



Australian Pecan Growers' Association

Spring 2011 Newsletter



Our AGM and annual conference was a great success and our presenters were called our 'best ever' by several people. Unfortunately our President, Scott Clark, could not attend as his wife, Karen, was in the process of giving birth to their first child, a baby boy Eamonn. Eamonn was 3.25kg (7lb3oz) and the whole family are doing well. Congratulations!

Vice-President, Terry Bates, had injured his knee and could not attend. He is much better now after months of exercising for hours per day to regain knee mobility and strength.

Many thanks to those Committee Members who could attend and make the day a success.

Thanks also go to outgoing Committee Members Densie Kitchin (Treasurer) and James Payne (former President). The hard work of both Denise and James has been greatly appreciated.

At the AGM a new committee was elected. The new committee details are given at the bottom of the last page of this newsletter. We again welcome Scott Clark as President, Terry Bates as Vice-President, Debbie Bugden as Treasurer, Dawn Thornton as Secretary, Richard Genest as our ANIC representative, Kaye McNaught and Geoff Bugden as general committee members. Dawn Thornton continues with website management, Terry Bates continues with writing our newsletters assisted by Kaye McNaught.

Grower Profile – Paul O'Neill & Jain Brand

Baerami Valley Pecans

In late 2010 we purchased a 200 acre property in a remote valley in the Upper Hunter area. Our farm has three separate orchards with a total of about 1500 pecan trees, some up to 40 years old. There are 14 different varieties of pecans on the farm, the majority being Wichita, Cheyenne, Cape Fear, Shoshoni, Kiowa and Tejas.

The pecans are growing on light sandy soils and water for irrigation is sourced via spear points from a small creek that flows through the property. The local area climate is fairly dry (average 26 inches of rainfall per year) which means that we need to irrigate more often than the north coast farms but it also means we tend to have less problems with fungus and rain damage.

The farm had been run as a successful commercial enterprise up until about 5 years ago. Since then the pecan orchards have had minimal care. The orchards were full of sticks, broken limbs, waist high weeds and thousands of self-sown pecan seedlings. The irrigation system was in place but many of the sprays and lines had deteriorated and needed replacing. All the pecan harvesting and cleaning equipment had been removed from the property.

We both came from a farming background – cattle and horses – & had experience with irrigation, fertilisers and farm management but no orchard knowledge. However we had been

looking for a niche industry that might provide us with a good, healthy lifestyle and income. We did some research on the pecan industry and it seemed that pecans could be a viable alternative to the traditional farming enterprises.

Our first major task was to clean up the orchard floors. Thankfully several friends decided to come and visit our new farm and were keen to pick up sticks for a few hours each day. We also had the help of two hard working WWOOFers. Hours of slashing got the weeds under control.

Our main equipment arrived very late from the USA – a shaker, harvester & cleaner. The shaker then brought down another massive load of sticks and limbs as the trees were so large and hadn't been shaken for several years.

This year we only collected about 6 tonnes of pecans from our orchards. This was due to our steep learning curve, the lack of care of the trees and the very late arrival of our equipment. Next year we hope to harvest a lot more.

Our next major job is getting our unruly and overgrown pecan trees into shape. Crowding is a big problem on our farm – the rows have been planted at 10 x 10 m. We are now researching the advantages and disadvantages of severe pruning versus tree removal.

The Longhorn beetle has also bred unchecked for several years and has taken advantage of the amount of broken limbs and timber lying around. We want to use limited chemicals on our farm so are looking at natural methods to keep their numbers down.

There is immense satisfaction in rehabilitating an old pecan orchard plus the financial benefits are that we could start harvesting and selling pecans straight away. However these big, unkempt trees are going to take a lot of work to get them into shape and producing to their full potential.

