

**Become a Farming Secrets Member today! BEAT THE PRICE RISE!**

## Special points of interest:

- Why does Barley Grass grow?
- Take an online course with Dr. Elaine Ingham
- Focus on Compost Worms for home
- Notes about pet food from Tigger

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Farming Secrets Guarantees Profitable Viable Farming With Less Effort And Expenditure ..... Even If You Think You Know Everything There Is To Know About Farming

Welcome to our 10th **Farming Secrets Digest!** As you'll see inside, we have travelled and filmed a lot since last writing. We have continually been inspired by the passion and the knowledge that is been shared amongst the farming community.

The most extraordinary gathering of speakers was at the event in Yass "Your Land, Your Soil & Your Future" organized by the Landcare groups. 300 people registered to hear 7 speakers talk about farming without chemicals. We even had organic food there!



Most recently we attended the annual Agrisolutions lunch where Gerhard proudly showed 2 awards from the Baw Baw shire. With him are Fiona and Carol, fellow staffers. We recently released Gerhard's DVD: Farming Deeper is Cheaper \*\*\*\*\*

And then just last week Hugo & I went to a local meeting to hear from local farmer, Marshall Bailleau why he is growing GM canola near suburbia. He actually said that it will not escape and that he is doing us a favour because he is using less chemicals! The panel included 2 members from Madge and another from Gene Ethics who quickly pointed out that neither of his claims were true. The crowd of 60 was unanimous in their vote for 2 shires to be declared GM free

## Are You a Happy Farmer? Is It Time to Take a Reality Check?

Farmers in general are busy people who don't have enough hours in the day to do anything but what has to be done. It is often only when it's tax time that you get to figure out exactly how you are going in dollar terms. **So let's stop and take a look at some simple measures.**

- ◆ Are your input costs going up more than your returns?
  - ◆ Do you have to produce more, be more efficient and you still aren't getting ahead?
  - ◆ Are you having the same problems despite using commercial products to get rid of them each year? Do the problems keep coming back?
  - ◆ Do you suffer from any of these? Weeds, Rust, RLEMs, parasites, pastures need resewing.
  - ◆ Do your animals have any of these problems? Lice, pink eye, mastitis, worms, infertility.
  - ◆ Are you finding your soils are becoming more compacted and holding less moisture?
  - ◆ Have you noticed that it is harder to farm year after year even in good seasons?
  - ◆ Are you aware that the government, 1 leading rural educational bodies and research institutes promote big business products and yet these products don't add to your bottom line?
  - ◆ Do you feel that you and your fellow farmers are losing control and it feels like you are being screwed?
  - ◆ Are you wanting to break away from the system that is slowly sending you backwards?
- Did you answer Yes to most of these questions?** We hope not (except for the last one) but if you did, maybe it is time to stop and make the decision to choose another way. Farming is meant to be joyful and free from all these problems!

That is one of the reasons we started Farming Secrets. **At Farming Secrets we show case farmers who would answer No to most if not all of those questions.** They are farmers who are very happy with their farming and who farm with confidence. That's because

- ◆ they farm with respect to the soil biology and to the whole farm management.
- ◆ They understand that commercial remedy products create further costs.
- ◆ They have learnt to find out why problems occur and see them as part of the whole picture.
- ◆ They know that everything is connected.

**When you understand and apply the whole functioning of the soil food web, the importance of the soil and biodiversity, then your farm will prosper. Productivity will rise and profits made and you, the farmer happy.**

Naturally we invite you to join Farming Secrets to rediscover from your fellow farmers the joys of farming again. Make it easy on yourself and join like minded farmers who are rediscovering the real reason why they are farming.

We love working with farmers and finding answers for your problems, so much so that next year we are offering a new level of membership. Prices will go up EXCEPT for our Foundation members.

