

MACCY BIOCHAR MEMBER BULLETIN

No. 9 - June 2020

Auspiced by the Macclesfield Community Association Inc.

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HELLO ALL.

Welcome to our 9th Member Bulletin.

This bulletin reports on our biochar production during May and June (to date); The Great Pump Scare; Sales Milestones; High School Collaboration; and Our Emissions Reduction Target.

BIOCHAR PRODUCTION

MACCYBIOCHAR SCOREBOARD		24-Jun			
YEAR	at	2019 *	2020**	TOTAL	Units
BIOCHAR PRODUCED		1720	5280	7000	Litres
CARBON CAPTURED		222	682	904	Kg
NET CO2 CAPTURED		0.775	2.239	3.014	Tonnes
TOTAL MWHR OFFSET		1.520	4.391	5.911	MWHr

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

** Includes 525L from member households.

During our first 2 months of the 2020 season we made about 3 times as much biochar as we did all last year bringing our total CO2 capture to about 3 tonnes. That's a lot of gas! Even so we are slightly behind our schedule to meet our target of 12 tonnes by November. So we need to keep the pressure on and do at least one "burn" each week. Many members have taken part in these "burns" as well as wood collection to "feed the brute" and on the whole I think many have been glad to get out and about in the fresh air and away from Covid lockdown. And in the process have enjoyed the social engagement.

WEEKENDER HERALD FRONT PAGE



You may have seen this photo of Tony Huppertz demonstrating his bowling action on the front page of the June 11 issue of the Weekender Herald together with a large group photo and article. If not you can see it at:

<https://adelaidehillswekenderherald.partica.online> and then go to the June 11 issue.

THE GREAT PUMP SCARE

The dam level rose unexpectedly quickly one night 3 weeks ago and drowned the pump! We managed to get it out fairly quickly and drain it of water and change the oil but it would not start. However we took it into Godings and the new mechanic was able to fix it promptly for us at minimal cost. It could have been much worse.

SALES MILESTONES

We have sold our first bag of enriched biochar!



MOUNT BARKER
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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It is available from Goding Farm Supplies, 50 Venables St., Macclesfield. Only \$18 per 15L bag. Believe me this is very good value.

We are actively promoting our bulk bags of quenched biochar and are expecting the Orders to start flowing very soon.



BLACKWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

Thanks to member John Agnew we are collaborating with Blackwood High School in relation to their Year 10 Scientific Studies course in which they will consider the various attributes of biochar and conduct trials to measure the effects of biochar in the soil. This collaboration is on-going and could lead to other high schools taking up biochar as a study vehicle to include in the teaching of soil science, chemistry, physics etc.

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

We now have 3 members using small kilns for their own use at home and allowing us to add their production to the group total for carbon capture purposes. Presently this represents about 10% of the group total. **If you would like to borrow one of our small kilns to make biochar please call me.**

HOW MUCH BIOCHAR DO WE NEED TO MAKE?

How much biochar do we need to make to make a useful contribution to our community emissions reduction target?

The Keeling curve shows that the concentration of CO₂ in the northern troposphere is rising by about 2 ppmv per year. See

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keeling_Curve

Based on the current concentration of about 410 ppmv this rise represents about 0.5%.

The Australian Government has committed us to an emissions target of 26-28% of 2005 levels by 2030. This target represents a 50-52 % reduction in emissions per person. You can see this explained further at:

<https://publications.industry.gov.au/publications/climate-change/climate-change/publications/factsheet-australias-2030-climate-change-target.html>

So let's take this personally as a township and ask what does it mean? It means that if we choose to take this target on we will need to reduce our 2020 annual CO₂ emissions by 5% per annum year on year for the next 10 years and hold it at that level after that.

How much of this 5% reduction per annum can we realistically aim to achieve using biochar? As opposed to using more renewable energy (eg. solar panels, wind turbines); planting more trees; improving energy efficiency; economizing; eking; etc?

To answer this question we need to know how much CO₂ Macclesfield is generating each year. This is difficult to determine without access to consumers electricity accounts or cooperation from the electricity providers. But we are working on it.

If you can help us obtain this information (which I think should be freely available to all communities) then we can set some realistic targets for our biochar production.

Based on our current production data each m³ of biochar we make offsets about 0.85MWhr of electricity. So if we knew how many MWhr Macclesfield households consume we could calculate what proportion of the 5% reduction target we could achieve using biochar.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS at present are:

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

NB: All members are welcome to attend meetings.

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