while enhancing soil health and reducing chemical inputs. Further consultations revealed a key challenge in sourcing sufficient material for composting with grape marc. To address this, discussions were initiated with City of Launceston to explore the use of FOGO compost, introducing a potential circular economy solution to the issue.

How did this enhance community relationships?

The workshop engaged 22 people, and fostered stronger connections between NRM's, agricultural organisations, vineyards, and composting experts by addressing this industry-specific challenge. It facilitated partnerships by connecting vineyards with the FOGO compost product and promoting shared sustainability goals. Peer-to-peer learning and collaboration further reinforced the workshop's impact within the industry.

What's the legacy of this event and relationships?

The legacy of the event lies in advancing composting as a sustainable practice within the Tasmanian wine industry. By demonstrating the potential of grape marc and other vineyard waste as valuable compost ingredients, the workshop championed the adoption of a circular nutrient economy. A key outcome was the provision of special access to the FOGO compost product for viticulturists at a competitive wholesale price, strengthening their connection to sustainable practices. The event also

encouraged the use of cover crops as a strategy to improve vineyard resilience, with the potential for lasting benefits in agricultural sustainability.

"Give composting a go, anything is better than nothing, it is important to cover bare soil"
- Steve Faulkner, presenter

What were the outcomes?

Survey results for this workshop indicated the content delivered was relevant and accessible to participants, fostering increased connections and peer networks. While many participants noted a high level of confidence that their farming enterprises were resilient to drought, a proportion felt they were not adequately prepared. Conversely, there was also a proportion who indicated drought preparedness and resilience did not apply to their farming enterprises. While there may be a range of influencing factors to these responses, there may be a need to raise awareness of increased frequency of drought conditions and how and when they are likely to affect the wine industry. Figure 5 below outlines survey response received by workshop participants.

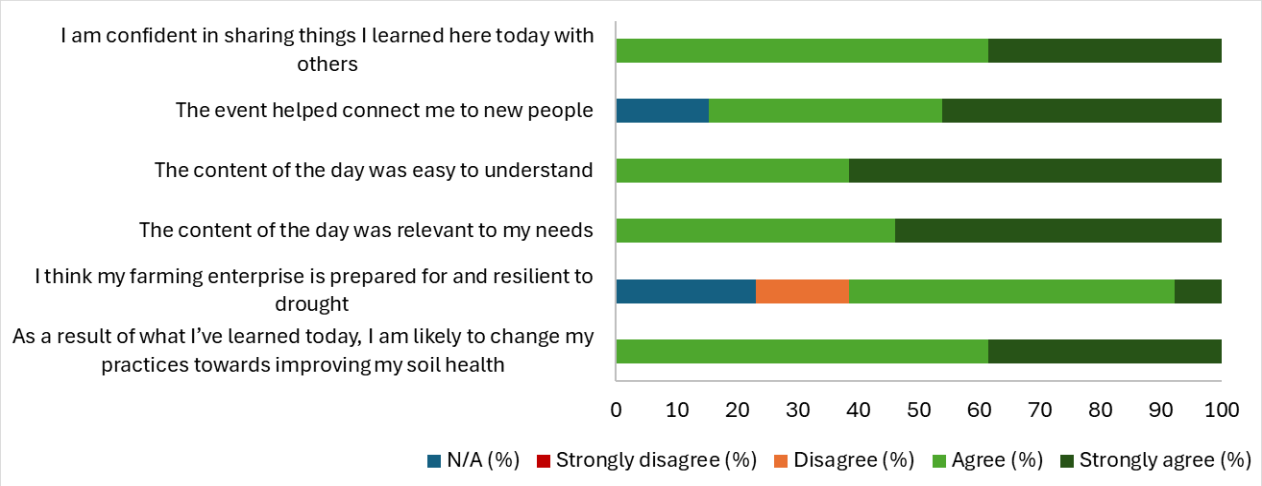


Figure 6 NRM Viticulture Series: Enriching Our Soils and Elevating Our Vines with Compost workshop attendee responses (13 responses) to survey questions (%).

Key reflections/themes from the event were:

- Strong demand for practical advice on integrating composting into vineyard management practices
- Recognition of grape marc as an underutilised resource with significant potential for on-farm composting
- Enthusiasm for ongoing collaboration with peak bodies like Wine Tasmania to address broader industry sustainability challenges
- Increased interest in cover crops and biodiversity as complementary practices for soil health improvement

Workshop: Balancing Drainage and the Environment

Figure 7 (top image) NRM North SEO, Ruth Murphy, in conversation with attendees around sustainable drainage best practices.

(bottom image) In paddock practical demonstration on the Wolverine machine.

Objective: Equip farmers with strategies for sustainable drainage practices and soil management techniques to address the growing need for improved drainage management on challenging duplex soils in the midlands regions of Tasmania.

Why did we engage with these stakeholders?

The Sustainable Drainage Workshop held at a property in Conara, showcased key challenges such as waterlogged duplex soils, completed drainage management works, a stream fenced off within a pivot paddock, and riparian zones previously restored by the River Health Action Plan (RHAP). These features offered an excellent case study for exploring sustainable drainage and soil management. Presenters were selected for their expertise in soil moisture management, riparian zone restoration, plant species selection, and subsurface drainage solutions.

Where did the need come from?

The demand for the workshop stemmed from feedback on the DST *Land Drainage for Farming in Tasmania*, which highlighted a gap in addressing the environmental impacts of on-farm drainage works. With increasing irrigation development and intensification, there is a growing need for improved drainage management on challenging duplex soils to balance productivity and environmental outcomes.

How did this enhance community relationships?

The workshop engaged with 24 people and strengthened community relationships by fostering trust through practical solutions to a pressing regional issue. It connected farmers with strategies for sustainable drainage and land management, while also building relationships with experts in tailored plant selection, drainage design, and environmental health. Discussions on the DST encouraged its practical refinement to better support farm-level applications. Additionally, peer-to-peer discussions allowed participants to share insights, fostering a collaborative learning environment that strengthened connections within the farming community.

What's the legacy of this event/relationship?

The legacy of this event lies in its demonstration of how sustainable drainage can address both productivity and environmental challenges in the Midlands. Participants gained practical knowledge on drainage design, riparian management, and soil stabilisation tailored to the region's unique conditions. The workshop highlighted how effective drainage systems improve soil health, reduce waterlogging, and protect waterways, ensuring long-term benefits for both farms and ecosystems. Practical demonstrations of subsurface drainage systems and innovative fencing provided actionable insights, encouraging immediate application of sustainable practices.

"I learnt the importance of good drainage. Most important however, is fencing off creeks" – event participant.

What were the outcomes?

Survey results for this workshop indicated the content delivered was both relevant and accessible to participants and assisted in fostering increased connections for sharing with peer networks. While most participants found the content easy to understand, there was a small component who disagreed - future soil drainage workshops should take this into consideration. Notably, a large proportion of participants indicated a lack of preparedness and resilience to drought conditions. In a similar vein to the NRM Viticulture Series workshop, a large proportion indicated that it did not apply to their enterprise. This likely indicates a strong need to raise awareness of the impacts of increased drought conditions and measures to build landscape resilience. Figure 7 summarises survey responses.

