

BFA Release 19th November 2008

Farms that fend for themselves?

**Find out how at the BFA Organic Roadshows - Armidale
Fri 28th & Coffs Harbour Sat 29th November 2008**

Finding the farm systems that work best in uncertain climatic times for NSW is something Rob Fenton, head lecturer from the Riverina National Environment Centre, has done for 25 years.

He'll share the current results of a 15 year, 400 acre certified organic farm project conducted by the Centre with participants at this month's BFA Organic Road shows in Armidale and Coffs Harbour.

"The project was devised with issues like climate change and peak oil in mind.

"When we began it was obvious agriculture was going to need to change for future conditions.

"We've invested a lot of effort in learning how to help farms sustain themselves – particularly in the Riverina region which has seen above average losses in rainfall."

He says for the first time farmers were realising organic and biological farm systems actually worked.

"I've known that for a while!" he says.

"But the growers asking questions now are certainly not restricted to organic – it's anyone looking for alternative answers to the problems they see recurring on-farm in a new environment".

He says he wants to provide people with practical methods to improve agricultural efficiencies.

"Everything from managing soil for high levels of organic matter, to best use of scarce resources -slowing water as it moves through the farm landscape - to improving industrial energy use."

He says the aim is to have farms functioning at an environmentally autonomous level.

That is, he explains, "Having a farm that functions in accord with the eco-system to the point where it is doing things for you."

A short overview of the Centre's one-of-a-kind organic farm management diploma will also be provided.

"We've designed the only flexible, long-distance, hands-on organic farming course available in Australia which actually allows students to create a working farm management plan that can be used in the organic certification process."

He says it's important those considering using organic farm techniques feel technically supported.

Find out more at the BFA's Armidale and Coffs Harbour Organic Roadshows!



Quality
Endorsed
Company

**BIOLOGICAL FARMERS OF
AUSTRALIA CO-OP LTD**
ABN 75 699 664 781

HEAD OFFICE · BRISBANE

PO Box 530 766 Gympie Rd
CHERMESIDE QLD 4032
Ph: +61 (0)7 3350 5716
Fax: +61 (0)7 3350 5996

info@bfa.com.au

SOUTHERN DIVISION OFFICE

PO Box 503
NURIIOOTPA SA 5355
Ph: + 61 (0)8 8562 2769
Fax: + 61 (0)8 8562 3034

info@bfa.com.au

www.bfa.com.au



When? *Armidale:* Friday 28th November 8.30am – 3.30pm
Coffs Harbour: Saturday 29th 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 to register interest
Visit http://www.bfa.com.au/index.asp?Sec_ID=150 for more information.

ENDS

Media contacts:

Rob Fenton, Riverina National Environment Centre Ph: (02) 6043 6700
Jaime Newborn BFA Media Department Ph: (07) 3350 5716 ext. 222

To obtain images or find out contact details for organic farmers in your area contact BFA media officer Jaime Newborn ph: (07) 3350 5716 ext. 222; email marketing@bfa.com.au

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



Quality
Endorsed
Company

**BIOLOGICAL FARMERS OF
AUSTRALIA CO-OP LTD**
ABN 75 699 664 781

HEAD OFFICE · BRISBANE

PO Box 530 766 Gympie Rd
CHERMESIDE QLD 4032
Ph: +61 (0)7 3350 5716
Fax: +61 (0)7 3350 5996

info@bfa.com.au

SOUTHERN DIVISION OFFICE

PO Box 503
NURIOOTPA SA 5355
Ph: + 61 (0)8 8562 2769
Fax: + 61 (0)8 8562 3034

info@bfa.com.au

THE VOICE OF AUSTRALIAN ORGANICS

www.bfa.com.au