**So don't ignore this Invitation for You today. Join Farming Secrets and BEAT THE PRICE RISE! Farming Secrets is changing and we invite you to be part of our inner circle of Farming Secrets members. Just fill in the pink form. Trial us for a month if you are not sure.**

## Weed of the month: Barley Grass

**Barley Grass** or *Hordeum glaucum* and *H. Leporinum* is an annual species renowned for rapidly germinating in autumn to provide valuable stock feed soon after breaking rain. Barley grass grows to about 450 mm in height.

**Dispersal:** Barley grass can be carried on animals and fabric and is a common contaminant of hay

and feed grains.

**Why does it grow?** Barley grass flourishes on a wide range of soil types, particularly in lightly grazed, fertile, pasture paddocks. Without intervention, barley grass builds up as fertility increases.



### Is it dangerous to stock?

The seed is a problem in pasture, hay and silage, causing eye injuries and creating mouth ulcers in stock, reduced live weight gains. Its presence reduces wool quality. If slashed 12—24 hours before animals are let into the paddock, it wilts and is more readily and safely grazed.

There are more occurrences this year of barley grass which is causing great concern for many farmers. One of these farmers, David Cole called us to see if we could help—he has tried everything! Can anyone shed any more light on non chemical control?

### Solve the problem!

It favours a dry, compacted soil with poor drainage. However barley grass does not persist in the soil and possesses little or no dormancy. If barley grass seedlings are controlled early in the season and are not allowed to set seed then near eradication is possible. While low grazing pressure leads to increased density, high stocking rates can be used to reduce levels of the weed in a pasture. Occurs in soils very low in calcium and very high in magnesium. Therefore it is recommended to activate the fungi in your soils by spraying out fish fertiliser and humic acid.

## The Worm Farmer's Diary *By David Davidson*



I recently attended a Field Day which featured Cereal Variety Trials and a Cropping Competition Trial. The competition included a group of agronomists, a group of conventional farmers, group of accountants and a group of alternative farmers. The alternative farmers deep ripped their plot using Mike Fix's Rehabilitator, spread a basalt based rock fertilizer, then used worm tea as a seed treatment, followed up by a worm tea foliar. To the naked eye, there was very little visible difference in the two crops, both doing extremely well in the fast finishing season we are experiencing. However, the input costs of the two trials were very interesting. The input costs for the alternative farmers came to about \$50 per ha whereas the costs for the agronomists was \$150 per hectare. The agrono

mists tried to justify his costs by saying he would only need to get an extra one tonne yield to cover the extra costs! It will be interesting to report the actual yields when the crop comes off. (Ed. What about the costs to the soil life?)

**This months tip:** When watering your Worm farms in the summer, in particular large beds or windrows, and water is a problem, instead of watering the whole area, place a plastic bucket with a few small holes drilled in the bottom, over a Hessian bag on a particular spot and this will provide sufficient moisture for the worms to congregate in that area. Move the bucket to a different spot from time to time.

Please initially email me: [davidd@aussiebroadband.com.au](mailto:davidd@aussiebroadband.com.au)

## Product of the Month

David Davidson



**Composting With Worms Made Easy**  
(approx 90 minutes)  
**\$29.95**



### "Walk the Talk"

More worm farming secrets with David Davidson but this time mostly on a smaller scale. David is a regular seller at the Farmers' Markets and along with his wife, Beth regularly advises mostly home gardeners on how to successfully farm worms AND get rid of your scraps. This time David also takes us on a paddock walk to check out his results from applying worm compost and worm teas. I don't think I've ever seen so many fat, juicy earthworms in one shovelful! We also visit his neighbor, Yonke Cane who has set up her own worm farm within bales of straw. A simple but brilliant way to make a good home for the worms while making good compost. To check out clips from this walk they are available at: <http://farmingsecretsblog.com>

### COMING NEXT!



John Bedwell shows his sprayer and compost tea brewing set up. We called in after visiting David To hear from John just how he was using David's vermicast

