



# Regenerative Agriculture Conference 2019

~Building Soils, Resilience and Profit~

Raymond Ferrall Centre, UTAS Campus, Launceston, Tasmania

**4<sup>th</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

**2 full days + a welcome gathering**





# What is Regenerative Agriculture?

Regenerative agriculture practices restore landscape function, increase nutrient and water cycling and sequester carbon in the soil. These practices increase biodiversity, productivity and are profitable and low risk while being personally sustainable for farmers and their communities and a significant ameliorant to climate change.

Research has shown farm family businesses using Regenerative Agriculture principles have similar levels of profit to traditional businesses but with lower risk. Family members have higher physical and mental wellbeing, and land that is healthier, with more ground cover.<sup>1</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> Vanguard Business Services Principal Consultant Mark Gardner



## **Who is the Regenerative Agriculture Network Tasmania (RANT)?**

Regenerative Agriculture Network Tasmania is a not-for-profit incorporated community group that aims to promote and support all forms of regenerative agriculture practices across all scales of operation and all farming enterprises in Tasmania.

## **Who is Stipa Native Grasses Association Inc?**

Stipa is a farmer led not-for-profit charity that promotes Australian native grasses in agriculture.





# The Conference

**2 days of exploration!**

*The Conference is not just a chalk and talk about **why**  
regenerative agriculture is good for the land.*

*The Conference is going to share **how** to restore landscape health,  
be more profitable with lower risk,  
while improving the wellbeing of farmers.*

The conference aims to take years off the time farmers are taking to successfully design and adopt regenerative practices that suit their farm. We will hear farmer case studies and the latest research and training to help farmers go home and be sure of their next steps.

Our keynote speaker is Charles Massy, farmer, researcher and author of “The Call of the Reed Warbler”.

Charles is one of the world’s leading voices on regenerative agriculture.

Other speakers include:

- Colin Seis, cover cropping expert and recently returned from a study tour to the US.
- Graeme Hand, Holistic Management Educator, and perennial grassland and grazing expert.
- Peter Raynolds, regenerative grazier, Braidwood, New South Wales
- Grant Sims, cropping farmer practicing covers and no till. President of No Till Victoria
- Robin Tait, 2018 Nuffield Scholar researching regenerative agriculture practices small seed cropping
- Mark Gardner, Holistic Management Consultant and principal of Vanguard Business Services. Mark recently co-authored a ground breaking report on the benefits of regenerative agriculture.
- Rachael Treasure, author and farmer, Richmond, Tasmania
- Dr Jason Rowntree, Researcher at Michigan State University





# Program

## Tuesday evening 4 June

6pm – 8.30pm

Welcome Gathering

Speaker Rachael Treasure, author and farmer

## DAY 1 Wednesday 5 June

9am	Welcome
9.30am	Charles Massy <i>Changing the Impact of Agriculture One Paddock at a Time.</i>
10.30am	Smoko
11am	Graeme Hand <i>What is Regenerative Agriculture?</i>
11.30am	Mark Gardner <i>Does Regenerative Agriculture work for the land and the people?</i>
12.30pm	Lunch
1.30pm	Colin Seis & Grant Sims <i>Regenerative Cropping, Covers Uncovered.</i>
2.30pm	Graeme Hand & Peter Raynolds <i>Regenerative Grazing. Complexity Simplified to Succeed.</i>
3.30pm	Farmer case study to be confirmed
4pm	Close for the day
6pm	Informal meal with pop up food and drink vans. Self-funded. Rug up! Charles Massy speaking.



## DAY 2    Thursday 6 June

**9am**                      **Welcome**

**9.15am**                Dr Jason Rowntree, Michigan State University  
*Does the science of regenerative agriculture stack up?*

**10am**                    Concurrent workshops

- 1. Profit Planning:**    Designing Profit into Your Farm with Mark Gardner
- 2. Cropping:**    Covering up – the latest from Australia and US with Colin Seis, Grant Sims, Robin Tait
- 3. Grazing:**    Breaking It Down with Graeme Hand & Peter Raynolds

**11am**                    **Smoko**

**11.30am**              Concurrent workshops

- 1. Profit Planning:**    Designing Profit into Your Farm with Mark Gardner
- 2. Cropping:**    Covering up – the latest from Australia and U.S with Colin Seis, Grant Sims, Robin Tait
- 3. Grazing:**    Breaking It Down with Graeme Hand & Peter Raynolds

**1pm**                     **Lunch**

**2pm**                     Panel discussion: Ask Us Anything!

Charles Massy, Graeme Hand, Peter Raynolds, Colin Seis, Mark Gardner, Rachael Treasure, Grant Sims, Robin Tait

**3pm**                     Where to from here?

**4pm**                     Close



## Speaker Biographies



### Charles Massy

Charlie Massy (BSc PhD OAM), has a BSc in Zoology and PhD in Human Ecology.

While managing the family farm in NSW he also teaches at universities and consults in the fields of Merino breeding and landscape design.

He has engaged in freelance journalism since 1977, and has published books on Merino sheep and wool history. His recent best-selling book, *Call of the Reed Warbler: A New Agriculture – A New Earth*, concerns the emergence of a regenerative agriculture in Australia and cause for hope.



