



MEDIA RELEASE – 18th January 2012

Wagin Integrated

Food/Fibre Processing Hub

The Shire of Wagin will again be the lead proponent in applying for a \$4 million grant through Round 2 of the Australian Government Initiative, Regional Development Australia Fund. The shire is facilitating the continuing development of a food fibre processing hub with three cohesive elements including a desalination unit, a cogeneration power station and an inland aquaculture system that aims to produce 125 tonne of barramundi in the first year of operation.

“Unfortunately we were unsuccessful in Round one of the Regional Development Australia Fund, but as we have been continuously encouraged by so many members of our community, this has provided a clear direction to Council to prioritise the ongoing development of the project”. Phil Blight, Shire President, Shire of Wagin.

“We have garnered as much feedback as possible from the Department and brought on new people with the required experience to ensure our application is absolutely watertight. As well as bringing in new people the consortium of partners who have only gained more enthusiasm are working overtime to strengthen the application which is due in less than a months time”. Len Calneggia, Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Wagin.

The project focuses on benefits to the community including creation of skilled employment opportunities, a 100% reduction in scheme water use for our parks and gardens, continued pumping to protect town infrastructure from the impacts of salinity, and a commitment to support industry development in the region.

Dr Gavin Partridge, Senior Research Scientist of Challenger Institute of Technology’s Australian Centre for Applied Aquaculture Research, “We have spent the last 10 years gaining a thorough understanding growing fish in saline groundwater and developing appropriate technology in collaboration with local company McRobert Contracting Services, also at this stage opportunities for local investors in the Aquaculture Farm still exist”

Morton’s Seed and Grain a large producer of oats have committed to the proposal with significant cash and in kind contribution. Jonnie Morton, Morton Seed and Grain, “We see this proposal as a conduit to maintain and increase agricultural production. The beauty of this cogeneration plant is its flexibility; it is able to produce a cheap green source of energy from a number of inputs including oat husks, straw, mallee and green waste.”

Karne de Boer of Regenerate Industries,
“I see the innovation in the integration of the three elements, We are confident the creation of competitively priced energy, steam and water will attract new industry to Wagin, this time round we have been able to allocate more time to developing the governance and management structure which will significantly increase our chances of success.”

Danielle Perrie, Wagin Woodanilling Landcare Zone Manager,
“I reiterate this project has regional, state and national significance for the environment. It addresses the extremely urgent issues currently affecting our region including water and food security, agricultural sustainability and the impacts of salinity. To achieve maximum impact, it is imperative that this proposal and industry is supported to make large scale changes to the way food and fibre is produced.”

The value adding opportunities are also listed as part of the comprehensive business plan such as the de-nitrification and solids separation of the waste water from the aquaculture farm backed by research partner Murdoch University.

For more information contact
Project Facilitation - Shire of Wagin (08) 9861 1177
Natural Resource Management - Danielle Perrie (08) 9861 2222
Project co-ordination and Investment- Karne de Boer 0406 771 053



Barramundi, the variety of fish proposed for the Wagin Aquaculture farm.

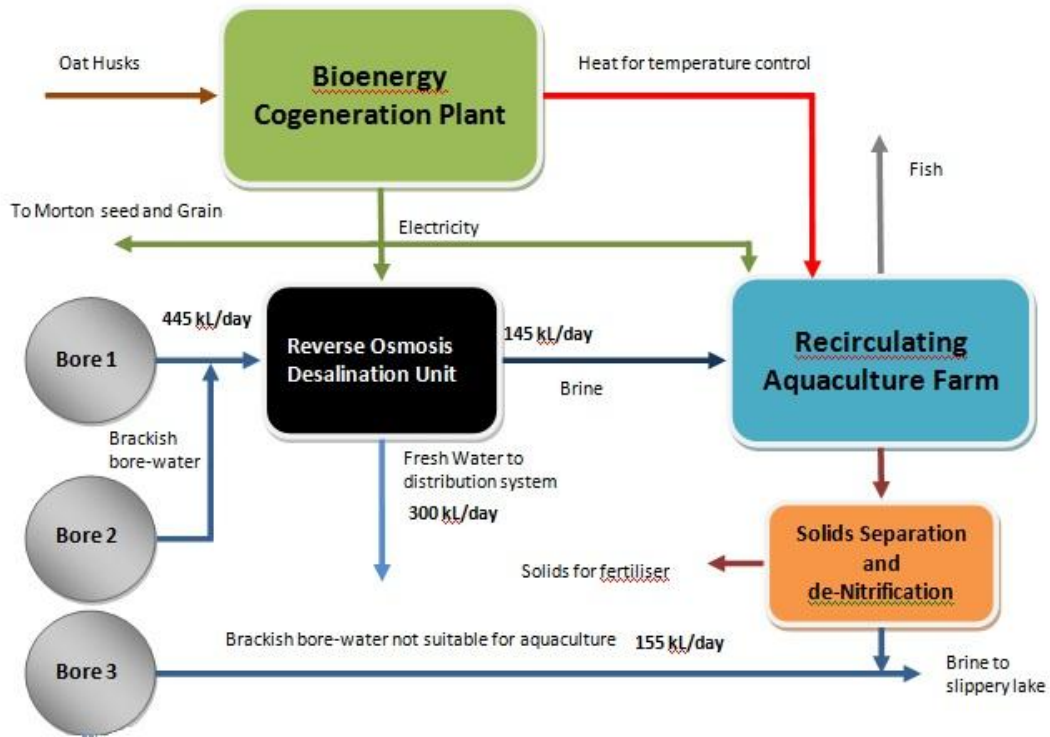
Consortium and Project Partners:



Specialist Seed and Grain Merchants



Basic Concept Diagram



Conceptual Drawing: 100 tonne Aquaculture Farm

