



e-news

August 2008

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Top stories

Saltland Genie™ – almost out of the lamp and on the web



A new website known as the *Saltland Genie™* to help farmers make better decisions on how to productively manage their saltland pastures is only five weeks away from being online and ready to use.

Program 4 Leader **Dr Ed Barrett-Lennard** said ever since the Sustainable Grazing on Saline Lands (SGSL) program finished in 2007, **Warren Mason** and a small team have been working hard at putting *Saltland Genie* together.

“In a recent email to me, Warren noted that *Saltland Genie* had the potential to become Australia's greatest online expert on saltland management – and that Genie would certainly have more magic than anyone else in the field,” Ed noted.

“Having seen some of the preliminary material that Warren and the team have produced, I think he could be right.”

Saltland Genie will have all the information that farmers and their advisors need to grow saltland pastures on their properties. The website will work by having two different kinds of information available for visitors; generic information about the principles of production from saltland and more specific information for 11 different options available for saltland revegetation. In addition, *Saltland Genie* will have a decision-support tool to help diagnose the capability of saltland sites and recommend the best site solution based on information provided.

Warren's team expects to have *Saltland Genie* on-line by the 26 September where it will sit as part of the CRC's *Saltland Knowledge Exchange* project led by **Dr Nick Edwards**. The CRC will be

spreading the word about *Saltland Genie* when he goes online shortly.

* Ed Barrett-Lennard: (08) 6488 1506; egbarrettlennard@agric.wa.gov.au

New National Adoption Manager to be appointed



Retiring National Adoption Manager **John Powell**

CEO **Kevin Goss**, and National Adoption Manager **John Powell**, who has been leading the adoption function within the CRC on a part-time consultancy basis, have announced that a full-time National Adoption Manager will be appointed during the coming months.

John intends to scale down his involvement with the CRC, but will mentor the new National Adoption Manager over a transitional period. He will also be involved in other work with the Perennial Connections Team as required, while pursuing other consultancies and managing his sheep and wool property at Yass.

John expressed his appreciation for the opportunity the CRC and its staff have given him in taking the lead in extension and adoption over the last three years.

“From the top down, both CRCs have had a great working atmosphere, where collaboration and openness in dealing with difficult agricultural resource management issues are key values,” John said. “My involvement with the CRCs has clearly been the standout part of my consulting career to date.”

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From the CEO

As you read this short entry, **Kevin Goss** is taking a well deserved-break and about to head for a camping holiday in the tropical far-north Queensland. Kevin and his wife, Bron started their annual leave with their son’s wedding. Our best wishes and congratulations to Jad and Melinda on this special occasion.

Following last week’s CRC Board meeting, Kevin delegated most CEO matters to me, leaving important business such as his footy tipping, to his confidante Sarah. **Mike Ewing** has just returned, pride and body intact, from his overseas veterans’ cricket tour of the UK, and has returned in time to avoid the mints and spit scandal about to recharge the rivalry between Australia and England.

Now the other international elite sporting event of August is over, rest assured that the work of the CRC rolls on. As suggested in Kevin’s last E-News report, our efforts to secure more funding for our ‘elite’ scientists will focus on a submission to the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) by 5 September. The DAFF submission will aim to secure additional funding to build on the research strengths of our participants and ensure that we provide “real choices for farmers in a changing climate.”

This edition of E-News highlights the efforts of our key scientists and project participants to ensure that the work of the CRC is relevant and has impact. I’m sure that the case to DAFF will be compelling.

Please contact me if you have further questions or issues.

* Mark Stickells, Acting CEO: (08) 6488 1429; mark.stickells@futurefarmcrc.com.au

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Business matters

August has seen the KPMG auditors return to Head office and complete the majority of the 2007-08 financial year audit. They will return in the first week of September to carry out an audit of the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR) compliance tables and then begin assessing the CRC's in-kind contributions. During this time, KPMG will be contacting Participants to verify their in-kind submissions.

The first FFI CRC Annual Report is coming together and is expected to be signed off in late September by the CRC Board in readiness for its final submission to DIISR in late October. Project Leaders are reminded to forward their Progress and/or Final reports to **Julia Wilson** ASAP.

A WA-based Project Leader Training workshop was carried out on Monday 25 August where Board Member **Kathryn Adams** spoke to participants on how to put Intellectual Property (IP) in a CRC context.

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- * Mike Ewing, Research Director: (08) 6488 1876; mike.ewing@futurefarmcrc.com.au
- * Mark Stickells, Commercial Director: (08) 6488 1429; mark.stickells@futurefarmcrc.com.au
- * Christina Sanderson, Finance and Operations Manager: (08) 6488 1954; christina.sanderson@futurefarmcrc.com.au
- * Julia Wilson, Research Contract Manager: (08) 6488 1846; julia.wilson@futurefarmcrc.com.au

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Adoption & Commercialisation

Regional Partnerships Strategy developed

The Perennial Connections Team (Senior Executive and Adoption Managers) has developed a draft *Regional Partnerships Strategy* to complement the *Adoption Strategy*.

