

Yarra Yarra Oil Mallee Project

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A partnership between the Central and Midwest Oil Mallee Regions, Kalannie Distillers and Yarra Yarra Catchment Management Group has been successful in obtaining funding from the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality. This is a 50/50 State and Commonwealth government initiative. The project funded is to develop incentives to revegetate by establishing a commercially successful oil mallee industry. The project which runs for three years is currently in its second year.

The two project areas radiate one hundred kilometres from Kalannie and Canna. Funding has been made available for:

- seedling subsidies;
- subsidies to mulch oil mallees too large or uneconomical to harvest;
- modification of existing Kalannie Distillers harvesting and distillation equipment to increase efficiencies;
- the establishment of a biomass transfer system, to bring the harvested biomass to a centrally located still.

Seedling subsidies and mulching subsidies were oversubscribed in the first year, with nursery space the limiting factor for seedlings in the second year.

Image 1

Right is the modified Kalannie Distillers Harvester. Kalannie Distillers harvest mallees, and distill eucalyptus oil from biomass, returning \$1/kg of oil produced to the grower. Currently it is able to harvest trees up to three metres tall and with approximately 70mm trunk diameter.

Image 1



Image 2

Recoppiced *Eucalyptus loxophleba ssp lissophloia* (Loxliss) seven months after autumn mulching. Trees were up to seven metres tall before mulching. Mulching can increase oil production in subsequent harvest by up to 20%. These trees will be harvested approximately 18months to two years after mulching, depending on regrowth rates and seasonal conditions over the next year.

Image 2



Image 3

The Braddon Mulching machine behind trees about to be mulched. Any size tree is able to be mulched with the rate inversely proportional to size. On average between 750 and 1200 trees/hour can be mulched.

Image 3



Findings of the trials to date as well as information on machinery available to mulch large trees are available from Project Manager, Jo Ashworth.