

“Every farm problem naturally has an answer”

Special points of interest:

- ◆ *Dandelions*
- ◆ *Homoeopathics is Challenged*
- ◆ *Common Questions*
- ◆ *The Year of the Australian Farmer*

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Farming Secrets Guarantees Profitable Healthy Sustainable Farming With Less Hard Yakka More Time and More Joy

Welcome to our 19th Edition of the famous Farming Secrets Digest! What do we do here? Well, do you know someone with a life threatening illness or even perhaps who has a food allergy? We believe that many of today's diseases are largely due to the lack of wholesome, mineral rich food and proper diets.

So we set out to film successful

farmers growing food in biologically active soils and without the need for synthetic chemicals. It has been shown that the food



Helen & Hugo with Christine Jones

grown is indeed healthier. Then each month our members are sent DVDs & CDs for viewing and discussion. We also make DVDs of experts who present a range of healthy farming options. Many are made available in our store for all farmers looking for a change to farm with more health, joy and satisfaction.

The Year of the Australian Farmer

It's time to celebrate! Did you know that this IS the year to celebrate the Australian farmer? Whilst there has not been a lot in the news—except for more land purchases by overseas companies!—we have been quietly celebrating. Celebrating because we have been listening and reading constantly about the future. And what we are seeing is that the Australian farmer will indeed be restored to his rightful place at THE CENTRE of our society. Food will be, along with water, the richest resource as the population rises. And if trends go the way that they are going the 'little man' will win. As areas regionalise you will have your own markets and you won't need to 'get bigger or get out'. So the message to all farmers? Hang in there, we all need you and thank you for the often thankless task of producing our food. But we do ask you just one thing, please make sure that the food that you are producing is the best that you can grow.

Common Questions Often Asked by Farmers

Hugo Disler

How can I reduce fertiliser costs and still stay viable? By appreciating, protecting and enhancing soil biology, fertiliser costs can be dramatically reduced or eliminated. There are a number of ways that farmers have achieved this like making inexpensive onfarm compost, compost teas, worm leachates to name a few. If you have animals just by managing their grazing has eliminated fertilisers altogether on many farms. Recommended DVDs: Stipa, David Davidson, True Soil Fertility, most of Elaine Ingham DVDs.

How can I control weeds in pasture without spraying? There are a number of ways that this can be done. By lifting the soil fertility and biological functioning as discussed above and by minimizing the effect of synthetic chemicals weeds can be reduced to low numbers where spraying is no longer necessary.

Secondly by managing animal grazing so that 100% soil coverage is maintained at all times

How can I control weeds in cropping?

Similar to the above but it requires more practice. The main proven way is by cover cropping to get 100% soil coverage and by practicing the technique of pasture cropping. You can check out the Farming Secrets blog where there is an hour long video by Jay Fuhrer showing this method.

How can I establish native pasture?

There are a number of ways, the most common being to heavily graze with a high stocking rate for a short time to create some soil disturbance while leaving the soil 100% covered **even if there does not appear to be any native pasture**. Then rest the area for 150 days at least. Native grasses have been reported to have stayed dormant for some 50—70 years.

What is wrong with No Till?

Isn't it only minimal disturbance of the soil which is good? Yes BUT it is only after nuking the soil with chemicals. It is not best practice.

What is wrong with this picture?



This sign is all too common enough. Why does it worry us? Just think what rich compost could be made. Why sell off your nutrients?

Want to have a chat. Have a question? Just give Hugo a call on 1800 800 466 to find out your best options. Do it today! Better still join and become a Farming Secrets Member NOW!

WEEDS

Dandelion

Dandelion: *Taraxacum Officinale* are broadleaf, herbaceous perennials.



Since their leaves die back in winter, below ground they strike down a taproot up to 10" long.

When you see the word, officinale in a name, it means the plant has been prized for its medicinal properties. With dandelions the roots, flowers and "dandelion greens" not only have medicinal uses, but also culinary uses. Dandelion greens are, in fact, quite nutritious.

How to handle them?