## Trekking around with Hugo and Helen



We have had a busy few weeks travelling. Firstly we went up to Yass and joined about 300 farmers who had gathered to hear more from leading biological experts. It was a brilliant line-up including **Christine Jones, Colin Seis, Maarten Stapper, Hamish McKay** ... The energy was magic as all seemed in one voice about how to nurture the soil. Whilst there we met **Ric Preston** FS member who invited us back to his farm to check out his new worm composting windrow (See above on L with another FS member Tom Nicholas) Also caught up with old Vitec friends, the **Booth's** and **Keily's** and met up with **Vicki Poulter** of Nourishing Australia. Also met up with **Tony Coote** from Mulloon Creek We'd been hearing about him forever from **Hugh Lovel** and **Maarten**

While in the area we met up with John Feehan, dung beetle expert, and went out with him to examine the different dung beetle activity. John is passionate and exacting about his dung beetle operation and impressed us with just how much can be achieved if a farmer has just 3 different types of dung beetles active on his property. As John said: a John Deere tractor is no competition to the dung beetles! Film to follow!

Finally we returned to Mulloon Creek where **Peter Andrews** was key speaker before we all set off to travel the 3.5km creek restoration. The project of rehydration is impressive as is the whole vision of Tony Coote's to provide a place of learning for fellow farmers.



On the way home we called in on FS member **Neil Prentice** (on R) to look at his stock supplement system. A week later Maarten was in town so we all headed down to Fish Creek to meet up with **Jean Belstead**, (on L) homeopathic advisor to **Ron & Bev Smith**. More soon—very exciting!

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Christine Jones with Keily's Carbon award

### What Farming Secrets means to members;

#### Now see light at the end of the tunnel

*Just a short note to say how happy we are with your service and knowledge. Knowing where to start on the road to sustainable farming was a real problem for us, but within hours of joining Farming Secrets we had a plan and we adopted it. We are implementing your advice and can see our input cost reducing overnight.*

*With tough seasons and high input cost plus a low milk (prices) we can now see light at the end of the tunnel as we improve our soil, reduce our cost and more importantly we've found a new drive and passion for farming.*

*Thank you to all of you at Farming Secrets and keep up the great work. Gareth & Fiona Rourke, Dairy Farmer, Muckatah, Vic, Aus*

#### Great listening to CDs

*I have been driving a header and have finally caught up on my listening to all the CD's. They are great and I am enjoying them immensely. I listened to them on the week end instead of listening to the ABC follow Tiger Woods around. If the Vic Govt would sponsor 3 and a bit Million Dollars for biological farming they would get better bang for their buck.*

*Keep up the good work. Martin J. Williams, Hayseed Ag. Pty Ltd, Katherine, NT, Aus*

## Tigger Tales! ..... for all her farmyard friends.

**Do they give you commercial pet food?** Last Digest I promised to tell you about why I don't get cans of so called "dog food". If you ask me it should be called "dog poison"! But first of all thanks to all of you who are listening out there and starting to use copper in you best friend's water bowl. Someone did want to know what happened if their furry friend ate the coins! My advice was to use pennies if you can find them—they'd be big enough :) or some copper tube in the bowl.

Now getting back to canned dog food. Do you know that most of it is made from really cheap meat meal, cheap grains like soy and corn, fillers and a heap of colouring, preservatives and pesticides? Why, I ask you, would we want to eat that! Especially as not so long ago we hunted for our food which was raw, not cooked or dehydrated and full of toxins! Apart from that we drank lots of clean water and nibbled on wild plants. I know that everyone tells you that processed food is balanced and healthy but don't believe 'them'. Hugo told me that a growing number of vets now claim that those canned and dry pet foods are the number 1 cause of illness and early death. If your friend has bad breath, itches, does runny pooh & smells (not all the time) and doesn't have a nice glossy coat then that's a good sign that the food you are giving isn't right.

So please if you want your furry friends to live a good healthy life give us food that we'd get for ourselves.

