



# From little things, BIGG things grow

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Trent Potter (Chair, Ag Excellence Alliance), Mark Grossman (Chair, BIGG) and Allan Holmes (Chief Executive, DEWNR) at the Ag Excellence Alliance Awards night in March 2014 where BIGG received a Sustainability Award for its achievements in delivering NRM outcomes. Photo: Barossa Improved Grazing Group

An Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Board grant in 2012 to encourage primary producers to improve pasture productivity has grown into an ongoing commitment to sustainable pasture and resource management in the Barossa.

The Sustainable Industry Grant which funded the AMLR Northern Region Producer Group's Winter Pastures NRM Project, allowed landholders to find out about local successes and innovations around sustainable pasture, soil, nutrition and grazing management. The project increased regional interest in productive pastures, but its greatest achievement was the formation of the Barossa Improved Grazing Group (BIGG).

BIGG is a vibrant community network of producers and landholders in the Barossa and surrounding regions that focuses on sustainable pasture production while promoting good NRM outcomes. It has

also become an 'umbrella' for five different farming groups in sheep, beef, dairy and two local ag bureaus – encouraging cross-pollination of ideas and strengthening community networks.

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BIGG has worked with a range of partners and funders to deliver and communicate the outcomes of various innovative projects at events such as pasture walks and technical workshops. Some key project areas are monitoring soil moisture in grazing systems, using innovative

electric fencing for effective grazing management and funding to conduct property management planning. BIGG's partnership with the AMLR NRM Board has also continued with its most recent project, Recovery and Management of Native Pastures after the 2014 Eden Valley Bushfire, funded by a 2014 Sustainable Industry Grant.

BIGG is guided by an Advisory Committee (under the auspices of the Angaston Ag Bureau) that represents a wide cross-section of the agricultural community. Its projects are thus driven from the ground up, and are intrinsically connected with the needs and priorities of the community. In recognition of this approach, BIGG was awarded the 2014 Ag Excellence Alliance Sustainability Award by its peers (sponsored by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources) as 'an outstanding locally based grower group for its achievements in delivering greater NRM'.