

Renowned bioregional planner brings change close to home at Guyra

PROFESSOR DAVID Brunckhorst says he's putting his money where his mouth is – trialling biological and sustainable farm methods on a small grazing property near Guyra, NSW.

If anyone knows the theories, he does – David has been awarded twice internationally for his work in bioregional planning (developing methods of sustainable interaction between human society and the natural environment).

“I'm interested in looking at how whole systems work together at regional scales and believe this is one way forward for farmers in the future,” David says.

“On our own property we've done a lot of work restoring creek areas, building (nature) corridor areas, protecting natural areas where it is most beneficial to do so for the whole landscape and increasing our pasture diversity.

“We have encouraged and worked together with our neighbours because eco-systems function on a landscape scale – across boundaries and paddock gates.”

1. Creek re-vegetation: Neighbouring properties with creek access have together planted around 10,000 trees and shrubs on a 2.5km-3km stretch of river over a period of several years to help improve river water quality and flow.

Water flow was also slowed via the introduction of small pools; and cattle were restricted from accessing the creek instead relying on a trough serviced by a pipe laid through the middle of the property.

“Our creek had channelised and head-walled. We wanted to stop water rushing through and eroding land during periods of rain. We created small rock and log ramps which allowed it to pour gradually into pools and begin depositing sediment for a more robust creek bed,” David says.

He says the water is now visibly clearer and research shows it is cleaner, too.



LEFT Electric tape and fencing are the inputs of choice for Professor David Brunckhorst, Guyra, NSW.

“By filtering through these zones I would estimate we have improved the water quality in terms of its chemistry make-up and faecal count by about 300%. It's close to world water drinking standards.

“There is also now a significant rate of returning fauna – lots of frogs, birds and snakes that aren't being exposed to contaminated resources.”

2. Pasture diversity and cell cropping for climate resistance: Investment and energy has been spent in building up a large variety of native and introduced grass species (left from previous owners) in pastures.

“We've found the higher the diversity of pasture grasses we have, the more resilience we have. Different grasses seed at different times; they have different responses to periods of frost or dry/wet times and they are able to adapt to changing circumstances, which is important in a variable changing climate.”

“We put our resources into fencing and piping infrastructure, rather than chemical inputs and the results are competitive and sustainable.”

Cattle are grazed in very small areas for short intensive periods through a long rotation. “We graze 50 or so head on about 70 acres (30 acres are set aside for the creek protection and other native vegetation).

“Such numbers would traditionally be considered to be overgrazing but because the land can be divided by electric tape temporary fencing into a large number of small paddocks (up to 70 depending on rainfall) each area has 80-150 days recovery before being grazed for two or three days. That's ample time to build up large quantities of biomass, which then is trodden back into the ground by the cattle, returning organic matter into the soil naturally.”

While not certified organic at this time, chemicals and drenches are bypassed to ensure the biological activity of the soil can be developed and maintained. “The long grazing rotation also breaks parasite cycles,” says David.

He says the success of the system is simply as a result of a shift in thinking and investment – “We put our resources into fencing and piping infrastructure, rather than chemical inputs, and the long-term results and productivity are very competitive and ultimately more sustainable.”



Growers tell their own story

"Sir, my story is great news for us. I have been growing bananas for 20 years and have never had yields like the ones I am having since I started using Organica's full fertilizer program including **Greenfert N Infused Humaboost+ microbiology** and **Liquid N Microbe-feed**. When my agronomist told me about Organica's products I decided to allocate 10 acres to the program last year. This year the entire farm is now using the program and we are well on the way to cutting the best crop I have ever grown. The quality, taste, storage life and yields are first class. Under the direction of Organica and their agronomist we have changed our growing practices. We are now doing things to the soil to protect it and the microbiology rather than ignore, and sometimes destroy it. It is an amazing change and I am enjoying being a farmer again."

Sincerely, **Andrew P., Banana Grower - Nth Qld**

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Growers Comments

Chilli spray kept the birds away!

- The birds and bats were sending me broke. Organica ChilliWax kept them off the crops.
Ian T. - Nth Qld
- Organica's Liquid N made all the difference to yields.
- N+Si infused with N fixing microbes (Humaboost-N) lets nature put nitrogen back into my soils for free.
- I have improved my profits using Organica's products over the years.
- What a great product Fish'n'Kelp is.

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New Product

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3% Nitrogen infused
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Omega's + Micronutrients +
N Fixing Biology.

Last season we picked the best watermelons we have ever grown. Sweet, good colour, heavier and best of all we almost doubled production, thanks to Organica's products. This season I plan to use exactly the same Greenfert program developed by Organica. A base preplant with pre digested Liquid Lime, Phos-S- Si- Cal, Humaboost, Liquid N12, and Hi K and Fish n Kelp to prepare the soil for planting. The pre plant Micro fine Calcium and Phos-S-Si-Cal will provide enough P,Ca,S, and Silica until flower set. Followed by weekly trickle applications of Greenfert N-12 and Humaboost for Nitrogen Carbon, amino's and microbes to fix N, and a weekly foliar spray of N12, Hi K, and Fish'n'Kelp. Last season we found this program provided enough nutrition to adequately supply the crop and fill the melons.



Cattlecoat helps keep this herd of dairy cattle free from Buffalo Fly annoyance.

For most pests Pyganic was successfully used for control. When we cut open our first melon the taste was worth the effort. Our clients were very happy and we did get a premium price because of the quality and flavour. Production costs were no more than in previous seasons. The bonus will be we pick longer, increasing our production per acre thanks to Organica's unique products. This season we will also use Organica's program and products on our mangoes and other crops.
Carl H. - N.T.

Cattlecoat

This has been the worst fly season I have seen in many years. **Cattlecoat and back rubbers** have saved my animals from the torment of buffalo fly annoyances for 5 years. Cattlecoat deodorises the cattle, completely changing their odour. They settle down immediately after they use the back rubbers, even the horses use the rubbers for relief. I can also see a great improvement. My cattle and calves are putting on weight and are more content.

*Ian S., Trickle Creek
4 Organics - Qld*



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Organica Sunblok Crop screen has reduced fruit temp. and sunburn on my mangoes and field crops. It extended my season by over a month and midday fruit temperature was 14 deg C cooler. It's removed easily and I could see an overnight improvement in the crop.
Mr. R Hogan - N.Q.



ORGANICA AUSTRALIA

Sustainable Agriculture

Slacks Creek, Bris. Q

Phone 07 3290 5440

Mobile 0402 856 924

Fax 07 3290 5443

organica.australia@yahoo.com.au

Weeds were a major problem on my vineyard especially grasses. Organica's Horticultural Vinegar has helped cut down the weeding and the cost (see pic above). Even large weeds are less of a problem as I simply spray to the base of the weeds. Pumping a knapsack sure beats chipping.
Joseph Warner - NSW