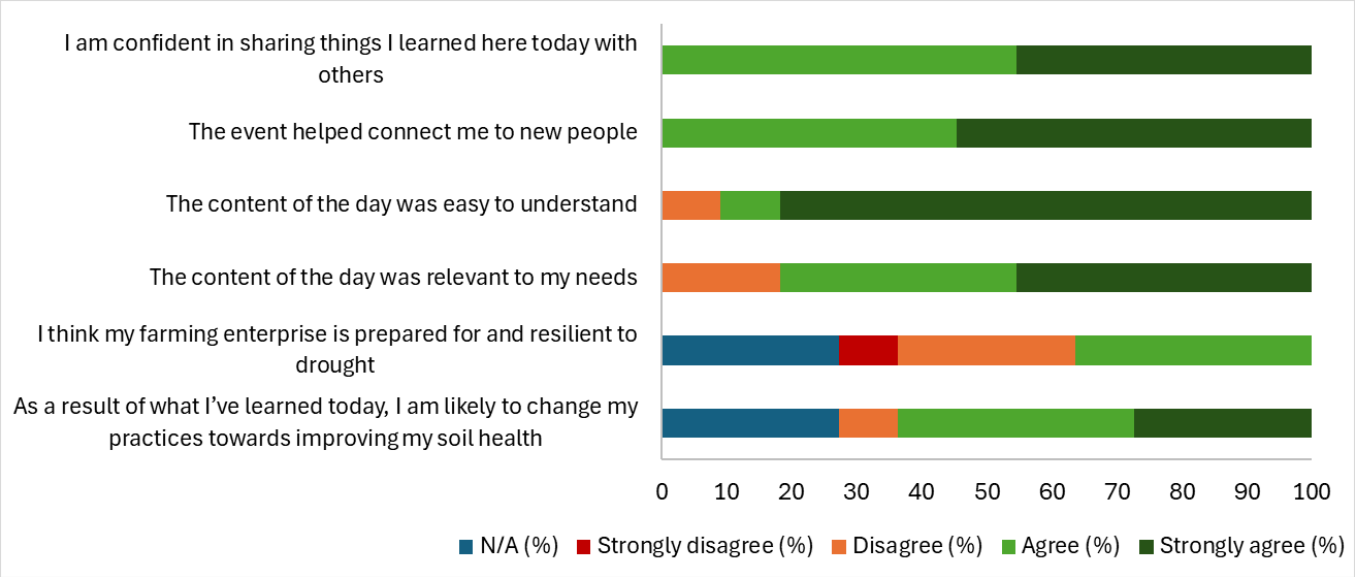


Figure 8 Balancing Drainage and the Environment workshop attendee responses (11 responses) to survey questions (%).

Key reflections/themes from the event were:

- The importance of riparian zones for farm and water health
- How waterway movement impacts productivity and management
- Tailored drainage solutions as a long-term financial investment
- Practical demonstrations such as the Wolverine drainage installer, and drop-down fencing showcased cutting-edge solutions.
- Emphasis on species selection for soil stabilisation under diverse conditions.

NRM North Project Outcomes

The project has made substantial progress toward achieving its intended outcomes by equipping farmers and advisors with knowledge and tools necessary to improve soil health and resilience to climate variability. Key accomplishments include:

- *Increased Knowledge and Confidence*

  77% of participants reported feeling confident in managing their farm's soil health after attending the workshops, indicating a significant increase in understanding and capacity. The relevance of the content was rated highly, with **90%** agreeing or strongly agreeing that the workshops addressed their specific needs, supporting sustainable on-farm decision-making. Events also provided actionable insights on integrating DSTs into farm management, ensuring that farmers had clear, practical pathways for applying what they learned.

- *Strengthened Community Networks*

  Workshops were highly effective in fostering collaboration between farmers, advisors, and regional NRM organisations. Notably, **100%** of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the events helped them connect with new people, creating opportunities for shared learning and collaboration. These

strengthened networks are crucial for maintaining ongoing engagement in sustainable soil health practices and drought resilience strategies.

- *Support for Sustainable Practices*

Participants gained practical knowledge in areas such as soil drainage, composting, and resilient farming techniques. Evidence from surveys indicates that **62%** of attendees planned to implement changes to improve soil health based on what they learned. These results align directly with the intended outcomes outlined in the Project Application and Workplan, focusing on building capacity, strengthening networks, and promoting sustainable land management practices.

Unexpected or Unintended Outcomes

The project also delivered several unintended yet valuable outcomes which include:

- *Heightened Demand for Peer-to-Peer Learning*
  Participants expressed a strong desire for more field-based, hands-on workshops, emphasising the importance of experiential learning in reinforcing the knowledge gained.

- *Exploration of Circular Economy Solutions*
  Discussions during the workshops identified opportunities to integrate circular economy solutions, such as composting farm waste through local programs like FOGO. This dialogue expanded the project's potential impact, addressing waste management challenges while promoting sustainability.

- *Enhanced Understanding of Drought Resilience Practices*
  While drought resilience was a key focus of the project, participant feedback revealed the need for additional practical resources and tools to further support farmers in building on-farm drought preparedness and long-term resilience strategies.

Evidence of Practice Change

Supporting evidence from participant feedback underscores the project's impact:

- Knowledge Sharing: **70%** of participants reported confidence in sharing what they learned with others, demonstrating the multiplier effect of the workshops.
- New Ideas: **85%** of participants indicated that they left with new ideas for their farms or for supporting others, highlighting the workshops' ability to inspire actionable change.
- Adoption of Sustainable Practices: A majority of attendees (**62%**) reported they were likely to change their practices toward improving soil health, showcasing the direct applicability of the knowledge shared.

Contribution to Overall Project Goals

The project has made significant contributions to its overarching objectives by:

- *Improving Access and Capacity*
  The workshops provided farmers and advisors with practical information and tools to manage soil health, climate resilience, and sustainable farming practices.

- *Strengthening Networks*
  Enhanced collaboration among stakeholders created opportunities for ongoing engagement and knowledge exchange, ensuring long-term impact.

- *Promoting Evidence-Based Practices*
  The use of Decision Support Tools (DSTs) and real-world examples ensured that participants could translate knowledge into action, directly aligning with environmental and productivity goals.

These outcomes demonstrate the project's alignment with the SEP Project Activity Workplan and its broader mission to improve soil health, enhance resilience, and foster collaboration within farming communities.

"Field Days have always been the most effective means of communicating changes especially when it's driven on providing organically grown safe food, whether it be for human or other animal consumption."

"I enjoyed the day very much was good to see such a good turn up of people. The speakers were very interesting and the topic very relevant to our farming system."

"How compost teas can enhance the benefits of composting. That better management of inter row cover crops can benefit the vines."

"Loved Steve's 'give it a go' approach - always good to have farmer to farmers presentations."

NRM South's Regional Activities

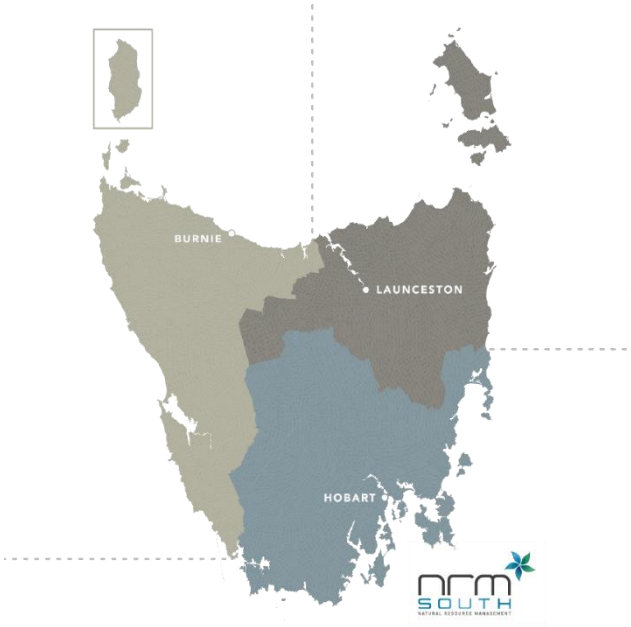


Figure 9 Depicted in blue, the NRM South region covers the southeast area of Tasmania and includes Bruny Island.

Within the Soil Extension Program, NRM South has worked in collaboration with farmers and grower groups to deliver soil health workshops, field days, webinars, and the promotion of decision-support tools. Extension activities were co-designed with the community to deliver information which was appropriate to the target region, addressing key challenges and advancements identified by the farmers.

The aim of these events was to provide farmers with the tools to sustainably manage soil health which aims to increase production or enterprise viability and the sustainability of soil as a natural asset. Topics included soil carbon, soil biology, farm management techniques, and basic soil health understanding and testing.

Summary of NRM South's Regional Outputs

Three engaging and meaningful extension events were delivered:

- The *"Soil health in a market garden"* workshop for market gardeners was delivered on the 5 September 2024. The workshop included two market garden tailored presentations from soil specialist, Declan McDonald, from ReGen Soils (Victoria), and a guided farm tour at Gardeners Bay Farm by Phil O'Donnell and Jimmy Zerella, who are experienced small-scale producers (see broader description below).

- A "*Market Garden Webinar: a deep dive into soil health & soil testing"* was successfully delivered online on 6 November 2024, with a focus on sharing knowledge to build productive, sustainable, healthy, and resilient market garden systems for smallholder communities (see broader description below).