Pulling the taproot as a means of dandelion removal is problematic. Thick but brittle, the taproot easily fractures -- and any fraction of the taproot that remains in the ground will regenerate.

Hugo picks 30 or so dandelion leaves every morning for us to eat raw. On reading the benefits of dandelion leaf I look forward to them every morning. If any are left over at the end of the day they go in our salad. Dandelion can be very beneficial for the liver and the gallbladder,

Solve the problem naturally!

Apply vinegar directly onto the leaves. Promoting lawn health is the best method of dandelion control. Another is to eat your weed problems away! Harvesting dandelion greens can save money. They're high in vitamins A and C, and iron. Why pay extra at the store to purchase foods with similar (or, often, inferior) nutritional value? For more info please go to the Farming Secrets store

www.farmingsecrets.com/fs

Homoeopathy On Line by Jean Belstead

There has been much flack recently about homoeopathics. Seems to be open season. General scientific take on homoeopathic remedies is, when analysed there is nothing in it that can be measured other than water and alcohol; therefore how could a few drops ever make any difference to the body, let alone heal? So, in their reckoning, if a person who takes homoeopathic remedies and their health improves, scientists call it faith healing, placebo, all in the mind, or worse still they say the person can't have had that illness in the first place.

Correct! There is nothing in a homoeopathic remedy that can be scientifically measured. What IS in it, is an energetic vibrational memory that can't be seen, heard, smelt, touched or tasted – or measured! When this energetic vibration resonates with the sick energetic vibration of a body, there comes about a healing. It awakens hope in the body – even Einstein said that. The body already knows how to heal, and given the correct vibration and circumstances it can heal itself.

We don't need to believe in vibrational medicine. Animals don't think about whether they need to believe in it. We don't have sceptical animals who walk up to the trough that's been dosed with homoeopathics to prevent footrot, and say to their mates: "Oi, I saw the boss put some of those funny drop things in the trough this morning, but I still think I'll get footrot this year". No, they just have a drink and think no more of it. And walk away without limping.

One of my clients told me last night: "I like your stuff, it works". My take on all this is, given homoeopathics can't be patented, after all they're nothing but alcohol and water (but we know better), the big blokes can't get their paws on them and make millions out of them. Unfortunately the mighty dollar rules the roost. Lets get back to a bit of good old-fashioned TLC. Mother Nature is available to all of us, not a few greedy people in white coats. I don't say that we can do entirely without vets and doctors, but what a wonderful thought it would be if they became healers, rather than practitioners at the beck and call of the pharmaceutical empire. My father told many people, quite matter-of-factly, that goats could see wind. You wouldn't believe how many people were convinced! Don't believe all that you hear. You don't need to believe me either. Prove it for yourself.

Cheers, Jean jbelstead@dodo.com.au

"Walk the Talk"

The 1st walk of the year featured Dr Christine Jones & Nicole Masters challenging the farmers at the Nutrisoil day to work out where do you start with biological farming.

Coming Soon!

Next "Walk the Talk" for Farming Secrets Members is highlights of Dr Mary Cole's talk to the NE CMA group at Oxley. It includes plant health disease management.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Featured Book Of the Month

By Sir Albert Howard
RRP \$40
See review Page 4

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Organic Victoria—Thriving Not Just Surviving

Victorian Organic Industry Forum (VOICe) Mar 6&7

We were asked to film and we heard the most wonderful array of speakers—lots of facts and figures on the industry including to the launch of Australia Post's Farmhouse Direct in association with Vic. Farmers' Market Assoc. It will all be on their website soon! Lastly we filmed **Liz Clay & Miranda Sharp** speaking at the CWA lunch for "The Year of the Australian Farmer" Great synergy!

Trekking around with Hugo and Helen

Last November found us dropping in for the night with members Peter, Jenny and their son Anthony Hammon who has come back to the farm. We had a great catch up and showed Anthony some of the earlier “Walk the Talk” DVDs about worms. The next day we headed up to Junee to visit Platinum member John Moloney who had gone Certified Organic and run into trouble with wild radish in his barley. He was also seeking advice on how to handle 200 tonnes of compost he had bought in. The heavens opened while we were there and continued while we were in Holbrook to film the **7th Annual Stipa** conference.

