

is to
stock.
and we
hardest

especially for people who don't
have experience with big
strong animals," Hettie said.
"In our breeding,

farmers who want easy-to-
handle animals and people
who want them as pets.
The couple will show two
heifers at Seymour.

Purebred said the event
will attract up to 30
pilots. Visitors can try
flying drones at sessions
over the three-day expo.

Seeds of a brilliant plan as Tree Project changes the landscape

By CAMILLE SMITH

CATTLE breeder Carol Timothy looks at the lush trees on her South Gippsland farm and pinches herself. She said it's hard to believe the 17ha property was virtually treeless a decade ago when she and her husband, Craig, bought it.

Carol and Craig run Milky Way Speckle Park Stud at Ryanston, east of Phillip Island. After discovering not-for-profit group Tree Project at the 2009 Seymour Expo, Carol worked with the group to source and plant 6500 seedlings to restore biodiversity, protect waterways and shade paddocks.

"It just looks so fantastic," Carol said. "The cattle out in the paddocks are getting all the benefit from the shade and from the wind.

"The birds are back ... and wildlife. It would have improved our land value by a third."

Tree Project is a charitable group that grows native tree seedlings from seed for the cost of supplies. Committee member De Grebner said the group aimed to make it easy and affordable for rural landholders to revegetate.

"Our volunteers include people who live in urban areas but understand that the people in the country are the ones bringing us our food and amenities. We want to help

them improve their properties and the environment," Ms Grebner said.

Founded in 1989, the group has grown more than two million trees that have been planted across Victoria. Growers are located in Melbourne, Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat and Warrnambool.

Landowners supply seed, cover the cost of supplies, which average \$220 for 500 seedlings, and are responsible for collecting trees when they are ready to plant.

"When we bought land, we found out we couldn't get the trees done through our local Landcare, because the planning permit specified we had to make improvements first," Carol said.

Tree Project was an affordable alternative that allowed the Timothys to start

revegetating as they built farm infrastructure and fencing.

Carol worked out suitable species and sourced seed from her local seed bank. She planted most of the trees single-handedly, completing the final hillside with help from a local school group.

"I was picking up 300 trees at a time all across Melbourne," Carol said. "Within two years, some of our trees were full height.

"A lot of people say plant something in Gippsland and it grows three times as quick as anything else. You have a shelter belt within three years."

Tree Project growers plant seeds in late spring, with tube stock ready to plant in June or July.

The group is an exhibitor at this year's Seymour Expo.



Greener pastures: Shelter belts in their second year of growth on Carol and Craig Timothy's Milky Way Speckle Park Stud at Ryanston.