



BFA Media Release 12<sup>th</sup> November 2008

# Leading soil Doctor shares sustainable farm secrets at Organic Roadshow

## - Armidale Fri 28<sup>th</sup> & Coffs Harbour Sat 29<sup>th</sup> November 2008

Farmers who want to know how to get the most from their land can get the biological dirt from Dr. Maarten Stapper at the Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA) Armidale and Coffs Harbour Organic Roadshows this month.

An ex-senior scientist with CSIRO, Dr. Stapper will share his knowledge on how to make the most of soils using alternative farm methods to 'hard chemical' applications.

"There is currently a real hunger from farmers to know more about productive land management which is not dependent on intensive chemical application," says Dr. Stapper.

"I will discuss simple biological soil solutions that can be utilised everyday in an effort to wean properties off synthetic chemicals where they are unnecessary or detrimental."

"It's a back-to-the-basics lesson in land, biology and the benefits of biodiversity".

Dr. Stapper, who began a career in science and agriculture more than forty years ago, is an expert across a wide spectrum of agricultural areas including wheat agronomy and the use of information technology in farming.

Now, he is passionate about the part biological farming methods could play in the future.

"I was always drawn towards soil biology because I realised early it was the life in the soil that was driving the entire production system," says Dr. Stapper.

"And I observed within most conventional farm systems the potential of biology and nature was limited with every application of synthetic fertilisers and chemicals on crops and pastures."

He says building stronger soil naturally will ultimately lead to more productive farming.

"In 'dead soil' where carbon levels are low, land can't adjust to climatic variation.

"In living soil, built on organisms capable of adapting to their environment, it can.

"Now, I want to work interactively with growers to help them realise how they can use this information."

He says soil health is not just about the environment.

"It is also about profitable farming - lowering inputs and associated costs, making plants and land more resilient and efficient and utilising natural resources for increased productivity.

He says leading organic and biological farmers working to stimulate soil biology are achieving the same yields as their conventional neighbours.



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“For so long, the old doctrine was organic will give you half the yield – and it’s just a myth. Now we’re seeing properties under organic management return the same yield, with the same stocking rate using methods that don’t damage the natural resources all farmers rely on.”

**Hear more on how to stimulate soil from Dr. Maarten Stapper at the BFA’s Organic Roadshows!**

**When? Armidale:** Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 8.30am – 3.30pm **Coffs Harbour:** Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November, 8.30am – 3.30pm

**Where? Armidale:** New England Regional Art Museum, Kentucky St, Armidale, NSW **Coffs Harbour:** Coffs Harbour Racing Club, Howard St, Coffs Harbour

**RSVP:** Contact BFA on (07) 3350 5716 email [info@bfa.com.au](mailto:info@bfa.com.au) to register interest  
Visit [http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec\\_ID=150](http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec_ID=150) for more information.

ENDS

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The BFA has a vision for organic industry growth and education in Australia. Ask about your copy of the Organic Industry Market Research Report to see how the organic industry in NSW is achieving its goals! More information is available at [http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec\\_ID=260](http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec_ID=260)



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