**Now prick up your ears!** Next time I get to talk to you I am going to tell you a story about camping as some of you might be camping this summer. What happened to me camping really shocked my family and friends as at first they thought I'd been bitten by a snake!



## Find Out How To Fast Track Your Farming!



Request your Free "Farming Secrets Starter Tool Kit"  
Simply return the form enclosed or visit our website at:  
[www.farmingsecrets.com](http://www.farmingsecrets.com)

**Question: Is a Landcare Group able to use one Membership and distribute information out?** They are starting up a Library for use by the Group and said that the Farming Secrets Digest would form valuable information, along with DVD's that they may purchase along the way. However the most valuable part of Farming Secrets is our one-on-one mentoring and the individual networking. What to do? We have had a number of requests from groups and libraries and are very keen that our message is spread. We are open to suggestions!

**Grameen Bank**  
We support the Grameen bank which is a Microcredit organisation working with the poorest of the poor to end their own poverty. Founded by Muhammed Yunus in Bangladesh, it basically loans money of about \$100 to enable a woman to eg. buy a cow, or a sewing machine or maybe a weaving loom. When the loans are repaid the money is lent out to the next woman. The model has been copied worldwide. You can join too to help. Details on website.



## GOLD NUGGET

Hi to our valuable "Farming Secrets Club" members both new and old. Are you enjoying your weekly **Gold Nuggets**? As you know, we cover a range of topics to stimulate your thinking. For ALL previous Gold Nuggets visit our Farming Secrets Members Forum. *Are you aware that without soil fungi and bacteria the continuous natural cycle of life would not be assured?* Fungi and bacteria are the primary recyclers of nutrients in the soil, decomposing complex organic compounds and returning their minerals to the soil the next generation of plants and animals. **So what should you be doing to look after them?** *In 1975 it was revealed that plants and insects "talk" to each other. When you know and accept this, you can learn how to control insects without the use of toxic sprays.* *A worldwide revolution in agriculture occurred in 1975 when Dr Phil Callahan published his book "Tuning in to Nature" subtitled "Infrared radiation and the Insect Communication System".* After many years of research together with 16 other researchers and 7 ento-

mologists, he finally wrote the book recording their breakthrough studies. Their research showed that sick plants emit a particular infrared frequency signal which is picked up by the insects which then come to destroy the plant.

*In 1893 "Bread from Stones" was written by Julius Hensel and is recognised as the first book to raise the awareness to farmers of their options available to them. Despite the book being written over hundred and 14 years ago.. "the 1893 classic that is still shaping agriculture today."\**

It was by chance that Julius Hensel, an agricultural chemist, observed that the stones when accidentally ground up with grain into flour meal, gave plants astonishingly healthy growth when discarded and spread around some vegetables. Furthermore he found that when he spread his mix around every second vegetable in the row they not only grew better but **insects would stay away from those plants as well as fungal and bacterial diseases.**

To read "Bread From Stones" find Your free PDF coupon in Santa's Bag of Goodies!

## "Farming Secrets Club" Members Corner!

### Help! Where Do I Start?

Farming Secrets is invaluable, pointing you to the shortest way to profitable, healthy, sustainable farming. We sincerely invite you to become a Farming Secrets member NOW! Early next year our *members only* can be part of Elaine Ingham's 1st ever online soil course based on the "Critical Invisible Soil Fertility Solutions Revealed" True Fertility Workshop. This is for 15 members only! It is not too late for YOU to become a member!

**Join TODAY to be part of this!**

### And just in from a member:

*Thanks a million for the follow up with David D. I have now built my Neverfill worm house and its fully functional! I found it one of the best Walk the Talks ever...*

*Thanks again for the great info!! Brian Irving, Beef cattle, Rollo's Plains, NSW, Aus*

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**Articles please! Have YOU got a great farm story or handy hints for your fellow farmers?**

**Contact Us Now! Please help us make Farming Secrets Digest an absolute must read for everyone!!**