

Regional Landcare Facilitator Newsletter, February 2012

HOSTED BY THE WESTERN MURRAY LAND IMPROVEMENT GROUP

Issue 9,

Events and Workshops

Making Meetings More Productive

A 'Making Meetings More Productive' workshop was put on by the RGA and WMLIG on 15th February at the Moulamein Bowling Club and was very ably presented by Rachael Williams from Balranald who works for Local logic place.



"Managing Meetings More Productively" workshop at Moulamein on Wednesday 15th Feb. had 13 participants.

Locallogic Place do community development, research and project management and are available as a resource in the local area.

Diverse Native Vegetation Benefits Farm

A field day has been planned by the WMLIG for Thursday 1st March 2012.

The day starts at Moorookyle on the Lower Thule Rd. at 10am, followed by a trip to Restdown Wines for lunch and a wetland walk.

Native vegetation not only provides aesthetic improvements on the property, but numerous other benefits including fodder when there are feed gaps (and droughts) and environmental protection for stock (especially lambing time).

The biodiversity benefits flow on to the farm in terms of providing habitat for birds and bats that

predate on insects, and even as bee attractants that can flow onto improved crop pollination and yields.

The day is intended to not only illustrate the diversity of native species indigenous to the area, but how native vegetation species have been incorporated in the farming system and house paddock.

Attendees will also gain knowledge regarding site preparation and establishment of native vegetation. The WMLIG will have their direct seeder on site, and participants will have the opportunity to raise queries with the group regarding native vegetation direct seeding requirements they may have for their property or Landcare group.

Pasture and Livestock Presentation Swan Hill (Mon 20th Feb)

The Central Murray BestWool / BestLamb Group is hosting a presentation on "Growing Young Sheep" by Bruce Farquharson on Monday 20th February.

Time is 4pm starting at Darren Henders shearing shed at Pent Island - approx. 3 km on left from Swan Hill Toyota, followed by presentation and dinner at Commercial Hotel at 6.30pm. Contact Rick Ellis on 0428 372 357 to book in.



Picture: Neil Gorey at Moorookyle house paddock native vegetation stand.

The trip to Restdown Wines on the Lower Thule Rd will highlight the diverse native roadside vegetation as well as some information regarding the Thule Lakes wetland system and history.

A free lunch will be provided by WMLIG at Restdown Wines. All people are welcome to attend.

Bookings are essential on 54 531 577 for catering purposes or for provision of special dietary requirements.

Special points of interest:

- MANY BENEFITS HAVING NATIVE VEGETATION
- WAKOOL HOSTS FARM TRAINING COURSE
- CAN MORE MONEY BE MADE FROM SHEEP THAN RICE PER ML WATER?
- MOULAMEIN CROPPING GROUP TRIALS SEEK YOUR INPUT

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Make more Profit from the Farm - A Rare Opportunity for Training in the Local Area

What clients said about the course;

The course was far more valuable than I could have ever imagined and was made even more valuable by having my partner commit to the program as well.

**Kate Arthur,
Coleambally, NSW**

A FarmFit for Profit course is planned to be held at the Wakool and District Services Memorial Club on the 6th March to 9th March, hosted by the RGA and WMLIG.

It is not known if this course will receive funding in the future, and even more unlikely to be held on our doorstep.

You will leave the course knowing how to;

- Strategically manage your farming business,

- Incorporate the management of water in an increasingly variable climate,

- Reduce overheads and reduce risk,

- Control and manage your business cash flow,

- Set and work towards your goals,

- Develop your planning, analysis and decision making skills,

- Use monitoring tools in your business.

The course is \$2250 (or \$1950 for 2nd person), however there is FarmReady funding available to cover 65% of the cost following successful completion of the course. The RGA and WMLIG will also subsidise the costs to participants so it is likely to **cost only a couple of hundred dollars each**.

Please contact Roger Knight on 0354 531 577 for a copy of the flyer and registration forms.

How much can be made from sheep per ML water?

“It is not just tonnes of dry matter production - it has to be palatable to stock and converted to dollars?”

**Dean Harrington,
Agronomist, Boort**

The Central Murray Best-Wool / BestLamb Group plan on conducting irrigated forage trials on several properties in the local district over the autumn to spring period.

The role of the trials is to demonstrate how to manage and maximise production

from different forage systems focusing on the efficient use of water for conversion to lamb and sheep meat / wool production.

The trials intend to weigh lambs in and out of the grazing areas. This will to determine the exact weight gain over the period using differ-

ent forage varieties and thereby determine just how much money can be made from sheep production per ML of water used in this traditional feed gap period.

Demonstration site field day dates will be advised later in the year.

What Opportunities are in the Carbon Farming initiative?

The Carbon Farmers of Australia are hosting “An Introduction to Carbon Farming and Trading” workshop in Wagga Wagga on the 13th March 2012.

Topics covered include;

What is Carbon Farming?

Why is it so important for the future of your community?

What is the Carbon Farming Initiative? What does it mean for you? How will it change the way you farm?

What activities are covered? What new opportunities for additional farm-based revenue are likely? What risks are involved? Farm emissions: what are they; how can they be reduced?

