



## Field trip to Bob Freebairn's property at Coonabarabran

On 27<sup>th</sup> August 2014 Mid Lachlan Landcare organised for 13 local graziers to visit Bob Freebairn on his property at Coonabarabran. The focus of the day was to learn from Bob about the potential role that tropical grasses and temperate legumes could play in the Mid Lachlan Landcare district in order to increase biodiversity of our pastures, and boost animal production.

Our group were shown how Bob plans, grows and manages these pastures on his property. It was particularly interesting to see Serradella and Biserrula growing throughout his property mixed with native grasses and sown tropical grasses, and it was amazing to see how well they had responded to recent rainfall events in the area and to observe livestock already grazing these pastures.



Some interesting points that Bob made about temperate legumes:

- They can grow in light acid soil types with high aluminium levels
- They are bloat free
- They can deliver 25% of digestible protein levels
- They have the ability to fix up to 40 kilograms per hectare of nitrogen per tonnes a hectare of dry matter
- They can be ground sped for sowing

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Photos: Nodulation on roots of Serradella; a thick mat of Serradella and Biserulla; temperate legumes in a native pasture paddock.

Bob also provided a presentation on tropical grasses of which he has a range that is sown over 30% of his property consisting mainly of Digit, Bambasti and Rhodes grasses. According to Bob, tropical grasses have a number of advantages:

- They can cope with light soils that have low pH levels
- They can be in production 3 months after sowing
- They're quick to respond after a dry spell with small rainfall events

Our sincere thanks go to Bob for sharing his time and knowledge.

Mid Lachlan Landcare is planning a number of follow-up visits within our district to learn more about tropical grasses and temperate legumes in our local environment. Future information will be forwarded on, if you have any further enquiries or information please feel free to contact me.