

MACCY BIOCHAR MEMBER BULLETIN

No. 62 – 3 December 2024

Maccy Biochar is a Task Group of the Macclesfield Community Association Inc.

Email: maccybiochar@adam.com.au Website: www.maccybiochar.com

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75,426 litres biochar made; 36.28 tonnes of CO₂ removed from the atmosphere.

Welcome to our 62nd Member Bulletin. In this Bulletin please find our latest news items from here and further afield.

LOCAL NEWS:

Production Update:

Biochar production this season ended on 15 November. Production for the season was 8,760 litres, representing a carbon drawdown of about 3.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Member's private production (as advised) was an additional 1505 litres. So when member's private production is added we can say that we removed 4.2 tonnes of CO₂ from the atmosphere this year. A good year's production despite having no quench water in May then mainly too wet in June! As a result our overall scoreboard is:

MACCYBIOCHAR SCOREBOARD at 30/11/24						
YEAR	2019-21	2022	2023	2024	TOTAL	Units
BIOCHAR PRODUCED	40103	11043	14015	10265	75426	Litres ²
CARBON CAPTURED	6223 ¹	1680	1766	1293	10962	Kg
NET CO2 REMOVED	21.513 ³	4.919 ⁶	5.660	4.193	36.285	Tonnes
ELECTRICITY OFFSET	55.432 ⁴	14.055 ⁵	23.415 ⁷	16.960	109.862	MWhr

1. Re-calculated based on 3rd party biochar analysis dated 19/4/20
2. Includes 13,344L from members.
3. Re-calculated based on 3rd party biochar analysis dated 28/1/21
4. Calculated based on Australian National Greenhouse Accounts Factors Oct. '20 (SA: 0.43 kgCO₂/KWh)
5. Based on Australian National Greenhouse Accounts Factors Aug. '21 (SA: 0.35 kgCO₂/KWh)
6. Re-calculated based on 3rd party biochar analysis dated 12/1/23.
7. Based on Australian National Greenhouse Accounts Factors Feb. '23 (SA: 0.25 kgCO₂/KWh)

Sales Update:

All the remaining biochar from this year's production has been sold for agricultural use so we could not wish for a better finish to the season. Well done all our active volunteers who have made this possible, including the wood collection team, headed by Geoff Brockhouse. Without the wood, there would be no biochar. And thanks to all our customers, as without them we could not claim to have permanently removed the CO₂ from the atmosphere.

Special Mention:

Special thanks are due to Kelvin and Fiona Williams who have been consistently "on deck" for burns with Fiona often taking on the role of "burn boss" making sure some of us don't get too enthusiastic with loading the kilns too quickly or too slowly.



They invariably had two kilns started up by the time I arrived which mainly compensated for the slow start to the season.



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And Kelvin also designed and made this saw horse to make cutting feedstock easier and safer.



Not only all that but Kelvin and Fiona also kindly allowed us to use their back garden and their small kiln to demonstrate biochar-making on two occasions to groups taking part in our two biochar training courses (sponsored by the Adelaide Hills Region Waste Management Authority (AHRWMA)).

Kelvin also made another trip to Lameroo with Dennis Hannon and our mobile kiln to carry out a demonstration burn for local farmers using mallee feedstock. The mallee wood burned very hot!



This event was sponsored by the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board. An important outcome from this trip was the eventual sale of 7000 litres to an agricultural firm based near Murray Bridge.

Not only all that but Kelvin, with others, master-minded the erection of the new shed which was no mean feat (given that there were no instructions provided with the kit). The shed has been a real asset and allows us to store enough dry wood to get a fire started after a wet spell; and keeps the sun off the poly bags. Kelvin and others have got the bagging procedure down to a “fine art” using the Kelvin-designed and made bag filler.



And all this in parallel with convening the weekly burns which involves juggling suitable days weather-wise with personal and other activities and calling on members to help with adequate notice. In all of these biochar activities Kelvin and Fiona invariably operated as a duo. **THANK YOU KELVIN & FIONA!**

Mt. Barker Council – Environment & Sustainability Strategy Forum:

David Reynolds represented Maccy Biochar at a forum on 18 November to contribute ideas towards the development of the Council’s new Environment & Sustainability Strategy covering waste, water, biodiversity, climate change and greening. David reported that he participated in 3 working groups on the day (Climate Change, Water & Waste) and made

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the point that Climate Change is the central issue to address. He also strongly advocated for Council to make their own biochar from waste wood. Development of the Strategy is on-going.

Note: Logan City Council in Queensland embarked on an ambitious project to process sewage sludge into biochar in 2021. See:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-10-26/logan-council-goes-to-tender-for-biochar-product/100557700>

See reports of the successful implementation in 2023:

<https://councilmagazine.com.au/biosolids-gasification-technology-pioneered-in-city-of-logan/>

<https://www.awa.asn.au/resources/latest-news/australia-s-first-biosolids-gasification-facility>

WHAT TO DO OVER SUMMER:

With the summer now with us our Fall has started. Gum trees will be losing their bark and branches will continue to fall here and there. Here are some tips to safely collect and keep that wood for next season's biochar:

1. If possible store the wood under cover out of the elements.
2. If storing outside restrict size of heaps to 1m high.
3. Keep grass mown for at least 4m around the heaps.
4. Separate the wood heaps from each other and any other flammable material or structure by 4m or more.

WHAT WE WANT IN 2025

– MORE BIOCHAR GROUPS:

We have commenced planning an intensive promotion of biochar to other community groups around the State. A proposal will be sent to every Council in SA to consider making biochar and to promote biochar to all those community groups in their Council area able to do so.

While the environmental benefits of making biochar from tree waste will be outlined so too will the other benefits that we have experienced be highlighted. These include the satisfaction of taking part in a worthwhile community activity; physical outdoor activity; working with others as a team; looking out for others (as in safety); and last but not least raising

money to ensure the financial sustainability of the group (not reliant on continual handouts).

Arising from our financial success as a community volunteer group we will announce a new policy of assistance to new community biochar groups that may involve actual financial assistance by way of a grant or by way of a kiln donation. It will be our expectation that any new community group that we materially assist will report their biochar production outcomes via our website.

So tune in next year to find out how we progress with this initiative and if you have any suggestions please forward them to me. We are entering new territory with this so we need all the brains we can muster!

FESTIVE SEASON COMING SOON!

We are holding an End of Year Barbecue on Sunday 8 December to especially thank all those members who have actively supported the group over the past year. While we are of course grateful to all our non-active members for their membership we feel that our active members deserve a special reward for their efforts. So this will be it.

SEASONS GREETINGS:

Finally please accept my best wishes for a safe and happy Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Committee meetings are normally held on the 3rd Monday of the month (public holidays excepted) from 7:30 pm. in the Macclesfield Institute Supper Room. You are invited to come along if you have a biochar matter you would like to discuss or simply to meet us.

The Committee are having a break this month from formal meetings so our next meeting will be on

Monday 20 January 2025.

ENQUIRIES:

Secretary: Brian Lewis. Mob: 041 148 0935

Production: Kelvin. Mob: 0423 198 345.

Wood Collection: Geoff. Mob: 0418 800 691.

Membership: Fiona. Email: fmwil62@gmail.com

Brian Lewis – Editor

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