

Regional Landcare Facilitator Newsletter, May 2012

HOSTED BY THE WESTERN MURRAY LAND IMPROVEMENT GROUP

Issue 12,

Upcoming Events -

Murrayview Field Day and Presentation - Monday 18th June

The Central Murray BestWool / BestLamb Group (CMBW/BL) is having a field day at "Murrayview" hosted by Simon Ettershank to demonstrate the germination success and growth of different varieties of forage crop species planted on the 4th April. The day starts at 10am and finishes at 2pm.

The field day will outline the method for determining dry matter quantities from the seven varieties sown. For participants that attended the CMBW/BL

"The goal is to benchmark weight gains of sheep against best practice. If we work out our sheep are putting on 150 grams/day and best practice is 300 grams/day, then we need to close the gap"

Rick Ellis, "Central Murray BestWool/BestLamb Group Co-ordinator"

day at Pental Island / Swan Hill on the 20th February, please bring along your **MLA Pasture Ruler**.

Topic 1: Pasture walk and talk - forage pastures for sheep meat and wool production with Agronomist Dean Harrington.

After a BBQ lunch, Peter Bailey from Victoria DPI will give a presentation on ewe lactation, from feed to milk supply, weaning and conversion to kg meat and wool (Topic 2).

The day is being funded by the Murray Catchment Management Authority.

"Murrayview" is located along the Cobramunga Rd. 9 km west of Murrabit. Field day signs will be erected on the day. The day is open to any member of the public. RSVP Rick Ellis by Thursday 14th June on 0428 037 2357.

"LEARN HOW TO DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF FODDER IN THE Paddock TO DETERMINE GROS RETURN PER KG/DM"



Sheep grazing in a paddock along the Gonn Road.

Special points of interest:

- CENTRAL MURRAY BESTWOOL/ BESTLAMB FILED DAYS AND PRESENTATIONS PLANNED IN JUNE.
- KEEP THE 5TH AND 6TH JUNE FREE IF YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT GROWING COTTON.
- FUNDING APPROVED FOR MOULAMEIN SCHOOL NATIVE FOOD GARDEN

Interested in Growing Cotton? Keep the 5th and 6th June free

There is a cotton machinery field day in Coleambally on the 6th June. This will provide the opportunity for local farmers to talk to some growers that have started growing cotton instead of, or as well as rice and to have a look at the new gin and attend the machinery field day. The machinery will cover picking and preparation for next season.

The plan would be to travel on the morning of the 5th June and visit farmers in the afternoon. On the morning of the 6th there will be a visit to the gin, and attend the machinery demo day in the afternoon (times still to be confirmed).

Accommodation could be provided overnight in Griffith.

The other option is to just travel up overnight and fit in as much as possible on the day.

If you are interested let either myself or John Smith (0428 236 629) know by Wednesday 30th May. If there are enough people interested we will run a bus otherwise we will organise cars to take people.

Upcoming Events - *Continued*

Noorong Field Day and Presentation - Monday 25th June



A field day has been planned by the Central Murray BestWool / BestLamb Group for Monday 25th June at the “Operina” shearing shed. The hosts will be Alec and Jill Martin together with Tim and Tam Mulholland.

The day starts at **1.30pm** and runs to **5.00pm** at “Operina” The guest speaker is Dr Jim Watts who will pre-

sent on the topic “Desirable Body Traits of Merino Sheep to Enhance Profitability”.

Participants will then have the option to travel to the Commercial Hotel in Swan Hill for dinner starting at **6.30pm** followed by another presentation by Jim on the topic of “Putting Merino Breeding and Marketing Together”, concluding at **9.30pm**.

“Operina” is located 40km from Swan Hill on the Deniliquin—Noorong Rd. or 51km from Barham through Noorong. Field Day signs will be erected on the day.

RSVP Rick Ellis by Wednesday 20th June on 0428 372 357 for catering purposes. The day is funded by the MLA, AWI and the MCMA.

Pretty Pine Livestock Field Day 26th June

The RGA is holding a Livestock Field Day on the 26th June at Pretty Pine starting

at 10.00am and finishing around 3.00pm. Further details to follow in the future.

Open Farms Open Minds

To link in with the Year of the Farmer, the Western Murray Land Improvement Group is looking to hold some on farm tours in the future to showcase the diversity of food grown in the local area and to provide the opportunity for farmers and urban dwellers to connect.