It was here we caught up with Graeme Hand CEO of Stipa and many wonderful members who love their native grasses. (See the enclosed for more details). Many with large holdings and basically have to learn to manage their feed through animal management. Thus this year the special speaker, Dr Fred Provenza who spoke from a deep knowledge and appreciation of animal and human feeding and behaviour.

In mid January we headed up to **Oxley** to film Dr Mary Cole’s **Soil Biology and Botrytis** forum. Mary included a good practical discussion both days and led a practical microscope course in conjunction with the Soil Foodweb principles of which she is a Director.

Then we joined forces once again with Agrisolutions at **Seymour Alternative Field Days** giving us the opportunity to complete our new DVD “**Easy Steps to Compost Teas**”. This is an ‘easy to follow’ demonstration by Gerhard Grasser of preparing the compost, brewing the tea and then finally using the microscope to check the results. It was again excellent to catch up with members and old friends from Vitec days as well as the Maddocks of Nutrisoil. Both Lyn and I had some wonderful massage treatment from DJ who appeared as people tend to do when help is needed :) Then it was off to Bega for the much anticipated “**Meeting the Challenge for Change**” organised by **Dr Christine Jones** with the able help of **Bruce**



& Heide Davison. We arrived in sweltering weather and looked forward to enjoying the nearby beach. Alas! It was not to be as the heavens opened and as the 2 days came to an end finally really dropping the lot!—the beginning of all the recent flooding. However it heightened the time together at dinner as **Tim Marshall** handed out the GAIA awards to well deserving recipients. Amongst those recognised for their service were **Colin Seis, Darryl Cluff, Tom Nicholas & Charlie Sexton** who all spoke of the wonderful work that they each have initiated. Key note speaker was **Garry McDouall** who challenged us with factual evidence of the need for change—food, fuel and finance. Very inspiring. More to come as we release the talks.

The Worm Farmer’s Diary

Just recently finished watching the excellent DVD produced  by Farming Secrets featuring Tony Evans and his Dairy Farming mates. I would like to clarify the situation when Elaine Ingham was asked whether adding worm juice to the compost heap would increase the fungal content of the compost. Elaine’s reply was that it would increase the food content in terms of humic, fulvic acid etc, but would not provide significant fungi. The problem is “What do we mean by “Worm Juice”? If we mean “Worm Leachate” i.e. the liquid that merely seeps through the worm bed, then in my opinion Elaine’s explanation was sound. However if we are referring to “Worm Tea” i.e. Liquid made from a base of quality worm castings, then fed and aerated for approx. 24 hours, that resultant commonly called “Worm Tea” would provide an excellent inoculation of fungi to the compost heap.

On another note last week I received a phone call from a Queensland Project looking to buy 3 tonnes of worms!!! Yes... that’s about 12 million worms and even at a low bulk price of \$40 per kg, that’s a lot of money, \$120K to be exact. Unfortunately, didn’t know where one could access that many, but these projects will become more common and those guys already building up their worm numbers will be well placed to cash in. So if you haven’t already started..why not? (apologies to Gerry Harvey.)

That’s all for now, Cheers, David
davidd@aussiebroadband.com.au



Tigger Tales! for all her farmyard friends.

I often go for walks with Helen and Hugo and on the way we meet lots of other dogs. Some want to come up and exchange a sniff, others are champing on the lead to come closer while others have owners who ask if I’m alright (as if!) because they want to let their dogs off the leash..

