

Monto Leads the way in Pasture establishment

Over fifty graziers packed the Monto Town Hall to update their skills in sown pasture establishment in time for the coming wet season.

The full day workshop, hosted by the Burnett Catchment Care Association (BCCA) was part of Better Catchments; funded through Australian Government Caring for Our Country program. The workshop was presented by Queensland Primary Industries and Fisheries (QPI&F) Extension Officer, Damien O'Sullivan who is one of the few remaining specialists in pastures in the Burnett.

Mr O'Sullivan opened the floor to the keen attendees to share their successful and not so successful experiences with establishing improved pastures in the North Burnett. Mr O'Sullivan also discussed the tools available to graziers to assist in reducing the risk of pasture establishment such as "HowOften", a simple rainfall pattern predictor based on historical rainfall records.

As added enticement for the participants, each were offered the choice of two soil management incentives; either soil test vouchers or the computer mapping program "Phoenix" to enhance their grazing enterprises. Both were eagerly received.

After a great BBQ lunch put on by local agricultural business, Farmstuff, the crowd ventured into the heat to visit some local properties and discuss appropriate sown pasture species with the potential to be established when the season breaks.

BCCA Chairman, Paul Lobegeier said he was extremely impressed to see so many graziers in one room, all keen to be prepared once the rains do come.



Soil Health & Weeds Targeted in the Mary

The Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee is pleased to announce that the second round of the Better Catchments project is ready to roll out in the Mary River Catchment.

This project which will run from 2009 to 2011, builds on the achievements of the previous Rivercare, SuperGraze and Better Catchments projects delivered to landholders from 2005 to 2009.

This new round has changed priorities from round one, but will still aim at the broad objective of improving catchment health. The focus will be on improving on-farm sustainability by managing erosion issues, improving soil health, developing strategic weed control plans and encouraging the adoption of best land management practices across the Mary River Catchment.

The MRCCC project team will work with local landholders on two key priorities:

1. Promoting implementation of improved soil management practices targeting organic carbon, soil acidification, hillslope erosion etc.
2. Developing Property Pest Management Plans for Weeds of National Significance e.g Lantana, and a range of other significant weed plants.

The Better Catchments project is an initiative of the Burnett Mary Regional Group and is funded by the Australian and Queensland Governments through the Caring for our Country Program.

If you would like more information about the Better Catchments project and it's planned activities in the Mary Catchment, please give the MRCCC a call on 5482 4766.

Not a lot of love for African Lovegrass

The spread of the African Lovegrass weed throughout the North Burnett has prompted the North Burnett Regional Council to support the establishment of an African Lovegrass Action Group.

The Group aims to work with all levels of Government and individual landholders to create a management plan for African Lovegrass containment zones within the Auburn River/Jackie Smalls Creek Catchment areas.

At a recent lovegrass field day at Narayen Station, landholders stated that the weed is spreading throughout the region and has a large economic impact for their properties.

"African Lovegrass has no nutritional value for stock and because it's extremely competitive with other pastures species, leads to loss of production, lowering returns and potential lowering in land resale value. It's also a threat to our native grasses and the natural environment as it spreads quickly through its large viable seedbank," North Burnett Regional Council Mayor Joy Jensen said.

"The aims of the Action Group is to source funding for more research into how to manage this weed and to create a plan for the containment of the weed by North Burnett Regional Council within the designated Auburn River and Jackie Smalls Creek zones," she said.



"The group will also be lobbying State Government about listing African Lovegrass as a declared weed and Council to have it declared at a local level, conducting further management trials in conjunction with the Australian Agricultural College at Narayen and lobbying Main Roads and utility providers to spend more money on weed control," Joy said.

The Action Group consists of representatives from Biosecurity Qld, Main Roads, Landcare, the North Burnett Regional Council, Australian Agricultural College and several private landholders. For further information, please contact the African Lovegrass Action Group representative, Lee Dorahy on 4165 5751 or 0427 654 773.