



Farmer to Farmer Coaching

HELPING YOU FIND
YOUR UNIQUE WAY
FORWARD TO A
LANDSCAPE OF PLENTY

Words and photos by
Karen Hughes-Field
Wildflower Business Consulting

Karen Jarling, of Clean Green Farmer Coaching, has been obsessed with soil health and regenerative farming methods for over 25 years and is a self-confessed addict when it comes to continued learning and collaborating around anything regenerative or soil related.

It might have been the gift of growing up on 300 acres, where she had the freedom to run wild and explore all the beauty and diversity her surrounding landscapes had to offer where the seeds of passion were planted.

It was no surprise when Karen, and her husband Warren McEwan, bought their first property. A beautiful 40 acres of creek flat country in Widgee.

It was a gorgeous piece of land, with good water and good soil. However, they were met with an intense struggle of being able to grow adequate quantities of quality pasture. Karen knew that the land had previously been abused, overstocked, and overgrazed, and immediately began the journey of understanding how to heal it.

As Karen began to scratch beneath the surface, she came to the realisation that what they really needed was a functioning landscape.

So, she set out to educate herself on what that meant and how to create it. It started with a few books, then a couple of courses, workshops, and even seminars. Within a few years, Karen would be attending the International



Soil Symposium in Cairns absorbing every ounce of information and alternative methods on offer. These were the days of face-to-face connections in regional areas, meeting people firsthand, and hearing their stories.

The impact on Karen and her approach to managing her land was huge. In 2005 Karen and Warren started a version of managed intensive grazing on their small block to amplify the positive impact that livestock can have on a landscape.

Working with what they had, existing infrastructure, limited shade, and limited water they made changes on their own and often the hard way. They were amazed that after just one growing season they were

able to see positive changes. The quickest and most noticeable change to witness was grass earlier in each season.

Karen became intimately connected to her landscape by leaning in and really watching the grass and listening as they whispered their subtle nuances.

By being out with the cattle and over the land throughout the seasons, they learned where the grass was going to be least affected by frost and where the warm spots were because of the trees.

They learned that less slashing and more grazing would ultimately leave some grasses behind, which would then

become protection for new growth in the spring.

They were amazed as problem areas started shrinking from the outside in and better-quality grasses were starting to populate the poorer areas.

They learned by 'doing' and working with what they had. Sometimes that would mean crooked fences or a lack of water or shade, but Karen's response would always be creative, with layers of flexibility ensuring that each decision would be good for the animal, the water, and the soil.

If you had to push a particular spot a little bit harder to ensure shade during the hottest part of the day then you would need to come back to that spot and tend to it.



This is where the relationship to the landscape truly begins. It is a continual suggestion, offering the land the tenderness and care that it needs and the result being something that both the earth and the farmer are happy with.

The family soon became known to the surrounding community as 'the people with all the grass'. As the grass grew so did their family and their need for additional land grew with them.

After 20 years of owning and tending to the land in Widgee, the young family purchased 108 acres in Glastonbury, where they have been raising 100% grass-fed, chemical-free beef cattle and chickens (Clean Green Local Farming).

The new property came with new challenges, having endured over 40 years of standard set stocking, but the family was up for the challenge bringing with them their 'can do' attitude and their alternative and regenerative approach to landscape management.

They have since made changes to contours and water storage and continue to lean into the land and listen to its wise whispers and they are being rewarded with a landscape of plenty.

Karen's lived experience fuels her passion, and she is adamant about spreading the word and helping other farmers and landholders to understand that diversity and

functioning landscapes are key to productivity. She believes that farmers are so used to 'struggle street', that they have no idea what 'easy street' is and that glimpses of sweet spots are just the beginning of what is possible for extended periods of time.

Karen invites us to be brave, do something different and step away from what we might have done for years with the best of intentions. She assures us that mother nature does not cap things, and unleashing the landscape's potential is ours, if we choose it.

She profoundly understands that every farmer or landholder's experience is different, dictated by the land, the weather, the issues or struggles, and the wide



variety of desired outcomes, which is why farmer to farmer coaching is so unique.

Karen's farmer to farmer coaching practice is designed to help you get from where you are, to where you want to be.

By listening deeply, sharing stories and conversations, and uncovering what might be stopping you. Karen's coaching supports and empowers you to create change, your way.

It is a safe place to start learning and have fun, with the promise that within just a couple of growing seasons you will see massive improvements, faster than you could ever imagine.

Whether you are action-ready, and know what you want to do, or are uncertain and need a hand to hold, Karen's approach will work with where you and your land are at. She believes that there is truth in everything and once you see it, you can no longer unsee it.

She invites you to step away from the path of continued degradation and step up to the path of regeneration.

Karen is a lifelong learner and is well known in the soil restoration community for collaborating and connecting with like-minded farmers to bring about positive change in farming.

Her vision is long-term, with the hope that 100 years from now our landscapes will be unleashed, limitless, beautiful, and bountiful.

With over 25 years of on-farm practice, Karen Jarling's farmer to farmer coaching will help you find your unique way forward to a landscape of plenty.

For more information on Karen and her amazing work visit www.cleangreenlocalfarming.com.au

Written by Karen Hughes-Field
Wildflower Business Consulting
[@wildflowerbusinessconsulting](https://www.instagram.com/wildflowerbusinessconsulting)