The *Regional Partnerships Strategy* maximises engagement between the CRC and regional interests, and through that engagement, attracts additional resources to the full spectrum of CRC activities and maintains the CRC's credibility and regional profile.

More specifically, the *Regional Partnerships Strategy* will provide pathways for regional interests to enter into relationships with the CRC in three ways – through regional adviser networks or as Associates or Partners.

- * **Regional adviser networks** engage with the CRC as knowledge recipients or exchangers. They don't contribute cash or in-kind resources to CRC-related activities and there is no formal documentation
- * **Associates** enter into an exchange of letters or an MOU with the CRC as knowledge brokers with special access to the CRC. Associates may or may not contribute resources to CRC-related activities
- * **Partners** do contribute cash and/or in-kind resources to CRC projects and instead enter into contracts with the CRC as project equity partners.

Following further developments, including a national consultative workshop in Adelaide on 18 September, the *Adoption Strategy* and *Regional Partnerships Strategy* are expected to be considered by the Management Committee at its October meeting.

State Adoption Manager responsibilities clarified

In developing the *Adoption Strategy* and *Regional Partnerships Strategy*, National Adoption Manager

John Powell and State Adoption Managers **Dave Bicknell** (WA), **Anna Dutkiewicz** (SA), **Austin Brown** (Vic) and **Peter Regan** (NSW), have clarified their roles and responsibilities.

The National Adoption Manager is responsible for overseeing and advising the Management Committee on progress towards adoption-related outputs and milestone targets in the Business Plan.

If necessary, and in collaboration with Project Leaders, the National Adoption Manager initiates adaptive action directed by Management Committee to ensure projects achieve output and milestone targets, and can also initiate reconsideration of targets within the Management Committee. Project Leaders have primary responsibility for achieving existing or revised targets.

State Adoption Managers assist the National Adoption Manager in implementing the *Adoption Strategy* and the *Regional Partnerships Strategy*. They are responsible for leading and coordinating adoption activities across projects relevant to regions wholly or predominantly within their State. They also assist with Project Leader reporting on adoption activities conducted with in-kind and cash resources within their State. State Adoption Managers report to the National Adoption Manager.

The roles and responsibilities of the new State Adoption Managers are quite different from the previous Node Manager positions. They are adoption-focused which require high-level skills in adoption and extension. As a result, some new appointments are expected to be made in the coming months.

For further information contact:

* John Powell: (02) 6226 5298; jpowell@optimalicm.net.au

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State Adoption Managers

SA

For further information contact:

* Anna Dutkiewicz: (08) 8303 9735; Dutkiewicz.Anna@saugov.sa.gov.au

WA

For further information contact:

* David Bicknell: (08) 9881 0222; dbicknell@agric.wa.gov.au

VIC

For further information about the Victorian Node contact:

* Austin Brown: (03) 9742 8728; Austin.Brown@dpi.vic.gov.au

NSW

For further information contact:

* Peter Regan: (02) 6391 3185; peter.j.regan@dpi.nsw.gov.au

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Communication

UWA Open Day profiles salt-tolerant wheat research



Dr Ed Barrett-Lennard shows off a pot of sea barleygrass at the UWA IOA Open Day

Promising field results from the CRC's *Salt-tolerant wheat* project have generated some media interest at the UWA Institute of Agriculture's Open Day earlier this month.

Read the transcript of Ed's interview with the *ABC's WA Country Hour* and the *Get Farming* and *Farming Ahead* articles about the Open Day.

CRC research gets profiled in Participant publications

August is turning out to be a month that CRC research graces the pages of its Participant publications:

- * The CRC's work on evaluating the potential of the group of native legumes known as *Cullen* in becoming a drought-tolerant fodder plant is a feature article in GRDC's *Groundcover* magazine
- * Page 15 of the August-September edition of AWI's flagship publication *Beyond the Bale* profiles CRC researcher **Hayley Norman's** work on assessing the ability for *Oldman Saltbush* to become a complementary food source for sheep during the drier summer and autumn months
- * A story on *EverGraze's* pasture studies at its Hamilton Proof Site in southern Victoria appears on page two of MLA's August edition of *Feedback*.

New publications on website

The publications section of the website has been expanded during August to include three new publications. They are:

- * A *brochure* to encourage investors to become involved in the *Mallee Harvester* project
- * The *Biodiversity in the Paddock Guide* that shows how to improve pasture biodiversity
- * The August edition of the CRC's external eNewsletter *efocus*.

For further information contact:

- * Greg Lawrence: (08) 6488 7353; greg.lawrence@futurefarmcrc.com.au

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Program activities

P1 Future Livestock Production

For further information contact:

- * Joe Jacobs: (03) 5561 9946; joe.jacobs@dpi.vic.gov.au

P2 Future Cropping Systems

For further information contact:

- * Alison Bowman: (02) 6938 1628; alison.bowman@dpi.nsw.gov.au

P3 New Woody Crop Industries

New Program Leader announced



Paul Turnbull (pictured above), from the Victorian Department of Primary Industries (Vic DPI), will soon take over the role of Program 3 Leader.

Paul is an experienced forester and project manager having progressed through a range of forestry jobs for more than 20 years. His background provides the CRC with a good understanding of the challenges facing the development of new woody crop industries including oil mallees. Paul's involvement in the Program will also add a Victorian element to the research that will provide a boarder national perspective.