- With support from industry body Wine Tasmania, the "*NRM Viticulture Series: practical solutions for compact soil and low carbon soils"* workshop was provided for the southern viticulture community on 19 November 2024. This workshop identified key soil challenges and provided helpful insights and effective strategies for soil management, with a focus on low carbon soils and compacted soils. The workshop had a highly valuable interactive component through hands-on physical soil assessments for four different soils over two different vineyard properties. (see broader description below).

With support from the project, NRM South has identified needs outside the scope of the project, and is implanting the following:

- *"Soil Testing and Monitoring in a Market Garden",* a case study on the locally relevant The Agrarian Kitchen's market garden. We will explore current soil testing, observe patterns in their data, encourage the importance of soil testing, and comment on future management techniques to drive a sustainable and productive system. – *in-progress*

- Two videos are currently being produced, serving as an additional resource for others who could not attend each event. These videos will be beneficial for smallholders and industry, allowing them to revisit information shared at their events and share the information with others who could not make it to the workshop, maximising the value of the extension events. – *in-progress*

Additionally, the project supported:

- NRM stall at the Ag Innovation Day 2024 event, engaging landholders and young agricultural students with the DSTs and the efforts we are undertaking in the soil health space
- Completion of two soil samples for two different market garden properties
- Collaboration with the other NRM SEOs to reach a wider audience of producers and actively learn from one another.

Program staff raised awareness of regional SEO and contacts through:

- Social media posts about the project, SEOs, DSTs, and soil health awareness
- SEO presence and networking at existing events
    - Resilient Farming Tasmania workshop in the Huon Valley
    - NRM South Farming Forecaster Bloomfield Containment Workshop
    - Hub 'Managing Dry Times' workshop in the Huon Valley
    - Resilient Farming Tasmania 'People & Culture Workshop', connecting three individuals with additional information surrounding natural resource management and one individual to our NRM South market garden workshop
    - Actively participated at the Southern Pathways to Resilience 'Prosperous Local Economy' workshop, facilitated by Regional Drought Resilience Coordinator, Lissa Villeneuve.

Workshop: Market Garden

Figure 10 Jimmy Zerrella and Phil O'Donnell discussing their management practices during the farm tour.

Objective: Empower participants with practical knowledge to improve soil management in small-scale market gardens, fostering more sustainable and productive practices.

NRM South welcomed the return of the spring growing season by hosting a workshop aimed at market gardeners who were keen to learn more about how to improve the health of their soils. As part of the Program, this workshop was the first in a series of two southern workshops aimed at different producer sectors.

Soils expert, Declan McDonald from Regen Soils, presented to a group of 20 attendees at Gardners Bay Farm in the Huon Valley, delving into what makes healthy soils, how producers can test their soils to get a deeper understanding of what's happening beneath the surface, how to interpret soil tests, and tips on how to practically improve soil health. This was followed by a tour around Gardners Bay Farm, a 1-hectare market garden and orchard where passionate owners Phil O'Donnell and Jim Zerella grow a range of high-quality fruit and vegetables that they sell to local restaurants and via a vegetable box scheme.

Gaining a deeper understanding of soil health is important both for producers' bottom line as well as the health of their properties. Knowing the structure, biology and nutrient profile of soil helps landholders to understand what amendments to apply, when to apply it, and how much. Judicious application of product, at the right time and in the right quantity saves unnecessary expenses and helps improve soil condition over the long-term, boosting plant health and supporting a healthy more resilient growing landscape.

Workshop feedback was incredibly positive, with all attendees expressing an interest in changing their practices based on what they learned during the workshop. On the feedback form, an attendee wrote:

"It was fantastic to learn from Declan's expertise, and it will give me confidence in managing and amending my soil, and interpreting soil testing."

Where did the need come from?

After the 2022-2023 Soil Extension Program workshop at Old Beach Berries, the SEO identified that the workshop content was broad, and attendees were looking for more specific and actionable information. After actively listening to previous workshop attendees and Sprout Tasmania, NRM South responded by designing a market garden tailored workshop, with a focus on areas of growth and interest for this small-scale community.

How did this enhance community relationships?

During the market garden workshop, relationships with the market garden community ignited. The workshop created a perfect opportunity to bring together the community and provide a platform for sharing knowledge to common challenges, connecting to one another, and exchanging ideas. The workshop also provided an opportunity to build the SEO's relationship with key stakeholders and community members, fostering trust and building a better understanding of their needs, and demonstrating commitment by delivering meaningful extension experiences.

What's the legacy of this event/relationship?

The legacy of the event lies in the lasting impact within the small-scale market garden community. Participants will be supported into the future with valuable resources, building their confidence and empowering them to make changes for increased soil health and climate resilience.

What were the outcomes?

Out of the 25 attendees, approximately half were market gardeners, and the others were interested in learning more and applying new knowledge to their small backyard vegetable gardens. The majority of attendees travelled from local areas, such as Cygnet, Huonville, and Dover. No attendees were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin. Figure 10 summarises survey responses for this event.

Key findings from survey results:

- 100% of attendees were likely to make a practice change towards improving their soil health (Figure 10).
- 100% of attendees believed this event helped them connect with new people (Figure 10).
- 100% of attendees thought that the information was relevant to their needs (Figure 10).

Selected comments from attendees, to highlight significant impact to attendees:

- *"Much deeper understanding of soil chemistry and next steps to build soil health."*
- *"Loved it. So grateful for an opportunity to learn from valuable content in our local community."*
- *"It was fantastic to learn from Declan's expertise, and it will give me more confidence in managing and amending my soil, and interpreting soil testing."*

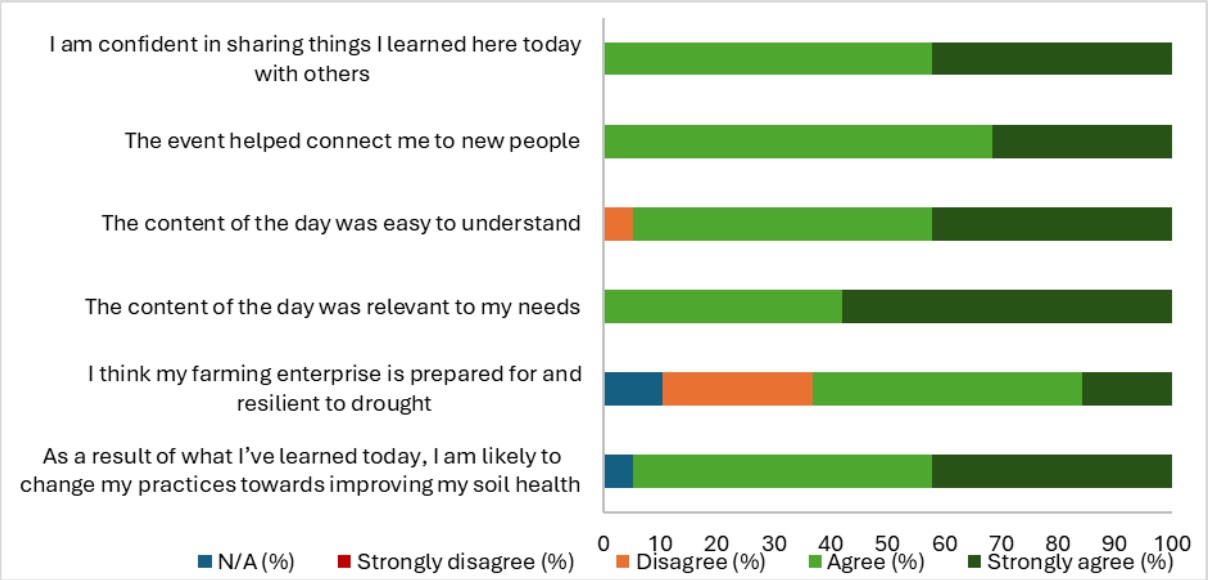


Figure 11 Market Garden Soil Health Workshop attendee responses (19 responses) to survey questions (%).

Key reflections/themes from the event were:

- Ignited trust and a strong relationship between the SEO and the market garden community
- Delivered a meaningful and knowledge-sharing experience for workshop participants
- Empowered market gardeners to change their practices to improve their soil health.

