

PRESS RELEASE

20th July 2015

OBE Organic grazing BMP a big boost for beef producers

The National Association for Sustainable Agriculture, Australia (NASAA) urged organic beef producers to take advantage of the OBE Organic Grazing Best Management Practices program at Roma on Friday 21 August 2015.

The forum is the first of a series organised by OBE Organic in partnership with Grazing BMP to help improve the profitability and sustainability of organic beef producers. NASAA General Manager Ben Copeman, who will speak at the Forum on the latest organic beef industry trends and policy developments, said the program was a perfect fit for serious organic beef producers.

"There's a natural alignment between organics and BMP. Organic beef producers are already reaping the environmental and economic benefits of organic certification. The OBE Organic Grazing BMP program will pinpoint any other aspects of their operation they can improve – such as grazing land management, animal production or people and business.

"The BMP program is voluntary, free, targeted, and after several years of development has shown it has positive impacts for beef producers. If you want some solid advice, based on science and practical experience, this forum is for you. NASAA is proud to be a part of this great initiative, and I call on organic beef producers, those who are 'in conversion' or thinking about going organic, to get involved," he said.

Mr Copeman said he would also explain to producers how they can now fast track certification if they have been voluntarily following organic management practices.

"We know many beef producers have been following organic practices for years. With the removal of the 12 month Pre Certification period, primary producers who can demonstrate compliance with organic standards for 36 months can now potentially achieve full organic certification in as little as 12 months."

OBE Organic Grazing Best Management Practice will begin with a forum at Roma on Friday 21 August to introduce producers to the program and self-assess the areas of their business that can be improved. This will benchmark producers' current grazing and business practices against an industry-developed set of standards, compare their performance to peers, and automatically create individualized action plans for improvement in areas that are below industry average. OBE Organic Grazing Best Management Practices will then help organic beef producers implement their tailored action plans at their own pace – if they wish.

The program is entirely voluntary, and is part of OBE Organic's efforts to help good organic beef producers be even better. The Forum will also include other speakers to update producers on the latest organic beef production news and trends. The Forums are free for all organic producers to attend, and conventional producers in conversion to organic or considering converting to organic beef production. More information on OBE Organic Best Management Practices is available at www.obeorganic.com, or by contacting OBE Organic General Manager Dalene Wray on 0439 224 968 or dwray@obeorganic.com.

– ENDS

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About NASAA:

The National Association for Sustainable Agriculture, Australia (NASAA) was formed in 1986 and supports the education of industry and consumers on organic, biodynamic and sustainable agricultural practices. NASAA was Australia's first organic certifier. Today, its certification arm, NASAA Certified Organic (NCO), provides certification and inspection services to assist Certified Organic operators access every organic market in the World. NCO certifies more than 1,000 operators in 13 countries, certifying some 11m ha of agricultural land worldwide.

About OBE Organic:

OBE Organic is Australia's oldest organic beef marketing company, established in 1998 by a group of Channel Country beef producers. It is still family-farmer-owned, and now sources beef from throughout southwest Queensland, northwest NSW, and northern South Australia. OBE Organic helps committed organic beef producers flourish. OBE Organic's safe and nutritious organic grass-fed beef is sold to rapidly growing markets in Australia, Asia, North America and the Middle East.

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About Grazing BMP:

Grazing BMP is a government and industry-funded voluntary online self-assessment and planning tool. It benchmarks graziers' current grazing and business practices against an industry-developed set of standards, compares their performance to peers, and automatically creates action plans for improvement in areas that are below industry average. For more information visit www.bmpgrazing.com.au



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