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AUSTRALIAN FOREST GROWERS - REPRESENTING & PROMOTING PRIVATE FORESTRY

Mt Lofty—KI AFG Newsletter

What's happening ...



This October, Tony Dickson and I will be attending the biennial policy conference in Sydney on your behalves. Have you checked out the current policy document and are there any issues that you want us to raise?

The winding up of *Mt Lofty Private Forestry* will be complete following a final meeting in October. Our newsletter will now be printed by Christina and posted from Canberra.

Those attending the Gumeracha field day (see below) enjoyed some good discussions. Peter is right into the harvesting phase in his patch of pines at Mt Compass and has an update on page 2.

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Gumeracha Agroforestry Demonstration Area

Dale Wenham (PIRSA Forestry) recently ran a well organized, interesting and very informative field day.

The 100ha trial area planted from 1992-1999 now provides the opportunity for local would-be growers to assess species suitability and silvicultural options prior to embarking on a farm forestry enterprise.

We walked around the trail through the arboretum with 40 different tree species and provenances in 100 plots and talked about the relative performance of species.

Dale provided us with sample packets of sugar gum seed from the Kersbrook Seed Production Area which is producing seed from the best 37 trees out of 455. Trials show that the progeny produce trees with superior form and growth.



A convoy of four wheel drives took us to lunch and the Gumeracha Climate Change Trials which aim to observe changes in yield, vigour and fecundity with respect to climate change. Species and seed sources that have originated from climates that South Australia is expected to change to, are anticipated to perform better over time. Mountain ash (*E regnans*) has already failed but surprisingly, the local hardy species rough-barked manna gum (*E viminalis* ssp. *cygnetensis*) has also failed.

We didn't visit the area of failed blackwoods (*Acacia melanoxylon*) adjacent to the Chain of Ponds-Gumeracha road—a species almost totally unsuited for commercial production in our patch. After the field day however, Peter and Tony called in to Lenswood Research Centre where some root cuttings had been taken from the best individuals at Gumeracha before they died. The superb form, uniformity and vigour of the clones on the moist fertile site next to a creek was the exception to prove the rule!



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Harvesting on Peter’s ‘glacial sands’ at Bracken Ridge—Mt Compass



Thirty nine-year old pines in the background being clear felled, pine regeneration on the block cleared in 2007 and the debris from a burnt windrow in the foreground.



From a similar spot, a couple of days later with all trees felled except for edge trees.



The ‘wall of wood’ (pot of gold perhaps) waiting to be loaded and trucked to the mills.

Burning windrows/heaps following 2007 harvest



Loaded truck (~25t) ready to roll on the recently resurfaced track.

In the last operation with Hannco as broker, it was not possible to access ForestrySA’s markets to place all the wood, meaning that many logs had to be carted to the South East at the grower’s considerable expense.

This time, a supply agreement with ForestrySA means that all wood will be placed locally and harvested using their contractors who are having difficulty getting wood out of non-sandy areas due to the wet/average winter.

‘Small’ harvester in background thinning high-pruned wide-spaced fifteen-year-old trees from about 350-400 trees/ha to 250-300 trees/ha...



that looked like the young trees in the fore/mid-ground below in 1999.



The plans for the property are to manage the natural regeneration to create a mixture of open space in amongst the regen with clumps of gums—much like this area (the same area at a later stage in the pic below)

