

Media release Biological Farmers of Australia, 26 October 2010

Biological Farmers of Australia Tasmanian Roadshow: Biological farmers farewell agrichemicals in favour of naturally healthy soil

Local farmers will have the chance to hear from successful A-grade growers with firsthand knowledge and advice on biological farming when the Biological Farmers of Australia Roadshow rolls into Launceston on Thursday 4 November.

Increasingly, producers are finding it easier to move towards biological production, particularly with an increasing number of growers with proven practices to learn from.

Travelling to Tasmania for the first time in several years, the Roadshow will be held at Kreglinger Wine Estate at Pipers River near Bridport. The Roadshow aims to link growers with the right tools and research on organic farming, with presentations from successful Tasmanian and Victorian growers.

General Manager Holly Vyner says there is a growing wave of interest in organic and biological farming, which has led to demand for the Roadshow in a dozen locations this year.

“There is now much more support available for farmers in terms of alternative products on the market as well as established methods which can assist growers to increase the biology in their soil. Growers are particularly interested in lowering their reliance on agrichemicals and increasing their yields and quality of produce and essentially this is what biological farming is all about.”

Ms Vyner says that often the move to biological production will open up opportunities for supplying new markets and even gaining a premium, particularly for those who opt to take the organic certification route.

Bruce McCormack, Roadshow host and chief viticulturist of award winning Kreglinger Wine Estates, will share his knowledge of managing seven vineyards at various stages of organic production. Additionally, he will be able to show conventional and organic vineyards on site at Kreglinger Wine Estates.

“There is a difference between saying you are organic and actually being organic. Organic production is about learning and putting into practice organic agricultural production principles and techniques. Organic production takes practice, and with practice comes knowledge and the realisation that it is possible to improve your land, fruit quality and commercial profitability,” Mr McCormack said.



Key speaker on the day, Mr Steve Skopilianos is the director of Keilor Valley Farms, a family business that for many years was a major distributor of salad to caterers and restaurants in Melbourne before converting to biological farming and gaining organic status. Now under the new brand name Ladybird Organics, the business is supplying supermarkets and independent retailers with fresh salads using award-winning packaging.

“As a father of three children it’s important to me to be able to provide food free of chemicals and with a great fresh taste. We use modern technology available to us and combine this with traditional methods of generations past to grow a consistent product that is true to nature,” Mr Skopilianos said.

Aside from practical farming advice, the BFA Roadshow is often known to be an entertaining day and holds all promise of the quality food catering one would expect from being hosted by a quality winery.

The BFA Roadshow will be held on November 4, starting at 8.30am and finishing at 4pm. The total cost including catering is \$45 pre-booked and \$50 on the day with a further discount for BFA members.

All interested should reserve their place on the day by calling the BFA on 1300 331 309.

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