

8 October 2017

*In 2014, my wife and I decided to establish a radiata plantation in the south west of Western Australia. Having no prior forestry experience, we decided to seek the help of an experienced forestry consultant to advise with the establishment and ongoing management of the plantation. Through initial contacts within the forestry industry, we were referred to PF Olsen's Albany Office. We reached out to the manager, Dale Cameron, who readily assisted us with understanding the basics of farm forestry. Dale explained in clear terms the actions that would be needed to achieve our objectives. He provided the template of a plantation economic model, which we adapted to the parameters of our proposed plantation investment. It is fair to say that without this model and Dale's coaching and guidance, we would not have had a clue as to the overall economic dimensions of our decision to invest in forestry. At this point we realized that without the expertise and security of a formal plantation establishment and management contract, we would not achieve our objective. Dale assisted us to develop and enter a long term service contract with PF Olsen, specifically tailored to the dimensions and requirements of our farm and our long term objective to own a radiata plantation.*

*PF Olsen assigned Mal Parker to lead and manage the initial establishment and ongoing management of the plantation. Our tree farm had previously been a blue gum plantation, which gave rise to a number of significant challenges in the conversion of the property to radiata. Amongst others, these challenges included dealing with coppice from blue gum stumps and adapting the previous mound configuration to suit growing characteristics specific to pine in our area. Mal's experience and technical expertise was crucial. He conducted a thorough analysis of the farm, helped us to understand the challenges, and then guided us with the correct decisions towards the establishment of the initial plantings. He advised and assisted with seed selection and engaged and supervised sub-contractors to perform the necessary conversion and plantation establishment activities. He continues to provide the ongoing management service including plantation monitoring, weed control, silviculture practice, and engagement and supervision of sub-contractors.*

*We are extremely satisfied with the assistance provided by the staff of PF Olsen, the expertise and resources they brought to bear to establish the plantation, and the ongoing plantation management service they are providing. They display a genuine interest in the health and success of our plantation, and adopt a holistic approach towards farm management including care of the land, responsible use of farm chemicals, and protection of native flora and fauna. Their communication and partnering is*

*transparent and excellent. They regularly monitor the health of our plantation and are readily available to assist whenever we need help with contract services, information and advice. We are fortunate to receive their monthly Newsletter (Wood Matters) which helps us keep abreast of a range of topics including developments in silviculture, environmental matters, plantation economics and global sawlog markets.*

*Ultimately, the relative health and growth of our plantation is the best measure of success of the partnership we have with PF Olsen. In a recent benchmarking with other radiata plantations in our district, our plantation performed exceptionally well, taking out top position. We believe this is principally attributable to the expertise and assistance provided by PF Olsen.*

*Mike Rautenbach*