

THE USE OF BLACKBERRY (*RUBUS FRUTICOSUS* AGG.) IN
FOREST SUCCESSION OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

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Abstract. A number of planting and seeding trials were planned for spring 1989 and spring and autumn 1990, involving the introduction of native plants to stands of blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*). The aim of these trials was to study the ability of native plants to compete with blackberries, and to determine the level of protection given to the native plants by blackberries against grazing from domestic and native grazers.

The original trial sites were located on agricultural land at Woodend and the main grazers were sheep and rabbits. The native plants were selected for a range of uses for farmers and were:

Eucalyptus viminalis
E. globulus
E. obliqua
Acacia melanoxylon
A. dealbata

The first series of trials involved planting seedlings of the above species directly into blackberry stands using a randomised latin square design. The second series of trials involved first burning the blackberry stands and then direct seeding of the native seed into the ashbed using hydromulching techniques. Fencing was used in some of the trials and for the control sites. Observations were made of germination rates of the native seed and survival rates and vigour of the developing seedlings. Full results will be known by August 1990.