

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Littleproud funds \$750K towards FNQ compost project

Yesterday, Hon David Littleproud MP awarded Regional Development Australia Far North Queensland & Torres Strait (RDA FNQ&TS) **\$750,000 over the next three years** to undertake research/analysis and a feasibility study into the commercial production of green-waste compost for commercial use in agriculture.

“This project has the potential to provide substantial benefits to growers whilst reducing the use of chemical fertilisers and sediment runoff to the Great Barrier Reef”, said RDA FNQ&TS Chair, David Kempton.



*Left to Right: Grant Stanley, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) CQU, Paul Inderbitzin, Shark Recyclers  
David Littleproud MP, Peter Inderbitzin, Shark Recyclers, David Kempton, RDA FNQ&TS Chair*

Over 10 years ago, Lakeland banana farmer, Peter Inderbitzin, began composting green waste from his farms to supplement the use of chemical fertiliser and improve the soil. Peter was recently awarded the 2018 Charlie Natasi Horticultural Farmer of the year award by the Mareeba and District Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association.

“It has since become evident that the use of compost has a much wider application as the benefits have far exceeded initial expectations,” said David.

After a decade, results indicate:

- 60% reduction in use of chemical fertiliser
- 35% increase in production
- 9 fold increase in organic matter
- 19% saving in energy cost
- 30% reduction in water consumption

Comparative work done by the Cape York NRM indicates a significant reduction in sediment and runoff after application of compost and an increase in organic matter. Trials elsewhere by DAF indicate a correlation between pasture health and a reduction in soil and sediment runoff (DAF Wombinoo Trials 2016).

\$250k of the funds will facilitate CQUniversity to undertake independent analysis of current data and give the project a regional context. CQU has had prior/ongoing experience in related activity and brings a blend of microbial, agronomic and resource economics expertise.

The remaining \$500 will go towards the development of a business case to determine whether the existing model can be replicated along the east coast of Queensland.

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**Further information:**

For more information about Regional Development Australia Far North Queensland & Torres Strait, please visit the official website –<http://www.rdafnqts.org.au>