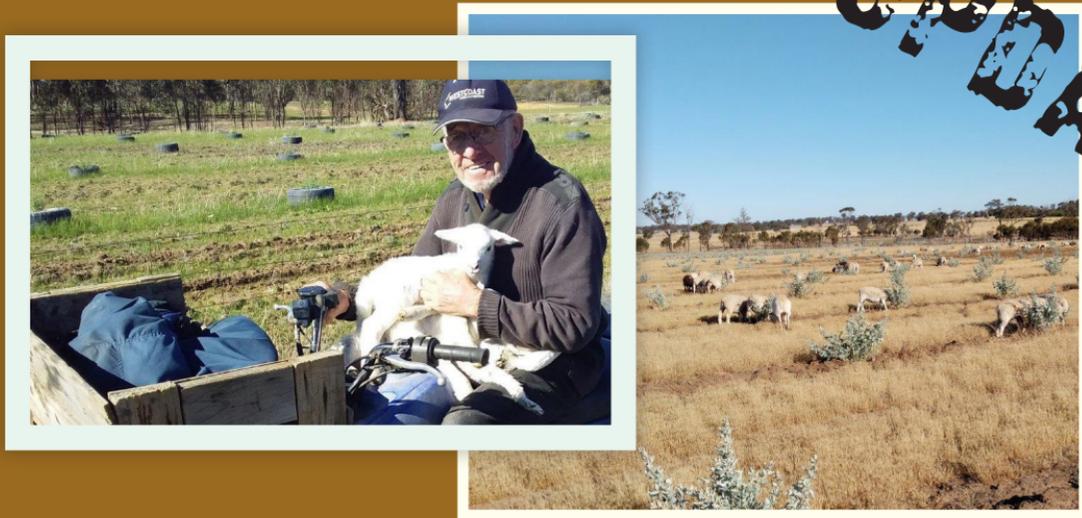


# FARMER BILL'S DIARY

Bill Haddleton 5th generation farmer Katanning WA



VIRGARA  
BROTHERS 1964

Farmers  
Resource  
#2

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bringing the salty paddock to life

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## HOPE AND HEALTH

*Hi, it's Bill, and this is the latest update on our land restoration.*

*We previously left off in early November 2020.*

*Firstly let me say thanks for all the good wishes received when I had a revisit of the ol' foe.*

*However, I am now back strong and in full gear .*

*Surviving summer dry: one of our concerns was how the plants would survive during the summer and if the EG could draw water from deeper within the soil.*

*Well we have been amazed at it's resilience and recovery, as you will see in the following pages. Not only has it survived, but thrived even with heavy grazing - which took us by surprise.*

*Water for the stock was also a critical concern. We estimate that they require some 10 litres per day so we created a series of portable water stations to enable both ease of access and to ensure the stock didn't create eroded paths to a water source in another paddock.*



*Bill standing in the 'salty paddock' looking at the first trial of the generic saltbush*

*November 2020 using Eyres Green, there's hope on the horizon with little difference between the most salt affected soils and the better pastures.*



# LIGHT GRAZING

December:

The photos are quite exciting, because they really show how resilient and fast growing these plants really are! 🌱 We are just so delighted. By being vigilant and photographing regularly, one can really see how these plants are thriving here.

In December we grazed our six month old lambs on the Eyres Green SB. Our lambs were around 40kgs at that time. We left them in the SB after we were certain they weren't destroying it. We also had dry rye grass between the rows for them to eat, and further supplement of a grain trail feed, but after a few weeks we did move the lambs out, as they had eaten a large amount of the SB. 😊



*Grazing the ewe's brought about an unexpected outcome: for Eyres Green and the ewe's with terrific weight gain.*

## 2 DAYS - DEVoured

January:

In January, just before mating, we grazed our ewe mob on the entire EG Saltbush plantation. In two days I took them out, and was quite horrified at how much they had eaten, as they had never devoured ANY saltbush to that extent before, showing that the EG was highly palatable (they were not hungry and had been well fed before they had gone into the plantation). I was a little worried about the plantation and how it would recover 😞



*The ewe's  
devoured the  
saltbush in  
just 2 days! .  
Yes we were a  
little worried,  
middle of  
summer.*

# RECOVERY - BRIGHTER OUTLOOK

February:

Progressive photos show the recovery. February they are looking a little more healthy,

We have had a couple of rainfalls during February and March: in February we had 43mm.

 We fertilized each plant (walking up and down the rows) just before the March rain.



*However the Eyres Green bounced back and was already looking healthy in February after the unexpected ewe's feasting in only 2 days*



# TALLER - STRONGER

March:

We've had 27mm of rain and now in March they are taller, stronger, and fuller than when the lambs grazed on them in December! 

How fantastic!. We fertilized each plant (walking up and down the rows) just before the March rain.

Bill is now keen to get the ewes back in there for another green pick soon. 

The lambs we grazed on the EG were our ewe lambs, are now over 50-60kgs and all appear to have been mated. The Eyres Green saltbush did a tremendous job of improving their weight gain. 😊



*What a sight for sore eyes.  
The regrowth has truly  
amazed us, stronger and  
taller, heavier foliage.  
It is the light at the end  
of the tunnel.*

# PREPARING A NEW PADDOCK

MARCH - APRIL - MAY

We have been inspired  by the transformation of the land and so have actioned plans to further extend the EG. Interestingly we have had neighbours visiting, having seen the change from the road to see the transformation - yes they have been impressed.

We have re-fenced a paddock adjacent to our creek where the salt has crept to, fencing out the salty land, and are in preparation to plant this 10 acres to Eyres Green Saltbush this coming winter.

 We've done the initial ripping of the land, and will ripper/mound in April, which will leave plenty of time for the parrots to devour all the Gilford grass bulbs, and leave the little Eyres Green SB seedlings alone when they are planted - we found this to be the case with the big planting last year.



*Contrary to traditional thinking of contour ploughing, we ran our mounds toward the creek. The water is draining down the sides of the mounds to the creek, and the plants are safe on the top of the mounds.*

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### bringing the salty paddock to life

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Bill will provide an ongoing Diary of progress for the coming season which includes water management covering both portable troughs and surprising issues with dam's and the detrimental impact on the livestock.



### Farmers Resource

Dom and Sam are keen to publish a series of Farmer's Diary's from around the country. The initiative is aimed at providing a resource of experiences that highlights local issues and you, farmers, land owners, mining executives have solved your specific challenges. The type of land, the machinery used and how you prepared the paddock and how you planted the Eyres Green.

We believe your story is important, please we encourage you to take photo's and highlight your issues and how you dealt with them.

We look forward to hearing from you,

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read "Dom and Sam".

Dom and Sam

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