

ILC2018 Poster and Producer paper*

The Leucaena Network and The Leucaena Code of Practice *La Red de Leucaena y el Código de Prácticas para el cultivo de leucaena*

BRON CHRISTENSEN

The Leucaena Network, Theodore, QLD, Australia. www.leucaena.net

Keywords: Environment, extension, research, responsibility.

Introduction

The Leucaena Network was formed in July 2000 by a group of producers and industry representatives who wished to progress the leucaena industry and address environmental concerns.

The organization's aim is to "promote the responsible development of leucaena in productive and sustainable ecosystems to build stronger rural communities".

In September of that year, the Network developed The Leucaena Code of Practice to promote responsible management of the legume in response to the environmental concerns (reproduced at the end of this paper).

Today, The Leucaena Network is a leading producer group in the grass-fed beef industry in Queensland. Members include livestock producers, leucaena and pasture seed growers, researchers and extension personnel. The Network remains true to its message, continuing to focus on the responsible management of the legume while working to promote the industry and provide current and relevant information and research to its members.

The Network encourages everyone who is involved with the leucaena industry to take up Network membership to foster ongoing activities and research to assist the industry to prosper.

Currently due to demand, much of The Leucaena Network's focus is on the promotion of strategies for successful leucaena establishment for new producers. However, the Network continues to strive to provide established producers with research and extension information. A linchpin of The Leucaena Network's information provision is its website, www.leucaena.net.

Current Research Projects

Currently, The Leucaena Network is partnering with Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and Queensland Department

of Agriculture and Fisheries (QDAF) in the MDC/PIFT 'Redlands for Regions' establishment trials; the Wandoan-based 'Improving the Productivity of Leucaena in Grass Pastures with Fertiliser' Producer Demonstration Site (PDS); and the provision of input into the UQ/UWA sterile leucaena project (Figures 1–3). The feasibility of research projects into the management and maintenance of established leucaena is currently being investigated.



Figure 1. QDAF, MLA and Leucaena Network representatives join 'Redlands for Regions' producers at Quincan Springs.



Figure 2. QDAF officer Bernie English joins 'Redlands for Regions' producers Rob Ahern and Gerard Lyons at 'The Four Mile'.

Correspondence: B. Christensen, The Leucaena Network, PO Box 240, Theodore, Queensland 4719, Australia.
Email: admin@leucaena.net

*Poster presented at the International Leucaena Conference, 1–3 November 2018, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia.



Figure 3. Leucaena irrigated under centre pivot at Theodore, Central Queensland.

The Code of Practice

The key message of The Leucaena Code of Practice for producers is to plant leucaena **ONLY** if you intend to manage it and are prepared to accept responsibility to control leucaena that establishes outside the planted area on your property, including watercourses.

Producers are advised that this can be achieved by adopting the following practices:

1. Do not plant leucaena in areas where rivers, creeks and flood channels can disperse seed pods/seed. If leucaena becomes a restricted or regulated plant under a Wild Rivers declaration, growers must comply with the relevant Wild Rivers Code.
2. Keep leucaena at least 20 m away from external fence lines.
3. Maintain a buffer strip of strong grass pasture between leucaena plantings and creeks or boundary fences.

4. Fully fence leucaena paddocks to avoid the unlikely risk of stock spreading ripe seed.
5. Graze or cut leucaena to keep it within the reach of animals and minimize seed set.
6. Chemically manage leucaena escapees with Access® (currently the only registered herbicide for use on leucaena).
7. Establish and manage vigorous grass in the inter-rows to:
 - a. provide competition to minimize establishment of volunteer leucaena seedlings;
 - b. minimize the risk of seed being transported during heavy rain;
 - c. productively utilize fixed nitrogen the system produces; and
 - d. maintain ground cover and prevent soil erosion.
8. Maintain the practice of:
 - a. regularly monitoring creeks and major watercourses to detect any escaped leucaena seedlings and plants; and
 - b. controlling all plants detected adjacent to property boundaries on creek banks and other adjoining areas where cattle do not normally have access, and on public roadsides (after first obtaining a permit from Main Roads Department or Shire Council).
9. Comply with local laws (weed declarations etc.) and assist Local Government agencies to identify any escaped leucaena so that action can be taken to control it.
10. Promote the responsible management of leucaena in accordance with this Code.
11. Keep abreast of best-practice developments in the management of leucaena.

(Accepted 22 February 2019 by the ILC2018 Editorial Panel and the Journal editors; published 3 September 2019)

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