By opening up local farms we offer other farmers and urban people the chance to share knowledge. We ask people to come and see how real farms work and to see all the great things that farmers are doing to improve and care for their farms, employing best management practices.

What is the aim?

- To connect urban and rural people.
- Rebuild the profile of

real farming and agriculture.

- To break down barriers and stereotypes.
- To show urban people that agriculture and the environment are interconnected and illustrate the beneficial environmental works being done on farm.
- To show the connection farmers have to aboriginal heritage.
- Offer other farmers the chance to see what other people are doing, knowledge sharing so that it is informative for farmers as well as city people.
- Big focus on how much farmers love their farms.
- Since the local region has a wide diversity of agriculture, from intensive irrigation systems used for horticulture, dairy, cropping

etc. to rangeland livestock operations, it is an ideal place to showcase agriculture.

- May lead to future tourism / educational opportunities for the area.

When?

Last week of the September school holidays.

Perhaps down the track we could have a showcase dinner (or camp oven day), which highlights all the local produce and link this with the Red Gum Food Group and the Farmers Market group etc...

If any farmers or members of the community have any ideas or experiences in farm tourism, please do not hesitate to pass on your knowledge and advice to the WMLIG.



Calves grazing on outskirts of Barham with citrus orchard in the background.

MCMA Funding Approved for Moulamein Central Primary School

The Moulamein Central Primary School have been successful in obtaining a grant to create a native food garden. The grant of \$2000 is provided by the Murray Catchment Management Authority (MCMA) under the 2012 Community Grants Program.

The objective of the project is to grow an indigenous food garden which will educate the public on Aboriginal culture and help preserve knowledge of how local native plants were prepared and treated for food, fibre and medicine.

It is anticipated that people from the Moulamein School, local indigenous groups, the MCMA and Western Murray Land Improvement Group will be involved in the project. General members of the community and community groups will also be encouraged to participate in the project.

The Western Murray Land Improvement Group is a co-contributor of funding and will assist with project management and labour in collaboration with other community groups.



Photo of what appears to be a scar tree in the Merran Creek whilst sampling water quality during the recent black water event.

Funding Opportunities

Thinking about purchasing conservation tillage equipment?

The Australian Government will provide a 15% refundable tax offset for eligible conservation tillage equipment installed between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2015, through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Exact details are yet to be released.

Private Land Conservation Grants

The grants program aims to support private landholders with Conservation Agreements to undertake conservation works on their property. Grants of up to \$3000 are available.

Private Land Conservation Grants are only available to owners of covenanted properties in NSW to conduct habitat or species conservation projects on their property.

Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarships open

Applications are now open for the 2013 Nuffield Australia Farming Scholarships. These prestigious scholarships are awarded each year to Australian farmers, with the objective of increasing practical farming knowledge and management skills and techniques generally.

The scholarships give Australian citizens the opportunity to study farming practices in New Zealand, Europe, Asia and the Americas and those countries best suited to each scholar. They also promote a closer understanding between farmers in the countries visited.

Upon returning to Australia it is expected that scholars will be able to actively spread the knowledge and understanding they have gained among their fellow farmers and others.

<http://nuffield.com.au/schols.html>



Sign on a tree near the Barham cemetery recognizing *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* (South Australian Yellow Gum) as a notable stand restricted to the Barham Area. The trees are found in a small area extending from the Golf Club to Eagle Creek.

WMLIG Mission Statement: “Promote sustainable farm and land management practices to enhance our unique natural environment through innovation, education and strong community networks”.



**Western Murray
Land Improvement Group Inc.**



Photo of the Western Murray Land Improvement Group Office in the Barham Rest Centre. Call in if you or your group needs a hand with an application or NRM / sustainable agriculture related information.

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Dates to Remember;

- *Wednesday April 30th, Farmers Making a Difference for Biodiversity, Conargo 5.30-8.30pm.*
- *Tuesday and Wednesday 5th and 6th June. Proposed Colleambally Cotton Information tour with John Smith.*
- *Monday June 18th, BestWool / BestLamb field day at “Murrayview”. Time 10.00am - 2.00pm.*
- *Monday June 25th, Central Murray BestWool / BestLamb presentation at “Operina”, Noorong. Time: 1.30pm - 5pm, followed by dinner and presentation at Commercial Hotel, Swan Hill 6.30pm—9.30pm.*
- *Tuesday, 26th June, RGA Livestock Field Day Pretty Pine. Time: 10am to @3.00pm . Further info. to follow.*



CARING
FOR
OUR
COUNTRY