

MACCY BIOCHAR MEMBER BULLETIN

No. 15 - December 2020

Auspiced by the Macclesfield Community Association Inc.

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HELLO ALL.

Welcome to our 15th Member Bulletin.

This bulletin reports on ideas arising from the 2020 biochar production summary; our plans for 2021; recent events; summer training courses and workshops; and Brian's 2021 "Specialty list".

BIOCHAR PRODUCTION

MACCYBIOCHAR	SCOREBOARD at		25/11/2020	
YEAR	2019 *	2020**	TOTAL	Units
BIOCHAR PRODUCED	1720	18451	20171	Litres
CARBON CAPTURED	222	2388	2610	Kg
NET CO2 CAPTURED	0.775	8.042	8.817	Tonnes
ELECTRICITY OFFSET or PETROL OFFSET	1.520 352	15.769 3655	17.289 3951	MWHR Litres

* Re-calculated based on 3rd party biochar analysis dated 19/4/20

** Includes 3180L from members.

Summary:

Total number of job events = 52.

Number of production events = 26.

Number of wood collection events = 22.

Number of other events = 4.

Average number of production events per week = 0.86

Ideas arising:

1. We can probably double production with the same number of volunteers by concentrating on the 2 wood heaps at the Springdale vineyard with smaller teams (2-4) operating 2 midi kilns simultaneously.
2. The above can be made possible by also reducing the number of wood collection events (as we already have an adequate supply!).
3. A wood collection charge of \$20 could be set for non-members; but free for members.
4. The wood drop-off charges can be retained for non-members; and remain free for members. Also wood drop-off could be made simpler if it was limited to say Saturday mornings.

PLANS FOR 2021

1. Char analysis - Sampling:

We now need to collect representative samples from the char we have produced at Shadygrove road and also from the vineyard and send them for analysis.

2. New kilns:

We will need 2 more midi-kilns to maximise the opportunity of the 2 wood heaps at the vineyard which are separated by a considerable distance.



3. Mobile water supply:

We will need a water-tank/pump set for the second wood heap at the vineyard. The owner has provided one for the first heap but we will need another if we are to process both wood heaps together.

4. Smoke reduction – wind/rim shield:

Installation of a wind shield around the rim of each of the midi kilns will help prevent smoke on windy days.

5. Production Target:

Let's aim for 30 000 litres of biochar. Not quite double what we achieved in 2020 but it will allow for those weeks in August when it is just too wet to start a fire.

6. Membership:

Let's aim to double our membership in 2021. This could easily be achieved if we could encourage more women and more working-age people to participate. The former group could perhaps specialise initially in making biochar with the small kilns for their own use.



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The latter group could use the large kiln at Shadygrove road on Saturdays.

7. Sales:

We need to sell the remaining bags of biochar that we produced in 2020 before start of next season.

8. Workshops:

Let's continue to promote biochar with workshops, demonstrations and training courses.

RECENT EVENTS

Ngeringa Winery Viti Symposium, 18 Nov entitled: Improving Vineyard Resilience; Soil Health & Biodiversity.

My 30 minute presentation was based on the relation between biochar, soils and climate action. It seemed to be well received with some attendees already making and applying biochar and others who are considering which method will suit them best. It certainly was good to be able to promote Maccy Biochar to a sympathetic audience and so many thanks to Janet Klein and Ngeringa Winery for that opportunity!

The videos of the presentations can be viewed at:

<https://vimeo.com/user/39003402/folder/3048685>

SUMMER 2021 WORKSHOPS & COURSES

BASICS OF BIOCHAR

Sat. 20 February:

Hills Environment Centre, 4 Crescent Drive, Norton Summit from 10am to 3pm.

Bookings: Val Hunt Tel: 8390 1891

BIOCHAR FOR BEGINNERS - PART 1

Sat. 13 March:

Tues. 23 March:

Duck Flat Community Garden, 87 Wellington Road, Mount Barker (behind Mt. Barker District Hospital) from 10am to 12 noon.

Bookings: Mt. Barker Community Centre

<https://www.mtbcc.org.au/news.html>

BIOCHAR FOR BEGINNERS – PART 2

Sat. 20 March:

Tuesday 30 March:

Duck Flat Community Garden, 87 Wellington Road, Mount Barker (behind Mt. Barker District Hospital)

from 10am to 12 noon.

Bookings: Mt. Barker Community Centre

<https://www.mtbcc.org.au/news.html>

BIOCHAR DEMONSTRATION WORKSHOP

Saturday 8 May 2021:

Normanville Natural Resource Centre,
3/50 Main Street, Normanville.

Bookings: Maddie Maguire

Tel: 8558 3644; Mob: 0418 828 517

from 10am.



BRIAN'S SPECIALTY LIST

We have been lucky to have had such dedicated volunteers for our wood collection, production and sales tasks. I would like to see that continue of course but we also need help with special interest aspects of biochar. So with that in mind below I have set out a summary of the special tasks we need people to step up for over and above the normal production tasks:

SPECIAL INTEREST TASKS:

Biochar for House & Garden: This person or group will have practical experience and knowledge of all biochar applications in the house and garden; and produce and maintain application notes for publication.

Biochar for schools:

This person or group will have practical experience and knowledge of schools and school children and how best to teach them about biochar; and arrange

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school visits, demonstrations and brochures about making and using biochar.

Biochar for Tree planting: This person or group will have practical experience and knowledge of using biochar in tree planting programs such as those carried out by land-care groups, local councils and landscapers.



Biochar for poultry:

This person or group will specialise in advising poultry owners on using biochar to ameliorate bad odours, reduce disease, and improve bird health.

Biochar for cattle:

This person or group will specialise in advising dairy and beef farmers on using biochar in feed to improve gut health, reduce methane emissions and improve soil and pasture health.

Biochar in compost:

This person or group will specialise in advising gardeners and others on using biochar in compost to reduce bad odours, reduce methane emissions and improve the capability of the compost to retain nutrients and moisture after application to the soil.

Biochar for water treatment:

This person or group will specialise in using biochar to improve water drainage, treatment of road water run-off, and similar water-related problems faced by landowners and local councils.

Please call me on 041 148 0935 if you have an interest in any of these specialties and would like to share your knowledge with us, be part of our group and help us advise others in your special area of biochar expertise.

SALES



Our enriched biochar is available from Goding's Farm Supplies, 50 Venables St., Macclesfield for \$18 per 15L bag. This is very good value indeed and stocks are disappearing steadily.

Bulk Bags of our raw quenched biochar are also selling steadily at \$400 per cubic metre. This is of course fantastic value at \$0.40/litre. We currently have stock available so if you know anyone that may be looking for biochar let them know before we sell out.



HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL!

COMMITTEE MEMBERS at present are:

Brian Lewis – Chairman. **Kelvin Williams** – Site coordinator. **Geoff Brockhouse** – Wood collection Team Leader. **John Agnew** – Schools Liaison. **Greg Marlu** – Technical advisor. **Stephen Heading** – Technical advisor. **Ivars Eglitis**, **Dean Hewlett** and **Meegan Semple** – Viticulture liaison.

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