Soil Carbon—What is it? How does it benefit agriculture?

Soil health, nutrition, production, and water efficiency....Planning tools and options to maximizing soil car-

bon sequestration.

Growing Soil Carbon: the role of the farmer, their animals, their plants, and microbial communities.

Trading Farm-Based Offsets: What markets are available to Australian Farmers?

To register, call (02) 6374 0329 or email to: Louisa@carbonfarmersofaustralia.com.au



Salt bush planted for live-stock fodder on a farm near Barham.

Other Events

The Farm Innovation Technology Expo will be held in Deniliquin on March 30-31st

Over 50 major exhibits displaying the latest in innovative and technological advanced equipment, chemicals and information. The "Australian Year of the Farmer" roadshow will also be on display.

For more information visit: <http://murraynow.com.au/events/events/event/farm-innovation-technology-expo-fite/>

On Tuesday!

The **DPI winter crop pre-season meeting** is on the 21st February at the Moulamein Bowling Club 9.30-12.30pm

DPI be reviewing the results of the local trials conducted by the group last year as well as Kerang results.

It is also timely to discuss potential disease issues for the coming season and look at factors to consider

in irrigation as growers make the most of the on-farm efficiency money.

Other discussion will focus on getting ideas off participants for potential activities for the Moulamien Cropping Group in 2012.

Contact John Smith on 0428



Moulamein Cropping Group Trial Area 2011.

"It was well worth attending the irrigated high yielding wheat and barley field day at Gorey's. It saved me a large amount of money as one particular variety I had selected to grow showed poor results in the field trials?"

Lloyd Polkinghorn,
Farmer, Moulamein

Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal Grants

The Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal has several grant programs currently open for applications. Small Grants for Small Communities - This national program supported by many partners provides grants of up to \$5000 for small rural communities. Applications are invited from not-for-profit, incorporated commu-

nity organisations and projects must be for a charitable purpose (benefit the whole community). Applications close 30th March 2012.

General Grants - there are a number of general grants currently available. Various closing dates. Please read the descriptions carefully as

some are for specific regions only and not all are available in NSW. More information on all of these can be found here: http://www.frrr.org.au/cb_pages/funding_programs.php Their Calendar of Grants is particularly useful for keeping track of due dates: http://www.frrr.org.au/calendar_of_grants.php



Good looking rice crop near Barham in 2012.

Funding— Murray CMA Community Grants 2011/12

These grants are aimed at helping a wide variety of small community groups, schools and local government undertake activities which enhance natural resource management.

The grants are open to any incorporated group, such as Landcare, "Friends of...", Local Government, Schools, indigenous groups or special

interest groups, which are incorporated and can meet the selection criteria set out in the Community grants guidelines brochure.

Projects are not restricted to on-ground works, but can include workshops, promotional materials, interpretative signage or replacement of plants in an existing project.

There are 20 grants available with the maximum per grant being \$2500.

Sue Logie in the Deniliquin office Juliet Cullen is the Project Officer co-ordinating the grants project.

WMLIG can help with applications and submit on behalf of your group. Applications close 29 February 2012.



1994 Wakool Landcare Group re-vegetation site on the sandhills north of Barham have been extremely successful.

Roger Knight
Regional Landcare Facilitator
WMLIG
Barham Rest Centre
Phone (W): 54-531-577
(M): 0487-455-511
E-mail:
roger.knight@wmlig.org

The WMLIG employs a part time Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) through funds from the Federal Government for its "Caring for Country" Program and the Murray Catchment Management Authority.

The Regional Landcare Facilitators role is to establish adaptable, self-reliant, and appropriately informed networks of community Landcare and production groups in each NRM region accessing funding, partnerships, training, and information and facilitating the adoption of land management practices that maintain for future generations, Australia's capacity to sustainably produce food and fibre, and enhance the capacity of rural and related landscapes to deliver ecosystem services such as clean air and water, healthy soils and biodiversity conservation.

Dates to Remember;

- 20th February, CMBW/BL Group Growing Young Sheep Presentation - Darren Henders shearing shed, Pental Island 4pm and dinner at Commercial Hotel Swan Hill 6.30pm.
- 21st February, Winter Crop Pre-season Meeting with DPI, Moulamein Bowling Club 9.30am—12.30pm
- 1st March, Native Vegetation Field Day - Moorookyle (Lower Thule Rd) and Restdown Wines wetland tour, 9.30am - 2pm
- 6th March - 9th March, FarmFit for Profit course - Wakool and District Services Memorial Club
- 19th March, CMBW/BL Group Livestock Health Workshop, Barham Services Club
- 30-31st March, Farm Innovation Technology Expo, Deniliquin



New signs erected for the Western Murray Land Improvement Group office at the Barham Rest Centre (please no more comments to me regarding its location as being appropriate – also refrain from any sudden loud noises when entering!).

The group has copies of Landcare and sustainable agriculture literature if anyone is interested. Also available are copies of the MDBA Draft Basin Plan if people wish to obtain a hard copy for their submission.

DPI Winter Crop Pre Season Meeting on Tuesday 21st Feb.