



## Mid Lachlan Landcare - Grazing Management Field Day

On 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015, Mid Lachlan Landcare held a Grazing Management Field Day at “Talinga” Woodstock. The field day attracted 60 people from Cowra, Canowindra, Orange, Grenfell, Boorowa, Yass and as far afield as Merriwa and Sydney.

Our guest speakers were Brian Wehlburg, a certified holistic management educator that delivers grazing management courses to a diverse range of groups. He also runs his own pasture grass-based beef, pork and egg enterprise. Gus Hickman also spoke to attendees, providing an insight into the transformation of “Talinga”.

At the field day, Brian talked about the importance of covered soils all year round and having a range of grasses and plant species in our landscapes. He also talked about the challenges faced when moving away from repetitive systems towards natural processes. The focus should be on working with the landscape and farm ecology.

Brian highlighted the importance of reducing production costs by utilising things that are provided to us for free such as sunlight, oxygen, water, soil and biology. By enhancing those processes with the use of grazing animals, they assist in landscape regeneration and contribute to profitable farming businesses. Brian explained that to make sure our businesses and ecology are moving forward, constant monitoring is required, he said “It’s critical to be managing our businesses and landscapes by a plan, monitor, control, and re-plan process”. He also stressed that planning is an essential component, all levels of management should be consulted in order for clear goals to be set.

Gus Hickman spoke passionately about the journey his family has made at “Talinga” over the last 20 years. Moving towards a bio diverse landscape has helped improve their profitability, build resilience in the landscape, and provided a sense of achievement and enjoyment. Gus also acknowledged how the topics on offer at the field day reflected the high attendance rate, and how group learning benefited everyone including himself.

Mid Lachlan Landcare’s Grazing Project Officer, Scott Hickman commented that “Brian is passionate about working with nature and making nature better by using grazing animals, ensuring we leave something for future generations but also making sure people can run a profitable business that has flow-on effects to whole communities as well.”

Following the field day, a paddock to plate dinner was held at The Oxley Wine Bar in Cowra for people interested in marketing and selling their own brand. On the menu was a range of local produce including free range, holistically managed chicken from Carbeen Pastured Produce at Cudal and holistically managed lamb from “Oatleigh” Canowindra. Forty people attended to hear Brian’s story on his own Kindee Valley Farm products and his reasons for marketing his own produce.

Brian's key points on marketing and selling are:

- Have a story to tell—the farm, the family, why your product is worth buying
- Know your consumer – farmers markets, demographics, what do they care about?
- Educate your consumer – recipes, cryovac/fresh products
- Good relationships are essential i.e. With your courier and butcher
- Be clear in your goals – a lot of time and effort is required, research everything before you start

Mid Lachlan Landcare would like to sincerely thank Brian for providing his time and knowledge. Thanks also to Gus and Anna Hickman for hosting the field day and to The Oxley Wine Bar for preparing and hosting the dinner.

If you would like more information about this field day or would like to be involved with Growing the Grazing Revolution please contact Scott Hickman 0427 450 416 or email [oaitleigh@westnet.com.au](mailto:oaitleigh@westnet.com.au)



Paddock walk on "Talinga"



Gus Hickman, owner of "Talinga"



Brian Wehlburg addresses the group



Scott Hickman Grazing Project Officer MLL