

FROM LANDCARE BEGINNINGS TO A 'BIGG' GROWING GROUP

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The [Barossa Improved Grazing Group](#) (BIGG) is a vibrant community network ranging across the Barossa Valley and Eastern Mt Lofty Ranges which consists of five local livestock production and farming groups that has a focus on sustainable pasture production while promoting on-farm NRM outcomes.

What began four years ago as a single 'Winter Pasture Project', BIGG now has developed and cultivated government and industry stakeholder relationships to support twelve projects with associated funding of over \$350,000. BIGG is guided by an Advisory Committee that represents a wide cross-section of the agricultural community, hence its projects are driven from the 'ground-up' and are intrinsically connected with the needs and priorities of the community.

With a common focus on sustainable grazing practices, BIGG links five different farming groups including sheep, beef, dairy and two local Ag Bureaus. This has provided a cross-pollination of ideas and also strengthened community networks.

Key project areas include monitoring soil moisture in grazing systems, the use of innovative electric fencing for effective grazing management and recovery of native pastures after bushfires. This year it was successful in receiving a 25th Anniversary Landcare Grant trialing native plant communities in watercourse rehabilitation.

Through its projects and a strong commitment to communication, BIGG has generated "enthusiastic champions" for sustainable land management and gained good traction in the community through the delivery of key agricultural productivity and NRM outcomes. This was recognised when BIGG was awarded the 2014 [Ag Excellence Alliance](#) Sustainability Award in SA as 'an outstanding locally based grower group'. In addition, BIGG's Georgie Keynes was awarded the '2013 Westpac Agribusiness Innovative Young Landcare Leader Award' at the 2013 State Landcare Awards.