Workshop: Market Garden Webinar: a deep dive into soil health and soil testing

Figure 12 Opening slide to the "Market garden webinar: a deep dive into soil health and soil testing", with NRM South SEO, Jacinta Leys, introducing each guest speaker.

Objective: 1A) Empower participants with practical knowledge and share experiences from knowledgeable industry individuals to improve soil management in a market garden system, fostering more sustainable and productive practices. 1B) Address the high demand for additional events by the market garden community.

After the success of the face-to-face workshop and the strong demand from participants for another, NRM South recognised the value of further supporting this small-scale agricultural community. Taking initiative in this space, they decided on delivering an additional resource, in the form of an online recorded webinar. This webinar addressed key topics of interest and common challenges faced, which were collected through participant interactions and feedback responses. This event highlighted the SEOs flexibility to evolving to the needs of the market garden community, and their commitment to continue knowledge sharing.

The webinar gave the SEO the opportunity to build on the momentum, with an astonishing 157 individuals registering their interest for the event. The online platform allowed a broader audience of individuals, reaching those who could not attend an event in person. The webinar format allowed the event to reach other regions, such as market gardeners located in the north west and north of the state, and on the mainland, and open up the event to others in the agricultural community, such as students, researchers, broad-acre farmers, and other community members.

After the feedback from workshop attendees, soils expert Declan McDonald presented once again, tailoring his presentation to the identified areas of interest. Two experienced and well-respected market gardeners, Mitch Thiessen and Stanley Robert, shared their perspectives on practical soil health management techniques. Stan Robert, from Fat Carrot Farm, grows organic, nutritious vegetables for local subscribers and the food service industry, with previous research experience, bringing a strong foundation of science into his farming practices. Mitch Thiessen, Head Gardener at The Agrarian Kitchen, has a background in his family's apple orchards and years as a qualified chef, with a strong passion for

local food and regenerative farming, and focuses on building productive, sustainable, and healthy biological systems. All three guest speakers provided a range of interesting perspectives, highlighting their experiences, how they overcame challenges, the significance of soil testing, and practical advice for online attendees.

Attendees were encouraged to ask questions in the chat box and Q&A function, allowing a component of interaction in the webinar. All registered individuals received a direct link to the recording, allowing them easy access to a valuable resource.

How did this enhance community relationships?

This event enhanced community relationships by fostering a culture of collaboration between industry experts and key stakeholders, valuable knowledge sharing, and support for the market garden community.

By actively listening to the community's needs, the initiative created a ripple effect – bringing together a growing network of engaged participants and equipping them with valuable tools and resources. This approach has not only enhanced the community's capacity but also solidified a lasting relationship between the SEO and the community.

What's the legacy of this event/relationship?

The webinar strengthened trust and built a strong relationship between the SEO and the community, while fostering effective networking opportunities and establishing event legacy. For example, a market gardener who watched the webinar was interested to learn more about the biological health of his soil and after hearing Declan McDonald's presentation, approached him for further advice on his soil test interpretation. The benefits of this webinar and the established collaborations with experts are long-lasting.

What were the outcomes?

The majority of traffic to Humanitix.com was directly linked to the event from the monthly NRM South newsletter, and other socials, such as Instagram and Facebook, with a 44% conversion rate from visits to signing up to the event. There were 157 individuals signed up to the event, with approximately 35 individuals watching the event live. By 2 December 2024, there had been 280 views on the NRM South YouTube webinar recording (uploaded 8 November 2024).

As a result of what the participants learned, 71% agreed and 29% strongly agreed that they are likely to change their practices towards improving their soil health (Figure 12). Interestingly, the participants had mixed thoughts about the resilience of their farming enterprises to drought, with 57.2% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing (Figure 12).

Other key findings from the survey feedback:

- Average rating of 4.86 out of 5 for satisfaction of the webinar
- No attendees were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin (that responded to the surveys)
- 57% would actively promote the event to their friends or colleagues
- 43% strongly agreed and 43% agreed that they are confident in sharing to others (Figure 12).
- Range of attendees, with 50% market gardeners

Selected comments from attendees, to highlight significant impact:

"It was a really exciting webinar. So great to connect soil biology directly to a market garden operation and hearing from local producers applying such approaches."

"I have a better idea of how to approach our soil test results and will revisit them."

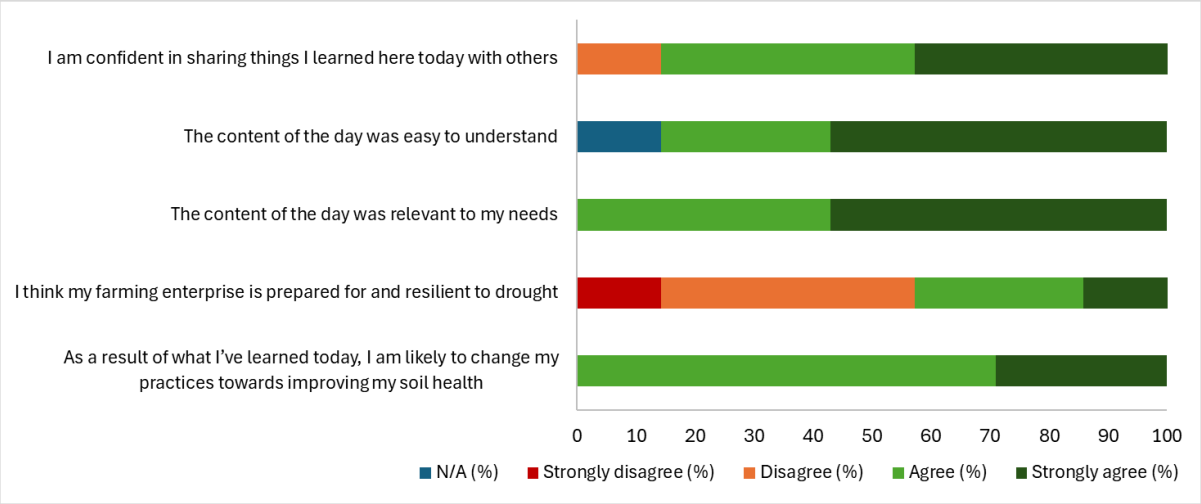


Figure 13 Market Garden Webinar 'A deep dive into soil health & soil testing' attendee responses (7 responses) to survey questions (%).

Key reflections/themes from the event were:

- Provided current and practical knowledge to participants, enhancing and building capacity of the market garden community
- Highlighted the benefits of actively listening and the SEO being flexibility to evolve to the needs of the market garden community
- Fostered a growing network of engaged participants, equipping them with valuable tools and resources.

Workshop: NRM Viticulture Series: practical solutions for compact soil and low carbon soils

Figure 14 Soil expert, Associate Professor Richard Doyle, discussing the soil characteristics in the Strelley Farm Estate vineyard, with participants actively listening and feeling the texture of the soil.

Objective: Equip viticulturists with actionable knowledge to optimise soil structure, avoid and reduce common soil issues, enhance vine performance, and support long-term soil health.

Tasmania's wine sector continues to grow in popularity and plays an important role for the state's economy. Through the Soils Extension Program, key learnings have been delivered to different industry sectors through tailored workshops, which included discussions with soil experts who discussed some of the common soil issues and how to address them.

NRM South facilitated a successful and well-delivered workshop for the viticulture community in the Coal River Valley, designed for vineyard growers and managers, and open to other community members. Supported by the peak representative body for Tasmanian wine producers, Wine Tasmania, they worked with Paul Smart to ensure that the viticulture community was well-informed of the event and aligned with their community's interest in soil.

As part of the Viticulture Series, this workshop was the first in a series of two workshops, aimed at different regions. NRM South delivered the first of the two workshops, with a focus on providing practical insights into improving soil health for healthier vines and better yields. Low carbon soils and compact soils were major soil issues explored in detail during the event. NRM North, delivering the final event for the series, explored effective composting in a vineyard, allowing the different regions to deliver different, but relevant and complementing topics.

After learning the benefits of collaborating with voices of influence and highly experienced individuals in NRM South's market garden extension activities, this approach was adopted for the viticulture workshop. NRM South collaborated with highly experienced soil and earth scientist, Associate Professor Richard Doyle, who has over 28 years of teaching and research expertise in soil science, geology, and land resource assessment. They also collaborated with Luke Taylor, a viticulturist consultant specialist, specialising in tailored solutions for farmers, and offering soil health management strategies for improved

productivity. Collaborating with these two individuals allowed a hands-on experience, with tailored advice and current insight into management strategies.

