



Biological Farmers of Australia Media Release Friday 01st May 2009

BFA GETS THE SHOW ON THE ROAD...

AUSTRALIAN ORGANIC ROADSHOWS 2009 ROLL INTO SOUTH AUSTRALIA!

Organic food is the flavour of the future and the latest news on organic industry developments and opportunities will be on show at the Biological Farmers of Australia's Organic Roadshows 2009.

The South Australian Roadshow will be held on Saturday 16th May, offering inspiring and practical presentations by leading organic researchers and A-grade organic farmers, and the latest news on innovations, and national and international regulations.

South Australia is home to many award-winning and quality certified organic grain producers, grape growers, wine makers, dairies and other producers.

Winner of the 2008 Barossa Winemaker of the Year award, Troy Kalleske, is one local organic grape grower and wine producer who will offer his knowledge from years of experience, the benefits both for the producer and consumer and how to market the many positive aspects of organic wine.

Other presentations at the Adelaide Roadshow will cover a wide range of subjects with three acclaimed researchers and consultants making the journey from three other states, including Dr Maarten Stapper (former principal research scientist, CSIRO), Robert Fenton (award winning ecological agriculture and sustainable landscapes designer) and Hugh Level (Biodynamic and AgPhysics Adviser).

Increasing profits and yield of produce through wise soil management, insights into how and why biodynamic production works, designing food production systems for the greatest resilience to climate extremes, and updates on policy and standards changes and their affect on future market regulation.

Organic produce is holding its own and even increasing its market share in spite of the current economic downturn. Hot-from-the press survey results indicate a growing consumer awareness about organics – organic produce is found in one in six supermarket shopper's baskets and the Australian Certified Organic "bud" logo is the most widely recognised organic certification logo, increasing its identification with shoppers by 20% over the past year, according to a March 2009 survey by Mobium Group.

Organic operators are responding to increased consumer demand and accessing Organic Roadshows as an effective means of networking, gathering and sharing information, keeping up-to-date with latest consumer and industry trends and changes in regulations that impact the organic industry.



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General Manager Holly Vyner says the organic industry is providing an alternative way forward for agriculture, addressing large and growing issues facing the rural sector and environment.

“With many organic producers now with some decades of experience behind them and a maturing of the industry supply chain, the organic industry is all the time gaining grounds, proving to be at the cutting edge of food and fibre technology,” she says.

“It is encouraging to see in the BFA’s 2008 market research that the average age of organic farmers in Australia is significantly lower than the average farmer and that the average size of organic farms has increased. This latter result highlights long-term success in utilising organic systems and a trend towards professional farming at a larger scale.

“We encourage all with an interest to come along to the organic roadshows. The events receive brilliant feedback each year from organic and non-organic producers and others. Attendees gain great benefit from the information but also enjoy the way the day is run and speak about it for weeks afterwards.”

Roadshow details:

Roadshow: Adelaide, SA

When: 16 May 09, 8:30 – 4:00pm

Where: Comfort Hotel, Adelaide

Riveria 31-34 North Terrace, Adelaide

Cost: \$35 Members/ \$45 Non Members prepaid price (add \$5 to pay on the day)

Networking dinner: Adelaide, SA

When: 15 May 09, 7:30pm

Where: GoodLife Modern Organic Pizza

1/110 O’Connell St, North Adelaide

Cost: \$35 pp for a two course meal of organic pizza and 1 glass complimentary organic wine

(Victorian Roadshow locations include Daylesford 13th May and Swan Hill 14th May.
For further details on the complete roadshow calendar and program visit www.bfa.com.au or Ph. (07) 3350 5716.)

Ends

Nb: See short profiles on speakers following

All media are welcome at the roadshows!

Media images and interviews will be available for both events. Post event information will also be available.



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SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GUEST SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Dr Maarten Stapper

BioLogic AgFood; former principal research scientist, CSIRO

Topic: Managing healthy soils for viable agriculture

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. 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. Dr. Stapper will share his knowledge on how to make the most of soils using alternative farm methods to 'hard chemical' applications.

Hugh Level

Biodynamic farmer and AgPhysics Adviser

Topic: Overview of Biodynamic Production

Hugh Level, with a background in maths, physics, chemistry, biology and psychology, applies science to the subject of biodynamic agriculture, demystifying it and rescuing it from a cultish past. Hugh has more than three decades farming experience in all areas of agriculture, from market gardening to grazing and dairy. His presentation incorporates a memorable slide show, while he loves to answer questions and solve problems.

