

## **FARMER-TO-FARMER MENTORING PROGRAM**

### **Steps:**

1. Farmers and Mentor Farmers nominate themselves for the program
2. Farmer is linked with a Mentor Farmer
3. Farmer dedicates a portion of their own land for trial
4. Farmer works on their own land with Mentor Farmer to prepare and plant trial crops using regenerative agricultural principles

### **How does it work?**

- a) Each region has a pool of Mentor Farmers (works best if Mentors live in the area)
- b) Both Farmer and Mentor are funded for the trial:  
Farmer's input costs are covered by the funding and they are paid the equivalent of what they would earn from a conventional crop; Mentor farmer is paid on an hourly basis
- c) An agreement is made for a minimum period of time for trial (with opt-out clause)
- d) Soil and carbon testing is done before, during and after trial
- e) If trial is successful and the farmer is happy with the result, they may become a mentor themselves
- f) Mentor Farmers may "tag-team" so that multiple mentors can work as advisers on any one farm

### **Advantages:**

- Learning occurs 'hands-on' on farmer's own land
- Farmer has 'buy-in' and participates in the process from beginning to end
- Farmers have support to deal with issues that arise
- Farmers receive encouragement and advice from their Mentor in-situ
- A number of Mentor farmers could participate, working with multiple nominated farmers.
- This 'mobile' model would require far less start-up funding than a conventional demonstration farm
- Farmers and Mentors can be matched based on proximity to each other
- Trial farmer can participate in educational Soil Health Field Days across the district