This interactive workshop was delivered over two separate properties, Strelley Farm Estate and Pressing Matters, where there was an opportunity to briefly assess and compare four different soil types. By touching the soil, observing its unique colour, and examining each soil site, the guest speakers encouraged the participants to identify which soils had more resilience to damage than the others, and which soils required additional management due to their higher vulnerability. This interactive component emphasised the fundamental importance of walking into the paddock and digging a hole to better understand their soils characteristics and their soil health.

The workshop covered techniques for improving soil structure, with supportive case studies demonstrating successful practices, and Associated Professor Richard Doyle and Luke Taylor providing insights into both low-carbon and compacted soils.

Workshop feedback was positive, with over 70% of attendees expressing an interest in changing their practices based on what they learned during the workshop (Figure 14).

Where did the need come from?

The demand and need of the viticulture event were driven by a combination of the following:

- A strong desire to address common industry-specific challenges and issues, with insights from key stakeholders, the Regional Soil Coordinator, Belinda Nielsen, and NRM South Land Team to reveal areas of improvement, soils vulnerable to damage, and identifying knowledge gaps in understanding
- Increasing interest in sustainable practices and building resilience to drought and future-climate related challenges in the wine industry
- Strong desire to share actionable knowledge and tools, such as the DST guides.

How did this enhance community relationships?

This viticulture event enhanced community relationships by fostering a culture of collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and support. It empowered attendees with practical tools and strengthened connections, enabling them to address shared challenges more effectively and improve problem-solving and decision-making, and increasing confidence in making changes within the community.

What's the legacy of this event/relationship?

The sharing of Tasmanian developed resources, such as the DSTs, Soilquality.org.au factsheets, and presentation notes from local experts, allows a continuation of available knowledge, following the event.

What were the outcomes?

There were 19 attendees who travelled from a diverse range of LGAs (Sorell, Granton, Huon, West Tamar). Interestingly, the majority of attendees believed their farming enterprise was prepared and resilient to drought (Figure 14). There were no attendees of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.

Key findings from survey results:

- 73% of attendees were likely to make a practice change towards improving their soil health, as a result of what they learned (Figure 14).

- 82% of attendees thought their farming enterprise was prepared and resilient to drought (Figure 14).
- 100% of attendees believed this event helped them connect with new people (Figure 14).
- 100% of attendees thought that the information was relevant to their needs (Figure 14).

Attendees expressed a range of interest in future events, including water management (irrigation and drainage), nutrient management in variable soil types, and interrow and under vine cover cropping.

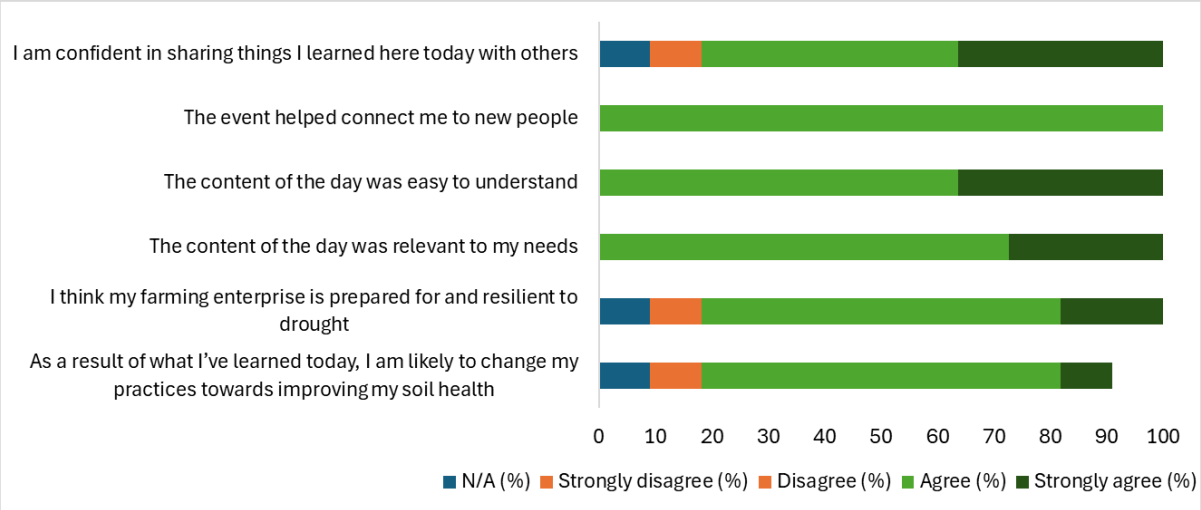


Figure 154 Viticulture workshop 'NRM Viticulture Series: practical solutions for compact soils and low carbon soils' attendee responses (11 responses) to survey questions (%).

Key reflections/themes from the event were:

- Providing current and practical knowledge to participants to enhance and build capacity of the viticulture community
- Fostered a culture of collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and support.

NRM South Project Outcomes

The Project has made significant progress towards the intended outcomes, as outlined in our Project Activity Workplan.

Increased access & capacity to use knowledge

The soil-health focused extension events have significantly helped give farmers and landowners increased access to information and the capacity to use knowledge. The participant event feedback suggests that most farmers and landowners are willing to make changes towards improving soil health and climate-resilient practices, ultimately giving them the power to reduce the landscapes exposure to climatic risks, and therefore improving economic, landscape, and social resilience.

Refining soil health through SEO networks & activities

Through maintaining and improving SEO engagement with the community, and the collaboration of NRM SEOs between regions, the SEP has facilitated integrated learnings from prior project knowledge and experiences, and effectively investigated knowledge-gaps in specific agricultural industries, to support the successful delivery of the extension events.

Supporting on-farm decision-making

The project has ensured the continued provision and promotion of the SEP Decision Support Tools, to assist farmers and advisors to make informed on-farm decisions for sustainable soil health management. This was seen through the re-print of DSTs, specific to the needs of each NRM region, allowing the team to provide physical booklets at extension events. For online events, the SEO shared the online location of the tools and encouraged participants to utilise these valuable resources.

Evidence of practice change

After analysis of the survey findings, NRM South identified the southern farmers engaged in the program have reported an increased capacity to use knowledge to improve soil health management and build climate resilience. The surveys revealed that over 94% of attendees at the market garden extension activities and over 81% of attendees at the viticulture workshop would likely change their practices towards improving soil health, because of what they learned at the events.

Why did we engage with these specific stakeholders?

Working closely and networking with significant stakeholders led to an improved understanding of regional interests, including southern small-scale market garden producers and large-scale commercial grape producers. This was achieved through active communication, in-person and online. Engagement with these specific stakeholders improved understanding of their industry's relationship to soil and their industry's needs from the SEO. This allowed the SEO to improve the value of extension events and increase the relevance of shared knowledge. It also allowed the SEO to effectively use their time, resources, and effort, leading to a desirable outcome for this project.

Better understanding of the wine industry was gained through engagement with significant stakeholders including Paul Smart from Wine Tasmania, Luke Taylor from AgAssist, and Richard Doyle from the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) and Doyle Consulting, was achieved. This allowed the SEO to effectively design and deliver tailored extension events, supporting key stakeholder needs and areas of interest.

The SEO has engaged with smallholder vegetable producers including several key market-gardens in the region, including:

- Phil O'Donnell and Jimmy Zerella from Gardeners Bay Farm
- Mitch Tiessen from The Agrarian Kitchen
- Stan Robert from Fat Carrot Farm
- Matthew Evans from Fat Pig Farm

This engagement gave the NRM South SEO a better understanding of the unique soil challenges and opportunities of improving sustainable soil management in market-garden production systems which are a rapidly growing industry across Tasmania. Through this critical engagement, the NRM South SEO was able to tailor a workshop and webinar with suitable experts to specifically address soil health challenges in small-scale vegetable production systems.