Rob Fenton

Natural Environment Centre (NEC), Riverina Institute of TAFE, Albury

Topic: Designing Food Production Systems in times of Uncertainty

Rob's background is in education, ecological agriculture and sustainable landscapes design. Rob and the NEC team have established a 400-acre organic farm designed specifically to explore organic farming in times of climate uncertainty. The impact of climate change is like introducing chaos theory to agriculture and Rob's charter is to develop strategies, within organic farming guidelines, for coping with the unexpected. Rob's presentation will include crop selection, managing organic matter in soil, working with the seasons and rotational grazing in times of climate uncertainty.

Dr Andrew Monk

BFA Director and Standards Committee Convenor

Topic: Organic Standards and Organic Certification; where to from here?

For more than 20 years the members of the organic industry have enjoyed ownership of and consultation with standards setting processes via their representative body, the BFA. BFA is an industry leader in formulating and formalising organic standards and in establishing organic certification processes via subsidiary programs such as Australian Certified Organic and Organic Growers of Australia. BFA's work in these areas assists in maintaining the integrity of organic market claims, while establishing a strong base of consumer trust in the value and reliability of certified organic produce.



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The essence of organic production, which includes animal welfare, prohibition of the use of synthetic additives, GMOs, hormones and antibiotics, etc, is under constant threat of dilution and change. Changes in government and policies, exclusively dollar- driven imperatives and fraud all add to the cocktail of challenges BFA manages to ensure the protection of the organic pedigree.

Dr Monk's talk will explore the steps BFA takes in its unrelenting crusade to ensure the integrity of the organic marketplace, industry ownership of standards and most importantly, the protection of the interests of the growing number of satisfied consumers committed to the organic cause.

Troy Kalleske

Kalleske Wines

Topic: Organic vines and wine – Just do it!

Troy Kalleske is a seventh generation Barossan. Among his many achievements he has achieved a BA Agricultural Science (Oenology) Degree -with distinctions, has been awarded three scholarships, studied and worked overseas and most recently as been awarded the "2008 Barossa Winemaker of the Year". Troy is rapidly gaining recognition as one of the Barossa's and Australia's best young winemakers.

Troy's presentation will outline what it means to be an organic grape/wine producer and some tips on how it is achieved, while demonstrating that it does not have to be difficult or costly to be organic and that there are real benefits to both the producer and the customer – from an environmental, financial and quality perspective.

Lastly, Troy will provide his suggestions as to how to market organic wine and use the many positives of being organic to your advantage.

Major Sponsors:

Chris Hockley

Seasol International Pty Ltd

Topic: Discovering the benefits of kelp

Seasol International will be presenting the major benefits of kelp, fish and humic among other allowed inputs in organic farming systems.

As manufactures of these products for over 30 years, the company has had vast experience in the beneficial use of different inputs for every crop and pasture type.

As verified by Soil Foodweb Institute research, kelp, fish and humic products are most beneficial for both large and small operations, in improving soil biology and microflora resulting in more plant available nutrients being released from the breakdown of applied organic matter. This in turn produces better quality plants and yield outcomes.

Peter Maddern

CEO of Fishers Creek Rock Dust Minerals

Topic: Remineralising soil

It is well established that remineralising the soil is a positive way to boost yields and reduce the need for annual fertilizer supplements. But why does it work and how does that translate into economic gains for organic growers in terms of yield and quality?



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Peter Maddern, CEO of FCRD Minerals, puts this into context through a review of FCRD's trial data over the past four years, covering everything from citrus and olives to pasture and grapes and many forms of vegetables.

FCRD Minerals is a balsaltic volcanic rock from North Queensland, high in silica, iron, magnesium and calcium that has been shown to be highly available to a wide range of crops. When composting just doesn't always do it, remineralising the soil may be the missing ingredient to make your organic farm meet its targets.

ENDS

For more information contact:

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

The BFA is working to improve organic industry growth and education in Australia. Ask about your complimentary copy of the Australian Organic Market Report to see how the organic industry is achieving its goals! More information is available at www.bfa.com.au



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