



Farming Secrets Digest

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

Special points of interest:

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

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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 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 250mm*
- ◆ *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

which are backed up by the many speakers who 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 minimise 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)*

Trekking around with Hugo and Helen

The Worm Farmer's Diary



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 **Fresh** 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.



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 who 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.



Find Out How To Fast Track Your Farming!



Request your "Farming Secrets Starter Tool Kit" \$7 p&h
Simply return the form enclosed or visit our website at:
www.farmingsecrets.com

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 Naylor**, a corn and soy 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: *****



GOLD NUGGET

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)

"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 unpredictable nightmare." Ed Scott, USA



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

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
