

MACCY BIOCHAR MEMBER BULLETIN

No. 12 - September 2020

Auspiced by the Macclesfield Community Association Inc.

Email: maccybiochar@adam.com.au

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HELLO ALL.

Welcome to our 12th Member Bulletin.

This bulletin reports on our biochar production to September (as counted so far); New Kilns; Futures Forum; Sales; Blackwood High School Visit; Working with Vineyards; and Suggested Reading.

BIOCHAR PRODUCTION

MACCYBIOCHAR	SCOREBOARD at		29/09/20	
YEAR	2019 *	2020**	TOTAL	Units
BIOCHAR PRODUCED	1720	12538	14258	Litres
CARBON CAPTURED	222	1622	1844	Kg
NET CO2 CAPTURED	0.775	5.347	6.122	Tonnes
TOTAL MWHR OFFSET	1.520	10.485	12.005	MWHR

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

** Includes 1590L from member households.

In addition we have about another 900 litres waiting to be counted and packed.

NEW KILNS

We now have 2 additional kilns, each just under 1 cubic metre capacity. These midi-kilns are easier to use than our large kiln and designed to be transportable. Here is one of them in action in the foreground. Note the difference in size from the smallest to the largest.



MOUNT BARKER
DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

We have 3 small kilns available for members to borrow for home use and for us to add their production to the group total for carbon capture purposes. The member contribution is currently 1590 litres. **Call me on 041148 0935 if you would like to borrow a kiln.**

FUTURES FORUM

The Mount Barker District Council (MBDC) recently held a community meeting at their new Environment Services Centre adjacent to the Laratinga Wetlands. The meeting was titled Futures Forum and the purpose was to obtain more community consultation prior to finalising the Councils Strategic Community Plan for the period 2020 to 2035. One of the 6 main topics for discussion was Climate Innovation and under this topic I was asked to address the Forum on Biochar. So I told the forum about Maccy Biochar and what we have been doing. And I asked how many people knew about the Australian Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategy for 2020 to 2030. Only 2 or 3 people raised their hand. So I tried to explain that this Strategy aims to reduce our GHG emissions by 5% of our 2019 emissions for each of the next 10 years. This National top-down strategy involves some massive numbers which makes it difficult for people to take seriously. So how about having a bottom-up approach working at a community level in parallel with the National strategy? And I explained how biochar can fit into this Community strategy along with solar and other renewable energy approaches. But it needs some help from Council to encourage other communities to get involved and we need help to determine our actual emissions at a community level. So the message was sent loud and clear that there is scope for more Council involvement in community emissions reduction and that we are here to help with that.

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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.

NEW MEMBERS

No new members this month. Remember that application forms are readily available from the website at www.maccybiochar.com so please encourage friends and family that show any interest in joining to simply do that.

BLACKWOOD HIGH SCHOOL VISIT

The Year 10 class from Blackwood High School visited our site on Tuesday 22 September despite the forecast rain and strong winds. There was only one short shower but the winds were a challenge.



We divided up the group of 20 into 3 smaller groups each with an instructor and a small kiln. It turned out to be a successful day after all with a high level of appreciation from the students. The school purchased

100 litres of biochar with which they will conduct trials and tests to see for themselves how best to use biochar in the soil.

WORKING WITH VINEYARDS

We have come to an arrangement with local vineyard Spring Hill to help them make biochar from their vine offcuts. They supply the feedstock and the water supply; and we supply the kiln and the labour. And we share the product. This is our first step towards working with the local wine industry and we hope to develop this relationship further as we grow.

EVENTS

BIOCHAR WORKSHOP

South Coast Environment Centre, Victor Harbor.
The 12 September date was cancelled due to a dire weather forecast which turned out to be wrong! Now set for Saturday 10 October at 10 am weather permitting.
Geoff and Brian to conduct Workshop with one of our small kilns.

SUGGESTED READING

One of the questions asked by a Year 10 student during our recent School visit was: Does our government support biochar? A good question that deserves a good answer. What would your answer be? Before you answer maybe take a look at one or more of the following sites:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/ag-farm-food/climatechange>;

<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/soil-carbon/carbon-farming-applying-biochar-increase-soil-organic-carbon>;

<https://environment.sa.gov.au>

COMMITTEE MEMBERS at present are:

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

NB: All members are welcome to attend Committee meetings held on the 2nd Monday of each month in the Macclesfield Institute Supper Room starting at 7:30 pm. **Enquiries to Brian Lewis Mob: 041 148 0935**

*Making Maccy Carbon Neutral
Making Biochar for carbon capture and soil improvement*