After a period of familiarisation with the CRC, Paul will begin meeting with key people within the CRC that will help him determine the new operating environment for the Program.

Meanwhile, please welcome Paul to the CRC.

* Paul Turnbull: (03) 5441 7301; paul.turnbull@dpi.vic.gov.au

P4 Farming Saline Landscapes

For further information contact:

* Ed Barrett-Lennard: (08) 9368 3441; egbarrettlennard@agric.wa.gov.au

P5 Biodiversity & Water

For further information contact:

* Ken Wallace: (08) 9334 0341; ken.wallace@dec.wa.gov.au

P6 Economic, Social & Policy Analysis

For further information contact:

* David Pannell: (08) 6488 4735; david.pannell@uwa.edu.au

P7 Education & Training

For further information about the Education & Training program contact

* Scott Glyde: (02) 6933 2385; sglyde@csu.edu.au

For further information more information about our postgraduate studies contact:

* Daryll Richardson: 0409 312 574; drichardson@agaveeducation.com.au

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Snippets

Namoi CMA teams up with *EverGraze*



EverGraze pasture monitoring begins at the Kelvin supporting site

By coordinating three Supporting Sites located at Tambar Springs, Kelvin and Currabubula in NSW, the Namoi Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is helping *EverGraze* test the mettle of its new perennial grazing systems.

Each site will investigate the different *EverGraze* grazing management systems aimed at improving production benefits from native perennial grass systems while improving the farm environment outcomes of better water management, biodiversity and soil health.

Namoi CMA Soils Officer **Simon Turpin**, and *EverGraze* Coordinator for the Namoi CMA, said the appeal of *EverGraze* is that it is landholder driven.

“Graziers join producer groups with whom they share a common problem with the aim of reducing the factors that constrain production on their farms,” Simon said.

The property, owned by **Mac** and **Robyn Howarth**, crops on the flat country and has grazing on the slopes and hills. The Howarths are joining *EverGraze* with the aim of improving the quantity and quality of their native pastures and to maximise production in their self-replacing Merino and crossbred sheep enterprises. A combination of a change in grazing management with the addition of fertiliser and sub-clover will also be investigated to determine their effects on their native pasture.

To find out more about *EverGraze*’s current activities, including their up and coming Field Day, visit their [website](#).

National Science Week launches new catchment detox game



Catchment Detox is a new online simulation game designed to entertain and educate people about the complex challenges required to achieve a sustainable catchment launched this month as part of National Science Week celebrations.

The game allows players to manage their own virtual catchment by making choices about natural resource management to improve its health while remaining financially sustainable. Radio segments played during the game coupled with links to useful material provide players with relevant information

to help them make better decisions.

Catchment Detox is a national initiative of the ABC, in partnership with eWater, the CSIRO, the DIISR and National Science Week.

2009 APEN Conference moves to WA



The Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN) will hold its 2009 International Conference from 11 to 13 November in Busselton, WA.

The conference will bring together a diverse selection of extension professionals from around the world and across a range of disciplines and sectors including agriculture, community development, health, natural resource and environmental management to share ideas and experiences.

APEN holds a range of events for its members and non-members each year across Australia with a focus on natural resource management, sustainability and the practice of extension in agriculture and the environment.

For more information, visit the [APEN website](#).

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Coming Events

Agriculture in a Changing Climate: the New International Research Frontier

3 September 2008, Canberra, ACT

Email: crawford@mira.net

Further information: www.crawfordfund.org/events/conference08.htm

13th International Lupin Conference

14-18 September 2008, Fremantle, WA

Email: conference@lupin.org

Further information: www.lupins.org

14th Australian Society of Agronomy Conference

21-25 September 2008, Adelaide

Further information: <http://www.agronomy.org.au/events/2008/>

EverGraze Proof Site Open Day (Albany)

October 2008 (tbc), Albany, WA

Email: psanford@agric.wa.gov.au

EverGraze Proof Site Open Day (Wagga Wagga)

3 October 2008, Wagga Wagga, NSW

Email: mfriend@csu.edu.au

EverGraze Proof Site Open Day (Orange)

15 October 2008, Orange, NSW

Email: warwick.badgery@dpi.nsw.gov.au

STIPA Native Grasses Association Inc 2008 Conference

9-11 November 2008, Horsham Town Hall, Victoria

Email: vivienne.stipa@bigpond.com

EverGraze Proof Site Open Day (Hamilton)

12 November 2008, Hamilton, Vic

Email: ralph.behrendt@dpi.vic.gov.au

EverGraze Proof Site Open Day (Albury-Wodonga)

25 November 2008, Albury-Wodonga, NSW, Vic

Email: meredith.mitchell@dpi.vic.gov.au

2009 CRCA Conference

May 2009, Canberra, ACT

Email: ceo@crca.asn.au

Further information: www.crca.asn.au

2009 APEN Conference

11-13 November 2009, Busselton, WA

Further information: www.apen.org.au

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Feedback is always welcome: greg.lawrence@futurefarmcrc.com.au