Cradle Coast NRM's Regional Activities

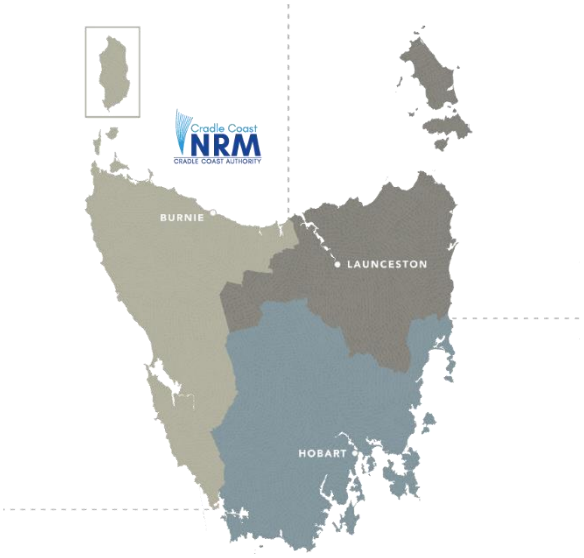


Figure 16 Depicted in light grey, the Cradle Coast NRM Region covers the Northwest area of Tasmanian and includes King Island.

The Cradle Coast SEO provided a trusted local source of unbiased information for farmers and Ag Service providers across north west Tasmania. The SEO has supported a diversity of extension events across the region with varied agricultural industries and strengthened relationships with farmers and key stakeholders including major cropping businesses, Dairy Tas, TIA and Hub staff, Greenham as well as groups such as Soil First Tasmania, Soils for Life and Farmers for Climate Action.

The SEO has shared the soil DSTs and other related soil resources at key events across the region and via local communication networks including our 'Cradle to Coastlines' newsletter and social media.

In addition, the Cradle Coast NRM SEO supported a variety of local industry events, school learning sessions, participation in regional Drought Planning initiatives, and numerous informal one-on-one connections with local north-west Tasmanian farmers.

Summary of Cradle Coast NRM's Outputs

Two successful, relevant and highly engaging events were held in the Cradle Coast NRM regions as part of the Tasmanian Soil Extension Program.

Dave Roberts-Thomson is a local 2024 Nuffield Scholar who had just returned from an agricultural systems study tour of five countries. He gave a presentation 'Learning from Farmers around the globe' focused on key topics of interest including boosting soil biology and building climate resilience. The light supper and talk format was followed by an interactive discussion engaging local north western producers from a wide range of farming operations. The event was held on 20 August 2024 in Wynyard and was attended by over 40 people.

On 11 October 2024 a full day workshop was held at Kindred entitled 'Using cover crops to boost productivity and soil health' with keynote speaker Grant Sims, a sixth-generation Victorian farmer who is recognised as a leader in cover cropping and cover crop seed production in Australia. This event was attended by over 50 people.

Brief case studies are provided which describe the need, impact and outcomes of the events:

Learning from Farmers around the globe - interactive farmer-led presentation/discussion with Dave Roberts-Thomson

Figure 17 2024 Nuffield Scholar David Roberts-Thomson is studying opportunities for biological priming of soils, for increased crop resilience and improved production. His presentation was very well received, and we are hopeful that this will lay the platform for future collaborations.

Objective

Agriculture across the planet is increasingly being influenced by a range of common drivers including climate changes and soil health decline, with farmers often faced with many similar challenges and opportunities. Tasmanian farmers are increasingly impacted by a range of factors, and it is important that they are informed of the latest global trends and to be able to learn from the experience of farmers on other continents.

Dave Roberts-Thomson's recent world study tour as part of his Nuffield scholarship focused on a diverse range of agricultural systems in five countries and his experiences and observations provided a unique opportunity for farmers across the north west coast to hear from one of their high profile and respected peers about a variety of trends that have potential to impact on their operations in the future.

Where did the need come from?

This event was co-designed with the local farming community and involved a series of informal discussions with several key farmers on the north west coast. These discussions indicated there was a high level of interest in learning about some of the trends in agriculture in different parts of the world.

The presentation also provided a current Nuffield scholar an opportunity to distil his observations and learnings gleaned from other farmers around the world and present them in an informal setting. The focus of the presentation and discussion centered around soil health initiatives and improving the resilience of businesses to increasingly erratic climatic impacts and related supply chain issues.

How did this enhance community relationships?

Providing an informal gathering opportunity allowed local farmers to get together for a catch up and learn about trends in agriculture. The peer-to-peer learning model was employed with great success in a setting where farmers felt comfortable asking questions. There was also an opportunity for farmers to mix with others involved in the agricultural community including: service providers, researchers, Hub staff, students and small-scale growers who all shared a common interest. This is recognised as a very successful way to build local networks and enhance community resilience. This event generated a great deal of positive feedback from all participants, with many stating that we should repeat the format for this style of events more often.

What's the legacy of this event/relationship?

A summary of the presentation was published in the Cradle Coast NRM 'Cradle to Coastlines' Newsletter and shared with event participants. Cradle Coast NRM are hoping to maintain an ongoing relationship with David Roberts-Thomson and assist Nuffield and Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA) with dissemination of findings of his research project when these become available.

"*The evening you all organised was terrific. It was also great to catch up with other farmers in the area. We all get so busy catchups don't happen very often. It was terrific to hear where Dave had been and some of his initial thoughts*".

Key reflections/themes from the event were:

The peer-to-peer learning model proved to be popular with the local farmers and is one of the most powerful and effective ways to reach this target audience. Farmers automatically home in on the topics and issues that are of critical relevance to other farmers and speak a 'common language' that is relatable and accurately reflects the economic imperatives that impinge on businesses at all scales.

Attracting a diverse audience with a range of viewpoints is useful to generate a variety of discussion points. This also serves to accelerate and amplify the speed and reach of messaging across a wider cross section of the agricultural community.

Timetabling the event for a weekday evening (Tuesday) proved to be popular and many farmers commented that due to their work commitments they couldn't generally attend daytime events but the evening format suited them better.

Workshop: Using cover crops to boost productivity and soil health

Figure 18 Grant Sims is widely regarded as an industry innovator at scale in the Australian context and is also integrating biofertilisers and foliar sprays into his farm system. The venue at Kindred provided an excellent setting with several local growers already actively engaged in cover crop use and seed production which showcased both.

Objective: To connect farmers with a leading cover crop specialist which would give local growers an opportunity to expand their knowledge and perspectives regarding the optimal ways for them to incorporate cover crops and biofertilisers into their farming systems.

Grant Sims is well known as an industry innovator and his operations showcase numerous examples of enterprise stacking, which is of great interest to many growers in the current economic climate. The format included an on-farm component in the afternoon, which allowed farmers to visit a farm that has been integrating covers into their rotations for many years and are now also diversifying their business to include a cover crop seed business.

Kindred was chosen as a venue for the event as it has several growers who are already actively using diverse cover crop mixes. In addition, there was a local grower who is also harvesting cover crop seeds and this farm provided an excellent venue for practical demonstrations in the afternoon that could showcase diverse cover crops and provided a great local example of enterprise stacking which was one of the key take home messages from the presenter.

Where did the need come from?

Interest in cover crops is growing internationally and across Tasmania with several local trials being delivered by Cradle Coast NRM and TIA across the region, with articles published in the widely read Tasmanian Country newspaper over the last couple of years. Several sustainability frameworks and corporate plans (e.g. McCains) are also actively promoting the use of cover crops, making this topic very relevant for increasing numbers of growers. Local companies such as Harvest Moon are actively promoting and expanding covers, especially with many of their carrot growers. This workshop aimed to capitalise on this momentum and increase the level of knowledge amongst growers.

How did this enhance community relationships?

This event built on the success of previous projects and used some previously established networks to design a relevant workshop. Cradle Coast NRM worked with several Simplot growers on a cover crop project with the Hub in 2023 and ran two field days which were well attended, and wanted to expand the knowledge base of farmers, in particular crop growers in the north west.

What's the legacy of this event and relationship?

Farmers from a broad range of enterprises came together to learn and had an opportunity to network with other producers from around the state. A summary of survey responses was produced and distributed to all participants along with presentation material and titles of suggested further reading.

A solid relationship with Grant Sims was built and this was instrumental in securing his participation in the joint NRM event 'Navigating Regenerative Agriculture Pathways – Views from along the value chains' webinar. The Cradle Coast NRM relationship with local field officers and Ag service providers also enable event promotion through their networks. Several service providers participated, which extends the reach of the workshop when they have conversations with their growers.