*I often don’t like it. Helen can tell because as they are approaching I walk away from them in a wide circle. She read about that in the book: **On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals***

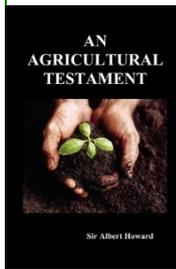
*In fact that book has helped both of them understand me more. But more than that, it teaches dogs how to understand other dogs. Which now leads me to remember that when I was a puppy I attended an **Alpha Dog Training School**. We all were trained and it was a lot of fun. They have even allowed me to put a copy of their training methods in the [Farming Secrets Store](#) Go to the **Free Section** **PS My itching is MUCH better :)***

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Simply return the form enclosed or visit our website at:
www.farmingsecrets.com

Book Review: An Agricultural Testament by Sir Albert Howard



Rating: ***** Is his best-known publication, and remains one of the seminal works in the history of organic farming agricultural movement. It focuses on the nature and management of soil fertility, and notably explores composting. "Sir Albert Howard certainly did not mince words nor did he dance around the subject of the destruction of soil fertility by modern farming techniques. The very first sentence of chapter 1 sets the scene for the entire book, **"The maintenance of the fertility of the soil is the first condition of any permanent system of agriculture."** He accurately depicts the soil as being the Earth's 'capital' and upon reflection one would come to agree that all of mankind's wealth have originated from the soil. In the same regard I will have to state the Earth's future population and prosperity (or lack thereof) will be determined by whether or not we can regain the courage to recognize and act on the eternal truth of Nature" Anon There is a **FREE** download of Sir Albert Howard's Book at: <http://farmingsecretsblog.com> **RRP \$40**



GOLD NUGGET

Hi to our valuable "Farming Secrets Club" members both new and old. Are you enjoying your exclusive **Gold Nuggets**? **Can Healthy Eating Affect How Long You Live? Can you add 14 years to your life expectancy by choosing to eat a nutritious diet?** ended a series on food.

"I'm not talking about losing (agricultural) diversity in the same way that you lose your car keys. I'm talking about losing it in the same way that we lost the dinosaurs: actually losing it, never to be seen again." Cary Fowler is the 1st on a series on examining what is happening to our farming lands, who is taking over control. It is certainly not the farmer!

Healthy Soils Australia



Tom Nichols, Chairman, shows me his GAIA award at Bega. Tom, with Walter Jehne, has worked tirelessly seeking farmers who are

farming in such a way as to put the carbon back in the soils and to create healthy soils ongoingly.

"Farming Secrets Club" Members Corner!

A letter last year from member, Tom Stone, Cattle, Kingsholme, 4208 QLD: "Paddocks look great and we have just about finished spraying tea for the Spring.

We have 20 calves on the ground this spring so far and no sign of any difficult births. Must be due to the Free Lick minerals. Our neighbour has christened the free lick trailer as the "Lolly Trolley". The cows all look great even through winter and have shiny coats all the time now. So this makes it easy to pick if a cow is crook as the coat gets a bit rough and lacks sheen as we experienced recently with the Liver Fluke.

I really appreciate the DVDs and the Gold Nuggets. These ideas have helped enormously in being able to regenerate the health of this farm. We have now been using your services and ideas now for just over 14 months and in that time we believe we have doubled the quantity of grass in the paddocks just with some chook poo and the spraying of vermicompost tea sprays.

I put a shovel into the soil recently to see what penetration we can get as a gauge for pasture improvement. Well sadly it is still rock hard in most places as we are now coming out

of our dry period. However our density of grass cover has at least doubled over the last year. So with more time I am hoping we will get to sink the shovel blade deep into the soil and then I am hoping the grass will be knee deep. So after one year we have lots of encouragement from the obvious improvements to continue experimenting and persisting with the sprays. The Brix reading is now about 5% for the clover areas in all the paddocks while the native grasses are as low as 2%. However a long way short of 12% but still about 100% better than this time last year. Now the cows rush to the clover patches when they move into a new paddock so I know they appreciate the improvements. Next step is to buy a microscope. Have you any suggestions?"

Farming Secrets Members Lunch 2012

Members! Put the date in your diary for the next lunch to be held the week 27th—30th August when Elaine is in town along with a few other of our experts. Dates to be finalised. And due to your survey response we will be including a dinner as well the night before :)

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
