Farming Secrets Digest Volume #15

Special points of interest:

- Chilean Needle Grass
- Holistic Management
- Fresh the Movie.
- Homoeopathics for Acute Cases

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Farming Secrets Guarantees Profitable Healthy Sustainable-Farming With Less Hard Yakka More Time and More Joy

Farming Secrets Digest

Join Us & Get To Know Your Options That Make Farming Far More Profitable!

Welcome to our 15th Farming Secrets Digest! It's nearly the end of another year. For us it is time to reflect on the milestones of this year and to start planning for 2011. What about you? We are constantly seeking ways to bring the message of healthier and more joyful farming to our members. We mainly do this through presenting new ways of thinking through our "Walk the Talks". These are only ever possible through the generosity of the farmers and experts who willingly share their experiences and information with us and subsequently with you. We thank you ALL!



Helen & Hugo with Dr Paul Hepperly and his wife Karen

Are you keeping an eye on our blog & enjoy the latest clips from our farming walks at: http://farmingsecretsblog.com We Invite You to Give us a Call to find out what your options are for YOUR farm. Start 2011 with Fresh ideas.

"Devote most effort to the design and management of systems that can enable wellbeing, social justice and sustainability, and that are problem-proof vs. maintaining unsustainable, problem-generating systems, and devoting time to 'problem-solving', control, and input management" Stuart B. Hill

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What Are Some Decisions That A Farmer Must Make to Have a Healthy Soil?

A rapidly increasing number of happy farmers in which are backed up by the many speakers who many sectors of farming have discovered true soil fertility and its astonishing benefit to profitable farming giving them immense satisfaction using their own intuition and doing their own trials. Let's take a closer look at these farmers growing pasture for example.

They are increasing:

- depth of top soil from 100mm to over
- soil organic carbon which in turn increases moisture holding capacity
- self generated desirable grass species i.e. no sowing
- Freeing up soils from hard pans
- plant root depth resulting in drought proofing
- plant diversity to get year round growth
- the mineral content of the grasses so
- animals greatly benefit

They are growing pastures with very little or no inputs and not spraying for weeds at all. Many of these benefits are also being achieved in cropping too.

How Have The Farmers Done This?

Simply put they have created farming practices that enhance the mycorrhizal association with the plants roots. In other words they are doing their best to help the many organisms in the soil - both seen and unseen by the naked eye - to do their intended job. Farming Secrets has filmed a number of farmers who have achieved these results

have researched and have a thorough knowledge of how a healthy soil functions.

If you are looking for long term productivity and profitability and a viable future these are some of the decisions that need to be made:

Prioritise finding out how the soil functions Take a whole system approach Stop using short term band aid solutions Ask why you are using a product, is there a better, more effective way.

Find out if you are improving your farm by your practices

Be prepared to be open, be the innovator in your community and seek to generate the growth of a truly local community.

Most importantly prioritise your soil and start to ask with every decision "Will this harm the soil life?" If the answer is "Yes" then ask "Is there another way or what can I do to minimalise the harm?"

As a healthy, lively soil is essential for healthy growth and to provide immense satisfaction for you, Farming Secrets has a Special Free Gift:

Take charge & Get your Free Gift Today:

"Hey! My Soil is Healthy! Yippee!" Discover do you have a healthy soil? 8 Simple Steps to Take. See what healthy soil looks like (See Pink Sheet for more details)

WEEDS

"Chilean Needle Grass"

Chilean Needle grass (Nassella neesiana) Is it dangerous to stock?



native to South America is a perennial tussock -forming grass that grows to 1.2 m in height.

Dispersal: Is unusual in producing two types of seeds: normal flower seeds and 'stem seeds' enabling the plant to reproduce despite grazing, slashing and fire. Can produce more than 20,000 seeds per sq. m. Spreads on farm machinery, clothing or livestock & via floodwaters. Why does it grow? It tolerates drought, heavy grazing and is able to establish on the hardest bare sites on disturbed ground. It is a Weed of National Significance.

- It is relatively unpalatable.
- Heavy infestations can decrease productivity by as much as 50% during summer
- The sharp seeds have a natural twisting mechanism that cause seeds to lodge into fleece, skin, eyes and ears of livestock when changes in humidity
- The seeds have been found to move through the skin and into the body muscles, causing abscesses and downgrading carcasses, and even rendering them unsalable
- reduces farm productivity by displacing more desirable pasture species.

Solve the problem! Chilean needle grass is a low successional grass which requires low animal impact and overuse of the surrounding higher successional grasses to germinate and establish. If we know what conditions favour the plant to establish, the key is to create the opposite conditions i.e. high animal impact and full recovery before the next grazing of the surrounding grasses. I would set up a small trial area that received this treatment to confirm this diagnosis and the specific combination of recovery and impact required in different environments - Graeme Hand (If you have no animals plants best slashed and burnt) /

Homoeopathy On Line by Jean Belstead

DOSING IN ACUTE CASES:

Acute means a sudden onset of sickness, or an accident, when intense and constant boss all about these magic potions nursing is needed.

