

## **Aussie Invention To Change Farming**

By Marty Silk

BRISBANE, Feb 14 AAP - Two Aussie blokes tinkering in a back shed have found a way to make hay while the sun doesn't shine. It may change the future of farming.

Queenslanders Terry Colless and Falvio Raccanello can grow livestock feed without soil, sunlight, chemicals, fertilisers or farm machinery. They've created Fodder Solution Systems, containers where seedlings are grown on vertically stacked trays under lights in an artificial climate.

It's a simple hydroponic set up that looks like a fridge. "Just plug in the garden hose, plug the power in and the controller looks after the rest," a softly-spoken Mr Colless told AAP. "We're taking the weather out of farming."

The smallest model, which is the size of a double doored fridge, can produce 50kg of fodder a day. That's enough to feed five cows. The systems can also grow multiple types of seedlings at once and can be driven around on trucks.

They first appeared in 2000 and aren't well known in Australia, but the creators are now world celebrities in farming circles. Fodder Solution machines are built and sold in 11 countries including the US, India, Japan, Turkey, South Africa and even Mongolia. "We do it at home and no one notices, then we take it overseas and it goes gangbusters," Mr Colless said. "I guess because farming land is under so much population pressure. "A Chinese company just emailed me a link to an article about the system asking if they can purchase the rights for it. "I never know what the day will have in store."

And Fodder Solutions are about to roll out a new model with LED lights and solar power that Mr Colless believes will revolutionise the whole process again. "Let's just say we won't be growing on trays anymore."

### **FACTS ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN INVENTION THAT COULD CHANGE THE FUTURE OF FARMING:**

- Fodder Solutions can grow livestock feed without soil, sunlight, chemicals, fertilisers or farm machinery
- They are containers that look like fridges which grow seedlings on vertically stacked trays under lights in an artificial climate
- They require only a garden hose and a power source to operate, but new versions will be solar powered
- The smallest model, which is the size of a large two-door fridge, can grow 50kg of fodder a day, while the largest can grow 4.5 tonnes a day
- Fodder Solutions are built and sold in 11 countries and international demand is booming.

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