

MACCY BIOCHAR MEMBER BULLETIN

No. 3 - December 2019

Published by maccybiochar. Edited by Brian Lewis.
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HELLO ALL.

Welcome to our third Member Bulletin. The purpose of these bulletins is to keep members promptly informed of all maccybiochar developments and biochar developments in general.

HERE IS A SUMMARY of our activities since the previous bulletin:

- Macclesfield Strawberry Fete;
- Sales;
- Grant money;
- New members;
- Website extensions;
- Quotations for new kilns;
- Volunteers SA & NT registration;

STRAWBERRY FETE



Here we are setting up the stall early on the day. It featured one of our small kilns full of biochar shovel-ready to sell in 10 litre blue shopping bags. We also sold Greg Marlu's 30 litre bags on commission and Alex Fiedler's enhanced Charboy biochar in 2 litre tubs. Sales were modest but what do you expect if you can't eat it or drink it! But seriously it was worthwhile. One young couple were up from Fullarton and we had a long chat about biochar and they bought a bag. That in itself made it worthwhile. And we gained two new members.

SALES

We now have our first 1000 litre bulk bag available to buy direct from the Shady Grove road site. Here it is:



CHARBOY DISCOUNT

Following the Strawberry Fete, Alex Fiedler, proprietor of Charboy enhanced biochar, has advised that all members can obtain a **15% discount on purchases of Charboy products** online at <https://charboy.com.au> simply by quoting the following discount voucher code: **maccy5JZRQDEM**. Thanks Alex! Much appreciated.

GRANT MONEY

We are proposing to spend most if not all our new grant money (\$2000) on a larger kiln. A quote has been obtained from a local fabricator for a kiln with a capacity of about 1 m³ complete with a tilting mechanism to help with discharge. However we will need further funds to buy a trailer and fit it out with a water tank and mobile kiln for on farm use.

NEW MEMBERS

A special welcome to the following new members: Tony Huppatz, Gabby Green, Tess Minett & Jurgen Ollwitz. Now if every member could just get one more member by the New Year I would be a happy vegemite! Because that will help greatly with future

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grant applications and help to spread the word still wider.

WEBSITE EXTENSIONS

The section on Biochar Production has been updated to better describe our bulk bag product with a photo and a product brochure.

Check our website at www.maccybiochar.com.

VOLUNTEERS SA & NT

We are now registered with Volunteers SA & NT via their VIKTOR platform so that we can offer our volunteer positions to a wider population. I envisage people perhaps registering from Adelaide or nearby Hills towns who may look forward to volunteering to work with Maccy Biochar for one or two days per month. Based on a 6 month period of perhaps 25 working days (1 day per week) and 10 volunteers per day we will need 250 volunteer working days. So if on average each volunteer offers to work 2 days per month (or 12 days over the season) then will need 20 volunteers. Clearly our production target will be largely determined by the number of volunteers we can attract. So the more help we can get with attracting volunteers the more biochar we can make.

Accordingly we are in the process of placing volunteer vacancy advertisements on the VIKTOR platform for 2 main occupations:

- Wood collection;
- Kiln operation.

We envisage 2 groups of 5 volunteers working on each task in parallel needing a total of 20 volunteers.

Volunteers need to be physically fit and able adults and preferably with experience using gardening shears, etc. and to wear specified safety clothing. Hours will be from 9:30 am to 4pm meeting at Macclesfield. Job training will be provided and any out of pocket expenses reimbursed. And we are considering providing a free lunch on the day!

So please pass this on to anyone who you think may enjoy a day out in Macclesfield in the fresh air helping to fight climate change!

2019 SUMMARY

And here is a summary of our biochar production in our first season:

SCOREBOARD		
DATE	15/11/2019	Units
BIOCHAR PRODUCED	1720	Litres
CARBON CAPTURED	389	Kg
NET CO2 CAPTURED	1387	Kg
TOTAL KWHR OFFSET	2719	KWHr

We are planning to increase this by 25 times in 2020. But this will depend largely on the success of our volunteer drive.