- * Dosing with homoeopathics in any acute condition entails dosing every 10 to 30 minutes until the animal begins to improve. Then continue to dose less often as the animal continues to get well.
- * Follow up with twice a day for three days for complete recovery.
- * Do not double the dose as this will only waste the product, the amount that isn't needed by the body will be expelled. *Better to give the correct dose more often, rather than a bigger dose less often.
- * The repetition of dosing is what kickstarts healing.
- * In emergency scenarios less, more often, is better.

While typing this I remembered a client who uses homoeopathics in

NZ. and has used them to save many a dairy herd. On one farm he taught his as the factory was on the brink of refusing to pick up his milk due to the high cell count. The boss was all ears. He learnt how to use a spray bottle to dose the cows via the vagina and was impressed as he watched the cell count figures drop. He actually saved nearly a third of his herd from the knackery. One day the boss''s cat was walked on by the horse. So the boss asked if there was a

homoeopathic he could give Puss for the bruising. He was given Arnica. Well .. the way he'd thus far learned to use homoeopathics, was to spray the vagina. The cat was a tom! The boss was stumped as to how he was going to dose that feline!!!!(Still learning). Hey life's a hoot isn't it! Cheers for now, Jean PS Gift in the store for you!

Special!! **Product of the Month**

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Fresh the Movie \$37 DVD

Only 2 in stock. Get your order in if you want us to get you a copy!

See Celia's review page 4 **☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆**

"Walk the Talk"

Graeme Hand with Alistair Jones at Tuki

snippets of what Graeme Hand has to say about holistic management go to:

To hear and see

http://farmingsecretsblog.com Graeme is CEO of Stipa, the Native Grasses Assoc, well worth your membership for only \$100 yearly He also does Holistic Management® Training and will come to you. Contact Mobile: 0418532130 Listen to Graeme on our great value Stipa 3 DVD set all for only \$30!

Our last walk we talked more about vermicompost. brewing and teas when we visited David Davidson with Gerhard Grasser. Using the microscope we looked at teas made by John Bedwell and Don Cane who showed us his BD brewer. Check out the Sneak Peeks at our blog: http:// farmingsecretsblog.com

Next "Walk the Talk" is all about measuring signs of healthy soils. It has inspired us to give all our subscribers a Farming Secrets Free Gift: "Hey! My Soil is Healthy! **Yippee!"** Make sure we have your email address so that we can start sending it to you now! (See the Pink Sheet for details) This can be shared with your neighbours & friends too.

Trekking around with Hugo and Helen



Stephen Cross, (R at rear) President of the Organic Agriculture Association Inc organised a conference which brought together practicing farmers to share their experiences. Nigel Kerin, NSW Farmer of the Year 2008 inspired us all with his message that you can't have monetary wealth until you have environmental health. "The wealth is in your grass not your animals" he said. Read & listen at: http://www.abc.net.au/

rural/content/2008/s2574915.htm Alan Broughton rings the bell to bring us all in from the fantastic

Organic food provided! We heard of many local successful businesses including Wendy Wallace who features in the *Fast Track Your Farming* series. It was filmed so we are looking forward to

its release! Walter Jehne set the scene with his talk "Why Healthy Soils?"





Paul & Karen Hepperly with Gillian Blair.

Next we drove to Glenormiston to film a presentation by Dr. Paul Hepperly late of the

prestigious Rodale Institute. He shared his findings of the many years of trialing conventional v organic farming. Watch out for the release next year! Lots of scientific data on organic, common sense advantages.:)



Megan of Biosys with Richard Murphy



We met Joel Salatin at Bendigo at a RegenAg talk where he spoke firstly about why what he does is way more logical than his industrial farming neighbours and secondly a little of his own practices. I bought his latest book "The Sheer Ecstasy of Being a Lunatic Farmer" a lunatic because he is a misfit in his own community. But he doesn't care and nor should we for

following nature's way. We need to be leaders if there is to be a future. Joel features in <u>Fresh</u> the Movie and is a very happy nonindustrial farmer! And yes he is a delight.

On the way we called in to see Howard Hepburn whom we had visited with Maarten Stapper. Howard has been trialing biological v conventional and we thought we'd check his soils. However much of his farm was under water following severe flooding and he'd just been out saving his sheep.



The Worm Farmer's Diary

Just come back from doing a four day Sustainable Agriculture course in Queensland. Learned a lot, and also confirmed that humic acid and fulvic acid are key components in non-chemical farming. Not that many people know that Worm Castings are rich in both these items.

Also discovered that one University in China has 38 thousand students enrolled in their Biological Farming Course.