If any other pecan growers would like to visit our farm or have a chat please don't hesitate to contact us: Phone - (02) 6547 5080 or email - baeramivalleypecans@gmail.com

(Grower profiles are brought to you by Kaye McNaught)

2011 Annual Conference Presentations

Our keynote speaker was Lisa Yates, Program Manager and Dietician, for Nuts for Life. Lisa discussed the nutritional and health benefits of pecans and trees nuts in general. Lisa's presentation is attached to this newsletter and further information can be obtained from nutsforlife.com.au.

Richard Genest submitted a written summary of the August ANIC Board meeting and progress report on Nuts for Life. We have included a copy of Richard's presentations with this newsletter.

Boyd Johnson was the winner of the Deane Stahmann Scholarship in 2010 and travelled to Texas for the Texas Pecan Shortcourse. Boyd presented his findings and we will hopefully provide his presentation with our summer newsletter.

Nut and pecan cook-off judging

Interest in the nut judging was strong and the winner was decided by people's choice. Entries for the cook-off were all of a high standard and were delicious.

- The winner of the cook-off was Kaye McNaught with her Pumpkin Pecan Cake. Kaye also won last year and is setting a high standard to beat. Katie Bugden won second prize.
- Dawn Thornton & Terry Bates won the nut judging competition with their Kiowa nuts and their Cape Fear nuts came second. Dawn and Terry won last year with their Cape Fear nuts. In the five years of competition Kiowa have now won twice and Cape Fear three times. David McNaught won third prize.

We intend to run the competitions again next year and urge you to put aside your very best 2012 nuts and fine tune your recipes.

Winning entry Kaye McNaught - Pumpkin Pecan Cake (or Slice)

2 cup w'meal sr flour	½ tspn baking powder
1 ½ cups cooked mashed pumpkin	¾ cup soft butter
½ cup sugar	2 eggs
4 tablespn plain yoghurt	2 tablespn golden syrup
1 tspn ground cinnamon	1 cup chopped pecans

Topping

2 tablespn golden syrup	¼ tspn ground cinnamon
8 pecan nuts (halves for decoration or chopped if you prefer)	

Preheat oven to 160C. Grease and line 18cm round cake tin or 18 x 30cm slice tin.

Beat together until light and fluffy: butter and sugar then eggs.

Gradually beat in yoghurt.

Stir in pumpkin and nuts.

Sift flour, baking powder and cinnamon together then carefully fold into wet mix, using a spatula.

Place the batter into prepared tin and smooth the top.

Topping: Heat syrup and cinnamon in small pan. Bring to boil then remove from heat.

Brush top of cake with the glaze then decorate with pecan halves or pieces. Brush nuts with more glaze.

Bake for 70-75 min or until cake springs back when pressed in the centre.

Cool in tin for 10 min. Turn out onto wire rack.



Kiowa kernel from Dawn Thornton & Terry Bates winners of the nut judging competition.

If you have not provided your e-mail address or if you have changed your e-mail address please send it to our Secretary Dawn Thornton at: bellbowra@bordnet.com.au

If you want your details added to our website as buyers or sellers contact Dawn Thornton.

FOR SALE - PECAN SEEDLING PLASTIC TREE SLEEVES UV stabilised, size 500 Dia x 800 high, 1300 of at 25 cents each, Total \$325-00. Contact Geoff or Debbie Bugden on 02 66243085.

Nutri-Tech Solutions one day course presented by Greame Sait on the 26th of November 2011 but has been **cancelled** due to ill health. Geoff & Debbie Bugden are still having the farm walk on Sunday the 27th of November 2011 commencing at 9am. APGA members and friends are welcome. We will be talking about and demonstrating, Soil biology, ground covers, green manure crops along with many other topics including a compost tea brewing demonstration.

2010-2011 Committee:

President: Scott Clark 02 66243378 lagoongrass.pecans@gmail.com

Vice-President : Terry Bates 02 6564 8747

Secretary: Dawn Thornton 02 6564 8747 bellbowra@bordnet.com.au

Treasurer: Debbie Bugden 02 6624 3085

Committee members:

Richard Genest 07 4699 9452 (ANIC Representative)

Kaye McNaught 02 66721483

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