"(Learnt more about) the benefits of cover crops and how they can reduce input costs"

"(Today I learnt) to be active in practice change. Implement some test strategies"

"Learnt that I am on the right track – will keep growing cover crops"

"That these practices can work and are worth continuing to learn about"

What Were the Outcomes?

Participant survey results indicated that in general, the event was well received with a high level of confidence in sharing what was learned with a broader network. The event was successful in facilitating new peer connection, was easily understood and was relevant to participant's needs. While there was a high degree of confidence in drought preparedness and resilience, results also indicated a number did not think this was applicable, and conversely there was recognition that some farming enterprises were under prepared for drought conditions. Survey responses are summarised in Figure 18.

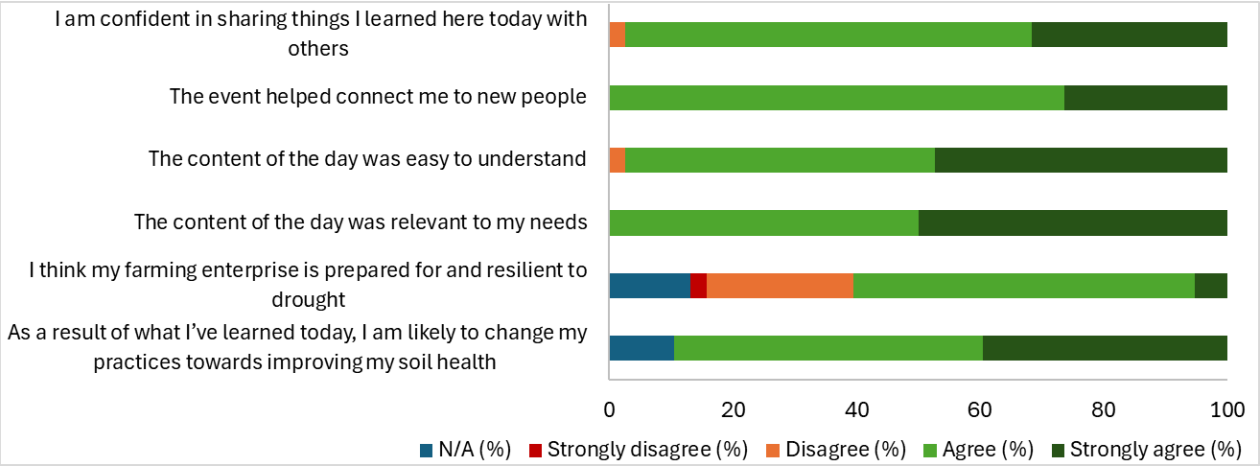


Figure 19 Using cover crops to boost productivity and soil health workshop attendee responses (38 respondents) to survey questions (%).

Key reflections, themes and Project Outcomes in the Cradle Coast NRM Region

Cover crops are an integral part of improving soil health and this event built on the interest generated by previous projects coordinated by Cradle Coast NRM. Survey responses indicated that there is still a great deal of detail that growers want to learn more about including: technical aspects of cover cropping, production and use of biofertilisers, grazing management, farm ecological processes including soil health and biodiversity as well as strategies for integrating RA practices.

Effectively marketing events is critical in a what is becoming an increasingly congested calendar, and co-promoting events via other existing networks can be of great assistance. A high level of support was received from other organisations who also focus on soil health improvement and education (including Hub, Soils First Tasmania, Soils for Life and Farmers for Climate Action) in co-promotion of events, and this is likely to have assisted in attracting a significant number of people. This process also helped to strengthen and expand existing networks and build new relationships with other organisations. This, combined with an article in print media *Tasmanian Country* maximised the reach for advertising the event and helped to ensure a high level of participation.

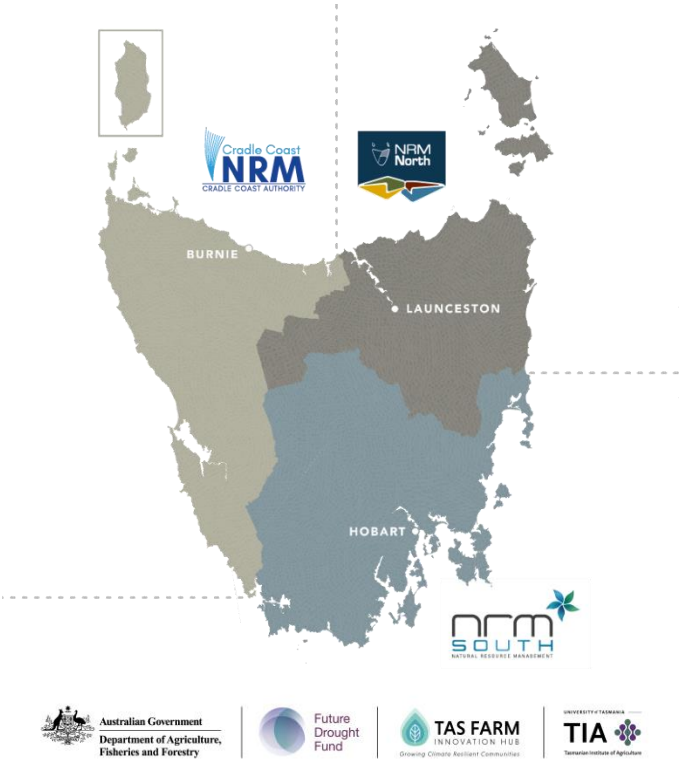
Timetabling the event for a Friday also appeared to be a successful strategy enabling significant numbers of people to participate, with several travelling long distances to attend the workshop. The attendance rate was also excellent considering there were two soil health events held in the north west earlier the same week. This highlights the relevance of the subject material for growers and producers from a diverse range of operations.

The peer-to-peer learning model, again proved to be a powerful and effective formula to reach the target audience. Farmers learning from other farmers was a strong theme across both activities and it is likely that much of the success of both events can be attributed to the appeal of this approach.

Both farmers engaged for the events are from medium-large scale family-owned businesses and it is interesting to note that most of the farmers who participated in the events came from similar or smaller sized operations, rather than representatives from larger corporate farms. Participants at both events found the farmer-led discussions highly beneficial with the presenters delivering high quality information

in a way that was very relatable and fit for purpose in terms of the operational considerations relevant to farms in north west Tasmania.

Collaborative projects



Project Activities

Collaboration on raising awareness of and increasing access and usage of DSTs.

Collaboration on design and delivery of an agricultural industry survey led by the Hub.

Collaboration on delivery of a Webinar: Navigating Regenerative Agriculture (RA) Pathways – View from along the value chain.

Outputs

Delivery of targeted communications plan.

Webinar: Navigating Regenerative Agriculture (RA) Pathways – View from along the value chains.

Webinar: Navigating Regenerative Agriculture (RA) Pathways – View from along the value chains.

Figure 20 Webinar: Navigating Regenerative Agriculture Pathway

Why did we engage with these specific stakeholders?

The webinar brought together agricultural advisors, farmers, and industry representatives to address critical knowledge gaps identified through the Hub's agricultural advisor survey. This survey revealed a significant demand for insights into regenerative agriculture (RA), particularly its profitability, scientific foundations, and integration into value chains. By engaging Grant Sims, a sixth-generation farmer implementing RA practices at scale, and Laura Grubb, a sustainability specialist leading an initiative with Greenham's cattle supplier, the event ensured a balance of practical on-farm experience and broader industry perspectives. These stakeholders were chosen to offer participants actionable strategies and highlight the broader market and environmental opportunities linked to RA adoption.

The webinar was facilitated by Prue Rothwell the Food Systems Project Manager from the Open Food Network who is leading the Discover Regenerative initiative which aims to showcase Australia's leading regenerative producers, their products and credentials with the aim of becoming the go-to directory for business-to-business buyers to find and connect with regenerative producers. This gave participants another perspective on how the RA value chain is currently evolving.

Where did the need come from?

The need was shaped by the Hub's agricultural advisor survey and reinforced through stakeholder discussions, which emphasised the importance of addressing economic viability and environmental sustainability in RA. Advisors and farmers sought clarity on how RA could support financial performance, improve soil health, and align with emerging consumer demands for sustainable products.

How did this enhance community relationships?