Recently hosted a bus load of students from The Polytech School of Engineering in Singapore. They had included a tour of our Worm Farming operation as part of a 4 day cultural and business learning tour. When the students saw our very modest (and very old) 3 BR brick veneer home. They exclaimed, "What a beautiful home"..they thought it was a Palace. When they learned that our three grown up children no longer lived with us, but in fact all lived in their own homes...they were amazed.

Tip of the Month

Next time you catch yourself thinking our life is tough.... SLAP YOURSELF!! Please initially email me: davidd@aussiebroadband.com.au

Happy worm farming! David Davidson.

PS Become a member of the Australian Worm Growers Association! \$100 PPS Check out my Free Gift in the FREE category in the Farming Secrets store: www.farmingsecrets.com/fs

Tigger Tales! for all her farmyard friends.

Did you know that living with a furry friend is good for you?

Would you like to lower your blood pressure to a healthier level? Need encouragement to get moving and exercise more? Are you lonely or depressed? Do you suffer from chronic fatigue syndrome? Well, it came as no surprise to me to hear that there is one prescription for all these problems. And that's the miracle treatment of owning a pet like me!

Did you know that apart from giving you all the love that we can and showing you how happy we are to see you whenever you've been away we also help you with your health?

Those people wh do surveys say there is lots of evidence that living with a pet has numerous health and life-enhancing benefits. This includes all pets—even ones with scales or 8 legs—and that's good news for us all.

And I have a gift for you all! There isn't room for me to put it here so Helen has put it in the Farming Secrets store. You'll find it in the FREE category. Hope you like it! So go to: www.farmingsecrets.com/fs/store now.





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DVD Review: Fresh the Movie By Celia Babbage, FS member This movie is a **must watch**. It shows

- how industrialised our food system has become
- organic, ecologically sustainable farming methods
- local food sourcing that is happening in the US and people who are involved in the movement to produce and supply organic food. One person is **Joel Salatin** who explains the efficiency of his farm operation and the principles upon which it is based.

Another is **Will Allen** who set up an urban farm and who educates people on how to do the same on any small block of land they have available. The movie profiles others such as the owner of a family-owned supermarket chain that partners with local food farmers to sell their produce, a pig farmer who tells his story about how he changed from 'conventional' practices to raising pastured pigs and George Navlor, a corn and sov grower who describes the struggles family farmers are currently facing. What impressed me about this movie was seeing achievable solutions to the food crisis which is building around us, solutions that are attainable by those seeking a way to change. It's a call to action! Rating: *****



Hi to our valuable "Farming Secrets Club" members both new and old. Are you enjoying your weekly Gold **Nuggets** for members only? The Importance of Creating a

Resilient Farm

The opposite to resilience is to be vulnerable which in essence means open to attack at all levels! And when we are under attack we respond sometimes inappropriately, dealing with the immediate problem rather than planning and preparing our defence.

So let's look at how we can plan and prepare for the extremes in the weather so that your farm withstands whatever conditions prevail in the future.

'Australia is in danger of becoming a country of modern-day serfs working for a foreign landlord' Bob Katter*

Future Farming: Productive, Competitive and sustainable.

Why do we need to focus on healthy soils?

Our members love their Gold Nuggets which are designed to stimulate thinking outside the norm.

"Farming Secrets Club" Members Corner!

I have just read your most recent Farming Secrets Digest (Vol #14) and commend you once again for bringing people of the land together in such a constructive and positive way. We are on the cusp of major change in agriculture where land managers are intimately and sensorily reconnecting with the soil and its life in spite of technology's attempts to isolate them from their landscape! The 'normal' rainfall season has given a breather as soil life gets the chance to grow and regroup under optimum conditions, but this opportunity must be taken to build a buffer in our soil and above ground management to make future farm management easier and more resilient to adverse conditions. It is not a time to sit back and do nothing, or to expect to raise the long term production rates without doing the ground work now!! Your continued messages from farmers and experts are providing the mechanism for this to take place. Well done. Best regards, Gerhard (Grasser, Agrisolutions)



Member Alan Wood with Hugo. Alan is now organically certified. Congratulations!

"Hi. Thanks for the information .. I am especially interested in grassland farming practices down under because I consider you guys to be practicing the farming of the future...We ..are very excited to hear that such efforts exist! In the early part of America's history retired President Thomas Jefferson encouraged ex-President James Madison to form just such a club with the intent of improving farming practices. Especially in Georgia .. farmers had exhausted soil fertility and were pushing to move onto Indian land. What Jefferson and Madison sought to promote was ways of farming that replenished soil fertility so that farmers wouldn't continually have to seek new land. Today the knowledge of how to do this has so greatly advanced. This is the real science of farming and not the Monsanto and Dow funded research in Ag schools here which I regard as pseudo science and the self serving nonsense of chemical companies. It has made them rich while making farming a risky, unhealthy and unpredict-

WANTED! People to help us get the good news out! Email: helen@farmingsecrets.com for extra copies. Have YOU got a great farm story for your fellow farmers? Email or Contact Us Now on: 1800 800 466