WORKING BEES in 2020

There are unlikely to be any more working bees until next May at which time we would like to run another **Open Day** and then start the new campaign designed to produce 1000 litres of biochar per day. This assumes that we will have 1 large (1m³) kiln plus our existing 2 small kilns making a total production capacity of 1000 litres of biochar (allowing for under filling).

TECHTALK – Atmosphere v. Soil

Our main emphasis is about making biochar to take carbon from the atmosphere (via CO₂) thereby creating carbon offsets that we can “claim” as offsetting Macclesfield’s CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel emissions. In doing so we are helping to reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and helping to fight climate change. This is a direct benefit of making biochar.

But we also aim to sell the biochar to local farmers so that the benefits of adding biochar to the soil can be realised locally. There are short term and long term benefits associated with burying biochar in the soil. The short term environmental (and economic) benefits of increasing carbon levels in the soil are well documented and are now recognised and rewarded by our Federal Government. But the long term

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environmental benefits of using biochar on the farm are not so easy to quantify. They include:

- Improved animal health and productivity when added to the diet;
- Reduction in methane emissions when fed to cattle;
- Reduction in animal excretion odour levels;
- Reduction in fly-born disease;
- Reduction in nitrous oxide emissions when supplementing ammonia fertiliser use;
- Improved quality of water run-off;
- And others that you can tell us about!

COMING UP:

May 2020: Open Day. Details to be advised. Suggestions welcome!

WHAT NEXT?

With the fire ban season now on us we will suspend production of biochar until May next year. During this off-season we will concentrate on the following activities:

- Fundraising;
- Completion of business plan;
- Design and manufacture of new larger kilns;
- Design and purchase of a trailer fitted with water tank and kiln to serve as a mobile unit to take onto properties to process burn heaps. This will be an essential part of our operating strategy.
- Plan our production target and organise a volunteer base large enough to enable us to meet the target.
- Plan another Open Day for May 2020 with related activities such as biochar sales, demos, wood gas stoves, etc. etc.

At the committee level we will need to appoint a secretary and treasurer, and others to concentrate on specific target areas such as individual membership, corporate membership, industry liaison (dairy farming, beef production, horticulture, viticulture, etc); site supervisor and volunteer coordinator; schools coordinator; Facebook coordinator; etc., etc.

So please think about how your experience could lend itself to any of the above and if it does then please call me to discuss.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ROLES at present are:

Brian Lewis – Chairman; Website; Newsletters; Bulletins; Volunteer coordinator; Carbon accounting.
Kelvin Williams – Site coordinator; Operator; Grant applications; Biochar analysis; Kiln development coordinator.

Kath Thurmer – Community Liaison; Membership.

Greg Marlu – Technical advisor; Operator.

Stephen Heading – Technical and general advisor.

Ivars Eglitis – General advisor; Operator.

Geoff Brockhouse – Operator.

Meegan Semple – Horticulture and Viticulture liaison.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Continue to support this community initiative!

Encourage others to Join. We want a membership of 100 by early in New Year!

Enlist as a Volunteer.

Advertise your biochar products or biochar-related activities on our website.

Help with Working Bees and Open Days!

Use the drop-off service as a household supplier of woody waste. Free for all Macclesfield households and those with a Macclesfield PO box address.

Engage us to make biochar on your property for your use.

Tell us what you think we should be doing next.

CONTACT DETAILS:

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Website: <https://www.maccybiochar.com>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/maccybiochar

THANK YOU

Thanks to all members for joining Maccy Biochar in its first year of operation. And thanks to all those who have helped with events and working bees. We have learned a great deal in this first year. And we are now ready to really make a difference next year and hopefully to inspire other townships to have a go.
Happy Christmas & Healthy New Year!