



wheatbelt
natural resource
management



Growing Summer Feed Options Program

Merredin 27 March 2019

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Day Plan

Field Visits

8:45	Registration Woollahra Farm, Bruce Rock (See directions)	
9.00	Welcome and Field Walk Old Man Salt Bush, plus newer Enrich species, Sweet Sudan Sorghum and future plans	Tanya Kilminster
9.40	Travel to DPIRD Merredin Research station Great Eastern Hwy, Merredin	
10.05	Merredin Research Station Tedera Trial – A niche option for low rainfall areas	Daniel Real
10.25	Travel to Merredin Community Resource Centre 110 Barrack Strett, Merredin	

Presentations

10.30	Morning Tea	
10.50	Introduction – Setting the scene	Bonny Dunlop
10.55	Perennial pastures – what are the options and where are we headed	Phil Barret-Lennard
11.25	Benefits of incorporating forage into the diet	Sue Low
12:00	Blending Livestock and our natural Environment: a worthwhile, but difficult challenge.	Roy Butler
12.35	Panel discussion – Ask the experts	All
13:00	Lunch	
14:00	Close	



Directions

Woollahra Farm

Meet at the field site. Allow 25 minutes from Merredin, 2 hours 30 minutes from Northam.

If coming from Merredin take the Bruce-Rock Merredin Rd out of town, continue for 29 kilometres. Turn right (West) at Belka East road. The field site is 4 kilometres from the intersection. If you reach Belka South road (railway line) you have gone too far.

If coming from Northam head south at Doodlakine when you see the sign to Bruce Rock for 25 kilometres. Turn left (east) onto Belka West road. Continue east for 13.5 kilometres east on the Belka West road, the road becomes Belka East Road at the intersection with the railway line – keep going another couple of kilometres.

Field Day signs will be placed at the intersection of the Bruce Rock and Belka East road as well as to the site entry on Belka East road.

Water will be made available at field visits. Please wear appropriate clothing and sunscreen.



Speakers

Tanya Kilminster

Tanya farms with her husband Dean Butler and three children at Bruce Rock on a mixed wheat, barley, canola, lupin and merino sheep farm. Both Tanya and Dean are fourth generation farmers.

Tanya has a Science degree with Honours at UWA, she worked at CSIRO in the late 1990's, travelling overseas with Dean before returning to the Butler farm in Bruce Rock in late 2000. Tanya has worked for the Department of Agriculture (DPIRD) in Merredin since 2001 predominantly in the sheep industry. She is passionate about agriculture and wants to see a profitable, productive and sustainable industry.

This is Dean and Tanya's fifth production year on their own farm Woollahra. Salinity, poor soil structure and poor organic matter have presented management challenges on Woollahra along with considerable variation in soil types within paddocks. This has led to an ongoing commitment to fit for purpose land use to support the mixed farming operation.

Old Man Saltbush and some of the newer Enrich species have been planted along with annual legume pastures in a holistic approach based on soil types. In spring 2018, Tanya and Dean established two stands of Super Sweet Sudan for the first time, this has provided grazing opportunities for their sheep through this past dry summer.

Roy Butler

Roy graduated from Melbourne University. Later, he obtained a Master's degree in sheep medicine from Massey University in New Zealand and membership of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Science, by examination and research project, in sheep medicine.

He has worked in clinical, advisory and regulatory roles in rural areas of Tasmania and Western Australia. Sheep appear to be Roy's favourite animals, but he has enjoyed working with all farm and domestic species, including pigs, horses, ferrets, dairy cows, and working and racing dogs. In the latter years of his employment, he conducted numerous investigations into reports of adverse farm animal welfare.

Roy owns a small farm in the Merredin district. He practises energy efficient living and integration of livestock farming with nature. His commercial Dorper flock grazes on a low input, native-pasture-based system (uncultivated, unfertilized, permanent pasture since 1991). At times the sheep are supplemented.

After over 40 years as a proud veterinarian, Roy retired happily in February 2018 and intends to remain in the district.



Phil Barret Lennard

Phil is an excellent communicator and critical thinker with extensive knowledge of pasture systems and the southern beef industry. He combines scientific rigour with practical farming experience in Western Australia and the United States. He is recognised as a leading advisor on the application of sub-tropical perennial pastures in WA. He is well known for his work with Evergreen Farming Group and the Grain and Graze project. Currently Phil is a member of the Agvivo Team providing agricultural and natural resource management services to organisations that aspire to excellence in sustainable resource management.

Daniel Real

Daniel is a senior research officer (forage breeding and agronomy) with DPIRD. He leads research on the forage legume tederia co-funded by DPIRD and MLA. The research includes its capacity to grow in low rainfall areas and its value for animal health and nutrition.

Dr Sue Low

Specialising in animal nutrition and animal production systems, Sue has had more than 30 years experience in CSIRO, state DPI's in Australia, university lecturing in Papua New Guinea and Australia and private industry in both Australia and Papua New Guinea.

In private industry she has worked as a nutritional consultant to the poultry industry, designed and commissioned 4 feed analysis laboratories (ruminant and monogastric) and implemented quality control management systems in two feed mills. Key areas of research include studies on the effects of tropical pastures that exhibit toxicity mechanisms, such as signal grass (*Brachiaria decumbens*), on the productivity of Brahman cattle.

Current research is directed towards the development of sustainable feedbases through integration of pasture, fodder tree and grazing management strategies. Enhancement of legume establishment particularly over summer periods and improving phosphorus use efficiency are key aspects of the work.



For further information please contact

Felicity Gilbert

Program Manager

Wheatbelt NRM Sustainable Industries Team

M: 0436 472 910

E: fgilbert@wheatbeltnrm.org.au



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