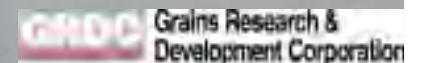


# Ronald Thompson

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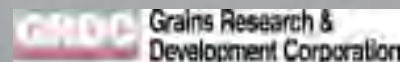


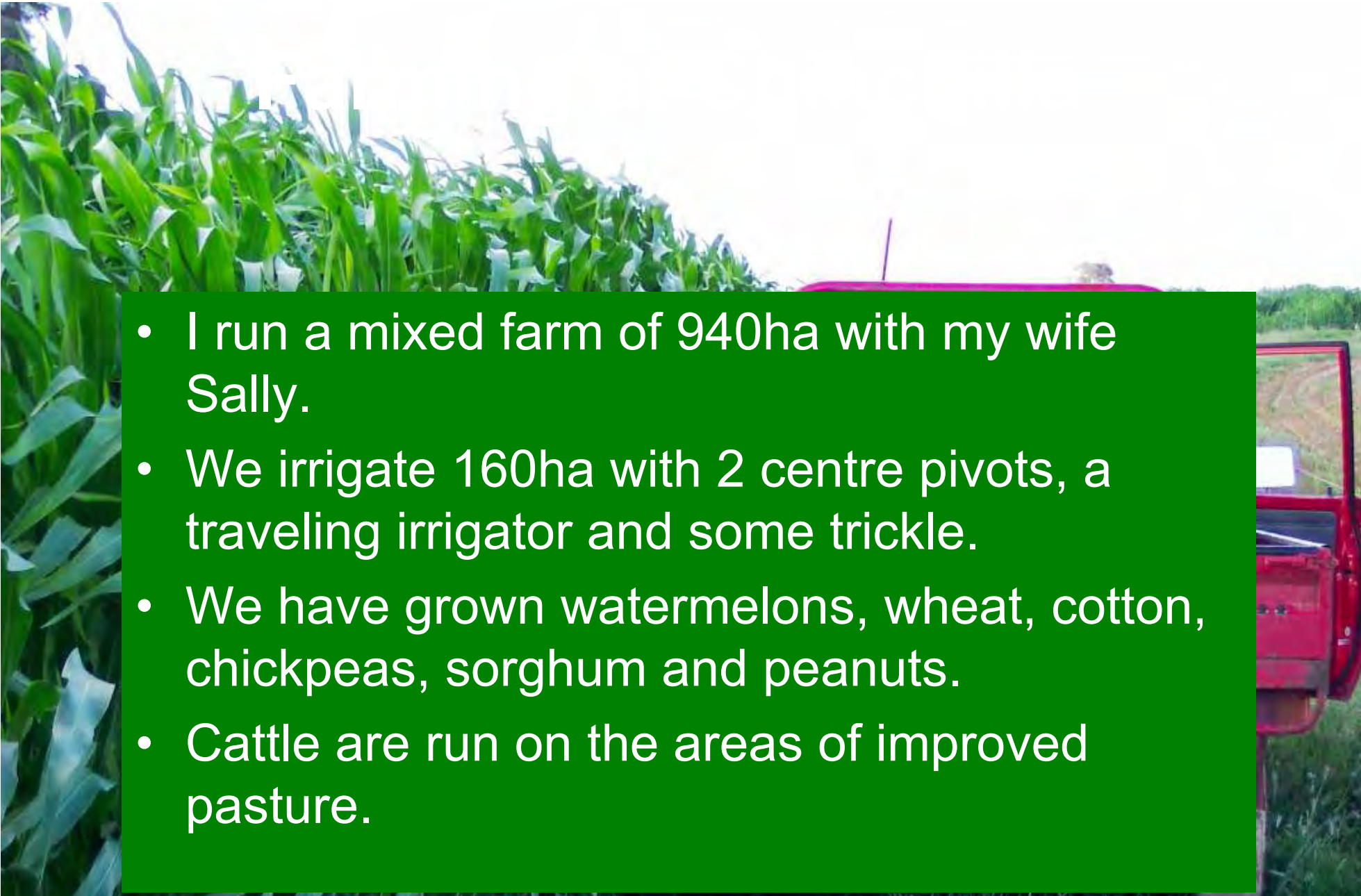
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**YARNHAM GRAZING COMPANY**



- 
- I run a mixed farm of 940ha with my wife Sally.
  - We irrigate 160ha with 2 centre pivots, a traveling irrigator and some trickle.
  - We have grown watermelons, wheat, cotton, chickpeas, sorghum and peanuts.
  - Cattle are run on the areas of improved pasture.

# Is it sunrise or sunset?





**Around the world with 32  
flights 70000 air miles  
and 15 countries**

# The labour shortage

- I was narrowly looking at a solution of bringing in overseas workers.
- Farmers our diminishing workforce – How we best manage the future.
- During my travels I soon learnt that importing labour was only a short term fix.
- Without fail in all countries I visited, the farmers who were value adding or maintaining ownership of product for longer did not have a problem with sourcing a workforce.

# Farmers our diminishing workforce – How we best manage the future.

- The ageing workforce
- The economics of farming
- The importation of labour
- Education
- The family farm
- Bio fuels and their place
- Research and Development

# The ageing workforce

1. With the farming community aging at the current rate, agriculture faces a tight future.
2. With the ageing of farmers the level of basic skill is reducing or being lost.
3. Our efficiency at farming will have reached its peak as the older operators start to wind the business down as they retire.

# The Economics of Farming

1. The diminishing terms of trade.
2. In countries with subsidies the farmers tended to be sheltered from real prices.
3. One of the consequences of poor economics is diversification.
4. Resistance to new technology, less R&D funds, reduction in essential inputs, depression.

# The Importation of Labour

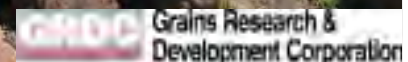
- Labour from overseas brings out some emotive and short sighted views.
- Australia is based on overseas labour.
- Global labour pool.
- Farming is a highly skilled occupation needing hard working thinking people.
- We should recognise that by employing foreign workers we have the ability to make a difference in countries where wages are low.

# Education

Every Family Needs A **Farmer**



- Skills need to be passed on.
- New generation of farmers will not put up with second best.
- It is our responsibility to get support for what we do.
- Promote the spiritual connection to the land.



# The Family Farm

- Continuation of the family farm is essential.
- Increasing corporate ideas as part of being successful.
- The family farm is a natural breeding ground for the next generation of agriculturists.
- Downside to a family farm comes when hard decisions need to be made.

25/12/2005

# Biofuels

- Pressure in this country to ignore biofuels
- Farmers will benefit regardless
- Mandate the use of biofuels.
- Energy has been associated with wealth.
- Many forms of renewable energy.
- Brazil use GM soybeans for biofuel.
- USA has mandated the use of biofuel

# Research & Development

- We led the world with our R&D
- We need to have scientists working here.
- The closing down of research stations has a devastating effect
- The head of the major research facilities were Australians.
- Critical of cutbacks in R&D.