The webinar enhanced community relationships by creating a collaborative platform where participants could engage with experts and peers, fostering trust and shared learning. Grant's discussion on leveraging networks like Soils for Life and NRM organisations, underscored the importance of community-driven initiatives, while Laura's insights into Greenham's sustainability initiatives demonstrated the potential

for collaboration across value chains. These connections not only facilitated the exchange of ideas but also strengthened participants' confidence in the viability of RA as both a farming practice and a market-driven opportunity.

What's the legacy of this event/relationship?

The webinar's legacy lies in its ability to provide actionable pathways for adopting RA and connecting stakeholders with practical solutions. Participants gained confidence in implementing practices such as multi-species cover crops, bio-fermented fertilisers, and long-term trials to measure impacts. Laura's presentation on Greenham's sustainability standards offered producers a clear framework for aligning their practices with consumer expectations, supporting both economic resilience and environmental outcomes. Additionally, the webinar strengthened networks between participants and established the importance of collaborative efforts to drive RA adoption and innovation.

What were the Outcomes?

Overall, the webinar was well received in terms of relevance, accessibility and confidence to share concepts in broader networks. Approximately one third of survey respondents did not agree the event provided practical insights into building drought resilience through RA. This should be further explored before building on this event to ensure specific concerns can be identified and discussed.

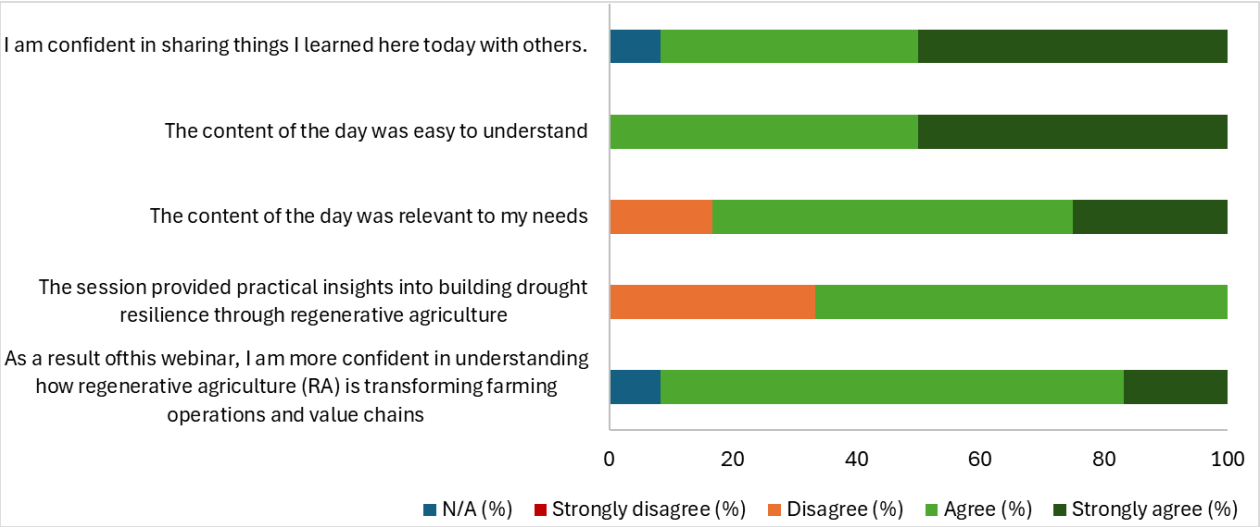


Figure 21 Regenerative Agriculture Webinar attendee responses (12 responses) to survey questions (%).

Key Reflections/Themes from the event:

- The profitability and practicality of regenerative agriculture (RA) practices in improving soil health and productivity
- The role of value chain collaboration in driving sustainability and meeting consumer demand
- The importance of networks, such as Soils for Life and NRM, in accelerating the adoption of RA practices
- Insights into Greenham's sustainability standards as a framework for aligning on-farm practices with global market expectations
- Examples of innovative practices like multi-species cover crops, bio-fermented fertilisers, and long-term trials to measure RA outcomes.

Selected comments from attendees, to highlight significant impact:

“When it comes to productivity and soil health, 1+1 doesn't necessarily = 2. You might be able to take a productivity hit in the short term for a larger productivity gain in the future.”

“That there is more than one option for help in going down the regenerative path and there are lots of networks for support”

Key Learnings

What worked well

Effective Resource Utilisation: The Decision Support Tools (DSTs) proved to be highly valuable, garnering an impressive number of online views. For instance, the Land Drainage Tool attracted approximately 2,200 views, while the Nutrient Management tool received 981 views, and the Soil Test Interpretation Guide recorded 886 views. Strategic promotion at events such as the Dairy Tas Conference and the TAPG Innovation Expo highlighted the effectiveness of targeting specific agricultural audiences by providing practical and accessible tools.

Collaborative Partnerships: Partnerships with organisations like Wine Tasmania and Dairy Tas enhanced the program's reach and relevance. These collaborations facilitated tailored activities, such as composting workshops and soil health field days, that aligned with stakeholder needs and priorities.

Community Engagement: Regionally contextualised workshops, such as the diverse pasture field day in Pyengana/Goshen, successfully fostered local networks, including the formation of a farmer group. These events also provided valuable insights into farmer needs, enabling adaptive planning.

Flexible Project Design: The program's scalable and adaptive framework effectively managed challenges such as staff turnover and enabled adjustments to changing stakeholder priorities and climatic conditions.

Areas for improvement or growth

Data Collection and Feedback: While event surveys and DST tracking systems captured engagement metrics, there is room to expand qualitative feedback mechanisms to better understand how resources like the DSTs are being applied on-farm and their impact on decision-making.

Broader Awareness Campaigns: While the DSTs received significant engagement, expanding their reach through broader online campaigns and partnerships with digital platforms could amplify visibility and use. Additional resources with a focus on soil biology would be a valuable addition to the DSTs with the more mainstream adoption of regenerative agriculture principles.

What we will do differently

Integrated Evaluation: Introduce mid-event surveys and post-activity follow-ups with participants to gather real-time insights and measure the immediate and longer-term impacts of workshops and field days.

Diversified Outreach: Expand promotional efforts for DSTs beyond physical events to include webinars, social media campaigns, and collaborations with online agricultural communities, ensuring access to a wider audience.

By reflecting on these key learnings, future iterations of the program can build on successes, address identified gaps and continue to improve soil health and drought resilience outcomes for Tasmanian farmers and advisors. Sharing these insights broadly will help similar projects avoid common challenges and replicate best practices.

Recommendations

Expand the Decision Support Tools (DST's) Reach: The DST's have shown significant engagement, but their reach can be extended to broader audiences through:

- Develop targeted online and social media campaigns to promote the DST's, including video tutorials and farmer testimonials.
- Offer virtual sessions on using the DST's effectively for practical decision-making.

Scale Regional and Cross-regional Collaboration: Successful collaborations with organisations like Wine Tasmania and Dairy Tas highlighted the value of targeted partnerships. Future efforts could:

- Explore new partnerships with commodity-specific groups, such as grain producers or livestock associations.
- Organise cross-regional knowledge-sharing events, such as statewide soil health summits, to bring stakeholders together and build wider networks.

Develop programs to address knowledge gaps: Gaps identified, such as limited compost supply and opportunities for organic soil amendments, present potential areas for additional projects. These could include:

- Research initiatives to explore sustainable compost production using locally available materials.

Demonstration projects to trial organic amendments at scale, with results shared widely.

Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation: Building on existing M&E frameworks, incorporate additional metrics to assess the real-world application of resources like the DSTs.

- Include follow-up surveys with participants 3-6 months after events to evaluate practice changes and outcomes.
- Utilise qualitative interviews with key stakeholders to deepen insights into project impacts.

Communicating and Extending Key Findings: Develop targeted communications for different audiences, such as plain language summaries for farmers and detailed technical reports for advisors:

- Utilise videos and social media to disseminate findings widely and in engaging formats.
- Establish an annual event to showcase key findings and provide networking opportunities for stakeholders.
- Ensure all resources, including the DSTs and event learnings, are freely accessible through appropriate channels.

By implementing these recommendations, the program can extend its impact and ensure its outcomes continue to benefit Tasmania's agricultural community in the long term.