

Healthy Soils Webinar

Sharing information on soils



Join us online for an interactive workshop to discuss key soil issues with experienced evidence-based soil experts with our MLA Healthy Soils Groups.

Tuesday 27th July 2021, 9am-12pm (AEST)

About the webinar

Healthy productive soils are the aim for most farming businesses. There is lots of soil information out there, some of it is old advice, some of it is new and trending, and can be conflicting and confusing of what is best for your' farming system. This webinar is a way to cut to the chase and find out what are the best ways backed by evidence. This event brings experts and producers together who have been working on three key areas, nutrients, soil acidity and soil organic carbon. The interactive webinar and follow up information, will give you a chance to have your soil questions answered.

Soil Topics:

- **Fertilisers** - Mark Farrell, CSIRO Agriculture & Food

Dr Mark Farrell is a Principal Research Scientist at CSIRO Agriculture & Food, where he leads the Biogeochemistry Team. His research probes fundamental soil processes and their interactions with plants, particularly carbon and nitrogen. Mark was part of the team that undertook one of the biggest controlled examination of biological soil inputs in Australia involved field testing 38 products including manures, humates, composts and bio-chars across 5 states to study efficacy, understanding and impact on soil microbial communities.

- **Soil Acidity & Liming** - Jason Condon, Charles Sturt University

Dr Jason Condon is Senior Soil Scientist with Charles Sturt University and has more than 20 years experience working in soil science research and education. He has been involved in the project "Managing subsoil acidity" which involved 2 main research sites (Cootamundra and Rutherglen) and numerous regional sites across southern NSW and Victoria. Jason has become renowned for his work on acidity band identification, causation and treatment using liming. He makes a complex soil chemistry topic easy to understand.

- **Soil Organic Carbon & Management** - Susan Orgill, NSW DPI

Dr Susan Orgill has worked as a soil projects officer with NSW DPI since 2005 and on soil carbon research from 2012. Her PhD investigation was on the effect of perennial pasture management on carbon accumulation in soil of southern NSW. Susan continues to work on farm management to increase soil organic carbon. Susan delivers farm ready research in a highly motivating and engaging way. Susan will not only give you direction on how to build organic carbon but to keep it there and not let the "soil bugs" eat it.

- **Key Learnings from the Healthy Soils Discussion Groups**

We have asked our experts the HARD Questions check out our scenarios posed to our presenters over the page.

Register by Monday 26th July:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZcsduGurzkpE9ZDsIbDMklut1IAYNBUAusZ>

If you have any questions or would like more information contact:

Lisa Miller, SFS E: lmiller@sfs.org.au or M:0488 600 226

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We have asked our experts to discuss the following scenarios:

Fertilisers: Healthy soils are the foundation of a productive and profitable grazing system. In the past the focus on achieving a healthy soil and pasture has been meeting sufficient levels of available nutrients by fertilising. However today some producers are querying the response they are getting from their traditional fertilisers given the money they spend; fertiliser just doesn't seem to work like they used to. Understandably many question if they are getting good value for the fertiliser investment. When combined with recent discussion around achieving balanced soil condition, holistic soil management, feeding the soil bugs and 'natural' fertilisers, it is not surprising many of us are wondering what's the right way to go.

Soil Acidity: Some of the soil experts are saying that our current liming topsoil pH targets are much too low and won't stop subsurface acidity from forming. But liming is expensive and producers/advisors are unsure if they can justify spending money on more lime, especially when lime is not the only limiting factor. Plus, it doesn't look like the lime is moving, so is it worth it? Are these new targets just for "good country," and protecting sown pastures, what should producers do about poor pastures or hill country? If producers already have acid subsoils, should they just live with it or try to fix them. Plus aren't soils naturally acid anyway, is it such a big deal?

Organic Carbon. Carbon, it's all that is currently talked about. My kids want me to do something to help the environment and there seems to be lots of benefits in improving soil carbon and I don't want to miss out if there is money to be made from carbon credits or benefits to be had. But I hear it's tricky to change levels and to tell if you are, you need to do lots of testing over a long time or test carbon fractions. I'm not sure that my carbon levels are even that bad and that its worth lifting them. How do I even tell and if I do try and improve, what's the best way to improve soil carbon? The neighbours are putting on compost and I have heard about special pasture renovators and even biological stimulants to increase soil carbon.

Brought to you by:



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