### Mark Gardner

After completing university studies in Agricultural Science, Mark worked as a jackaroo, wool classer and property overseer for a number of years in the Western Riverina before establishing Vanguard Business Services in Dubbo in 1996 (winning a number of Regional Business Awards).

As a Savory Institute Holistic Management Educator for 22 years, Mark's current activities involve working with around 300 family farm businesses to improve profitability, regenerative grazing/land management, and facilitating business development programs for groups. Mark has worked for a range of industry bodies managing extension and change projects and with Universities on research projects.

Mark has recently published [research paper](#) identifying regenerative agriculture practices as restoring landscape function, being more profitable, low risk and increasing the wellbeing of farmers.



## Graeme Hand

Graeme has worked as an industrial chemist, international marketer, meat industry consultant as well as farm consultant to many family and corporate farmers. He is based in Tasmania, and has a special interest in working with family farms helping to create profitable, sustainable farm businesses which are enjoyable to work in.

Graeme trains throughout Australia on regenerating grasslands using planned grazing management. He has also carried out bushfire and drought extension for Victorian DPI, provided Holistic Management training for CMA's and universities, consulted for the meat industry on eating quality and marketing. Graeme also manages STIPA Native Grass Association Inc.

Gabe Brown describes Graeme as having "The greatest understanding of not only ecosystem functions, but also how that relates to what we, as farmers and ranchers are doing. OUTSTANDING!"



## Colin Seis

Colin Seis owns the 2000 acre property "Winona", near Gulgong NSW.

The property is managed using methods that continually regenerate its grassland, soil, and farm ecosystem.

In 1993 Colin co-developed pasture cropping, a unique method of growing crops while restoring grassland and soil.

Colin's dedication to farmer education, support programmes and enabling extensive scientific study of his practices has resulted in 'Pasture Cropping' being adopted around the world.

During the development of 'pasture cropping' and regenerative land management techniques Colin has received many awards for his work the awards and in January 2015, the Weekly Times newspaper described Colin as a visionary and one of the top 6 most influential farmers of the world.





## Rachael Treasure

Rachael is a mother, author and regenerative farmer. In between studying she has worked as a jillaroo, rural journalist, ABC radio broadcaster, professional woolclasser, part-time vet nurse, family farm manager, drover and stock camp cook. As an author, Rachael is working to inspire farmers to change to regenerative agricultural practices, so as to increase both profits and restore a healthy ecology. Her writing also advocates for animal handler education so as to better understand their dogs and livestock.

Rachael farms with her partner Daniel near Richmond in southern Tasmania. They are focusing on hydrology in the landscape and mob grazing techniques.

Rachael is a Rural Business Administration graduate of Orange Agricultural College and has a Bachelor of Arts (Communication) degree from Charles Sturt University, Bathurst NSW.



## Peter Raynolds

Peter and Anja Raynolds manage Neringla a 900+ha grazing property near Araluen, New South Wales. Peter took over the management of Neringla from his father in 2012.

He has also worked in mining and construction, and studied agriculture at the Orange campus of Sydney University.

Peter is using satellite monitoring to ensure that his management decisions increase groundcover, perennial grass diversity, decomposing litter and stable profits.

He will be discussing the practical aspects of managing an extensive hilly grazing property area for regeneration.



## Grant Sims

Grant Sims, a sixth generation farmer, is running the family farm with his wife Naomi and children in North central Victoria Australia. The 8500 acre farm is a mix of dryland and irrigated land.

The Sim's farm has been utilizing no-till since the early 80's. After looking at ways to improve the soil health through biology, Grant changed from synthetic fertilisers in to biologically made liquid fertilizer in 2008. At the same time, he stopped using seed dressing, insecticides and fungicides, unless absolutely necessary.

The Sim's have a strong focus on crop diversity. They use companion and cover crops and have expanded their cow and calf numbers to integrate in their cropping system. They perform on-farm trials to learn and share methods about how solve problems, be more profitable, grow healthy end products and improve the soil for the next generation.

In 2015 Grant was awarded the Coles Weekly Times Farmer of the Year. Grant is the current president of the Victorian No Till Famers Association.



## Dr Jason Rowntree

Dr. Jason Rowntree is an associate professor in the Department of Animal Science at Michigan State University.

He chairs the Grassfed Exchange, a leading U.S. grass-fed beef educational organization, is the scientific advisor and an accredited Holistic Management Educator for the Savory Institute. Jason is an advisor of Standard Soil, a start-up corporation that aims to meet the nation's growing demand for grass-finished beef while restoring the ecosystems that support that industry.

Dr. Rowntree received his Ph.D. from Michigan State University, his MS from Mississippi State University, and his BS from Texas A&M University.



## **Robin Tait**

Robin is from Devonport, Tasmania and was a 2018 Nuffield Scholar to USA, Canada and Europe investigating how regenerative agriculture principles can be integrated into cropping systems, with the aim to reduce reliance on synthetic inputs for crop production.

Robin currently manages in excess of 400 ha of mixed cropping operation for Botanical Resources Australia. She provides agronomic advice for BRA's farm crops and co-ordinates harvesting and planting of pyrethrum and wheat.

As the majority of the crops are from very small seed that require substantial soil cultivation and exposed soil, Robin researched cover cropping, reduced tillage methods, companion planting, biological inputs and methods of crop monitoring which can be used to increase plant health as a means to reduce reliance on synthetic inputs.