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Visit [www.mlrf.asn.au](http://www.mlrf.asn.au) to see photos in more detail

## Firewood Expo

In April at the Strathalbyn racecourse, more than three hundred attended the forum and saw the demonstrations of harvesting and processing equipment.

If you missed out, visit [www.mlrf.asn.au](http://www.mlrf.asn.au) and/or get the CD for only \$5. It contains the presentations on the harvesting trials, viability analyses and a video of Greg Traeger's market overview. Phone Peter or email [pbulman@bigpond.net.au](mailto:pbulman@bigpond.net.au).

See below for interest in MTG course.

A partnership between MLRPF and ForestrySA with sponsorship from AHHA.



## What's happening

**Northern field day with a new-grower focus**  
Springton General Store, 10am, Sunday July 24th for an opportunity for new growers to talk to those who are a year to two further down the track; followed by BYO BBQ

Also, see **Chainsaw Course** on p2.

## Master Tree Growers Course update

About 25 attended the March session at Mt Barker — past Master Tree Growers, members of the national committee and a few new faces.

Andrew Stewart inspired us with the transformation of his landscape in the Otways — forestry from 0.6% to 13% of the catchment from 1990 to 2002; trees on recharge areas from 05% to 17%; veg with wildlife corridors from 2 to 35; area sheltered from 17% to 57%.

Rowan Reid showed a video of the milling of his large-diameter fast-grown high-pruned shining gum (*E nitens*) logs.



Richard Moore outlined the WA hardwood sawlog program — culminating from 20yrs of research highlighting the importance of 'growing space' on diameter growth.

Marg Scott outlined the coordination of farm forestry 'training' that's happening in WA

Quite a number 'convoyed' to Tony Bookman's timberbelts recently wide-spaced and high-pruned by Chris Brooks (photo).

Of the 120 people who filled out a registration form at Firewood Expo to find out how people heard about the event, why they had attended and if they were interested in attending a Master Tree Growers course — 73 did express interest. The next step will be for Peter, Bob and Geoff Hodgson to organise an intro session — the details will be in the next Newsletter and posted to non-AFG members.

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## Firewood harvesting trial update



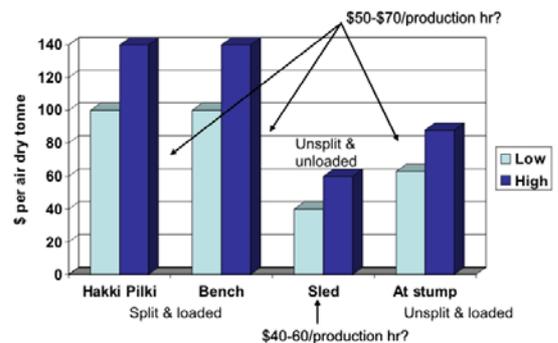
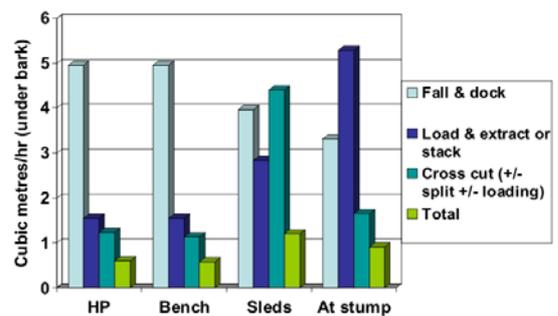
Without efficient small-scale harvesting systems, grower-managed marketing and a competitive harvesting and processing contractor base, growers will be unlikely to optimise returns from firewood.

Six prospective firewood contractors helped to evaluate the productivity of four small-scale harvesting and processing systems in small-diameter 17-year-old sugar gum plantation north of Keynton: a Scandinavian firewood mill; a ‘traditional’ saw bench; a low-cost sled system and an ‘at stump’ processing system (photo).



The time taken for the harvesting and processing steps was recorded and the production measured in under bark log volume and/or over bark log volume and/or green weight and/or ‘loose-stack’ volume. Enough data was gathered to define the relationships between these measurement units.

The charts illustrate the differences in production between the systems and a range of possible production costs.



It seems that the high-productivity low-cost innovative sled system developed in the 1980s by Kevin Teague at Bundaleer Forest has the potential to provide a suitable means of generating a net margin of at least \$50/tonne for growers.

Options being considered for further evaluation include: Processing of dry wood — for the sled and the ‘at stump’ systems to see what impacts that lighter weight but different cross cutting speeds have; The differences in productivity between small and large-diameter wood — to help determine the optimum small-end diameter for the sled or ‘at stump’ systems; Production figures for a larger scale production run for sled system, including splitting and using a front-end loader for loading — to put the system on a par with the other systems (minus splitting to compare with the ‘at stump’ system); Benchmark production run for chainsaw cutting blocks and manually loading into a trailer or ute — to see how much more efficient the mechanical systems are or are not; Extracting (snigging) tree-length logs rather than billets for non-at stump systems — to see how much extraction costs can be reduced for the bench system and Hakki Pilki.

## Chainsaw course

Due to an expression of interest for another course, Richard Bennett indicates that Stuart Rayson from the Logging Industry Training Association will run a two-day chainsaw course for up to 8 participants for \$695/day. Contact Richard on 0427 479 459 or benhol@bigpond.com to register.



Aged 67, Tony Brookman walked into the local ForestrySA office and much to the amazement of forester Rod Smith, Tony asked for help to plant a forest! Av. 19 y.o. diameter is now >46cm with some > than the 60cm limit on the MTG diameter tape!

C. Collins is looking for timber to cut and split for firewood. He is looking for 6ft logs (diameter up to 18") within 10 km of Goolwa. Ph. 8555 5859