



# Tableland Telegraph

## February 2015 Edition

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## Joint approach to farm biosecurity planning

Crops and livestock, commonly combined in Australian farming systems, require a similar approach to biosecurity.

Biosecurity principles are much the same whether you are cropping or running livestock.

With mixed farming widespread across Australia, it makes sense for extension programs to work together to help all growers protect themselves.

Grains biosecurity officer for South Australia, Judy Bellati, and the Livestock Biosecurity Network (LBN) regional officer for Tasmania, Jess Coad, got together with grower group Partners in Grain (PinG) to raise understanding of what farm biosecurity means for grain and livestock businesses. National PinG coordinator Kim Blenkiron says by working together, industry groups, grower groups and government could provide a seamless approach to on-farm biosecurity and planning that made it easier for growers to understand and apply.

[Read more](#)



## Scary berries: how food gets contaminated and what to do



An informative article in relation to the recent recall of frozen berries and their link to Hepatitis A!

It is important that anyone supplying fresh fruit and vegetables strictly follows good food safety and hygiene standards. This recent recall of imported frozen berries illustrates what can go drastically wrong otherwise.

Australian growers meet the highest standards in the world for food safety. This is why our products are in demand all around the world.

[Read more](#)

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## Case Study

### Good farm hygiene helps biosecurity

Simple but essential practices such as cleaning the harvester and airseeder down before travelling between farms are part of standard farm hygiene practices to help prevent weeds and other pests from spreading in the Bagleys' cropping enterprise near Northam in Western Australia's central wheatbelt.

Beth and Rob Bagley farm two blocks about 30 kilometres apart at Northam and Toodyay and cleaning equipment before it moves from one property to another is fundamental to their biosecurity management.

The Bagleys employ contractors to apply post-emergent crop protection products and fertilisers, and



prefer aerial applications to minimise vehicle traffic that could potentially bring in soil, pest and weed contaminants. Beth says contractors help reduce labour requirements and keep down their capital expenses.

“We look for reputable contractors with current industry knowledge, who take pride in their work, use modern equipment and keep it clean and well maintained,” she says.

The Bagleys take particular care in the storage and handling of grain, adopting a ‘clean as you go’ approach to minimise loose grain on the ground.

[Read the full case study here](#)

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## Agriculture

### Surviving the dry

Surviving the dry: using social media to connect



Queensland farmers are using social media and mobile technology at a rapidly increasing rate as a tool to be better informed about weather events and natural disasters, as well as to connect with and learn from each other.

This video features farmers who are at the leading edge of using social media to tell their story – Brendan Taylor and Terry O’Leary – and one of the co-founders of the #agchatoz forum, Tom Whitty.

This video has been produced with the assistance of the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal.

[View the video here](#)

### Online fertiliser calculator launched

A new online fertiliser calculator developed by DAFF WA, funded by Horticulture Innovation Australia aims to help horticulturalists and grain growers select the best options from hundreds of commercially available products.

[Learn more here](#)

### Homemade citrus trimmer a hit

Want to know more about pruning citrus crops. An interesting video on a home-made solution for skirting citrus orchards from the Riverina might interest you.

[View the video here.](#)

### 2014: NSW’s warmest year on record

NSW experienced its warmest year on record in 2014, with the state average 1.41C above the historical average.

The state has now had 30 consecutive months with above-average temperatures.

The state rainfall average was 465.8mm, 16% below the historical average and the driest year since 2006. Rainfall was well below average in the northeast, and close to average elsewhere. Spring rainfall totals were the eleventh-lowest on record.

[Learn more](#)

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## Natural resource management

### Tackling wild dogs and foxes head on



Just before Christmas LLS staff and staff from Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort and Spa undertook Canid Pest Ejector (CPE) training. CPE's are spring-triggered devices that eject 1080 into foxes and dogs.

CPE's have the benefit of directly delivering the poison, which is particularly useful when trying to deal with bait caching by foxes.

They also allow a more targeted approach to baiting by minimising off-target damage to native species plus the active ingredient 1080 will remain active for longer than it does in traditional buried bait techniques.

The Wolgan Valley was chosen as it is part of an approved Fox Threat Abatement Plan (TAP) for the endangered brush-tailed rock wallaby (BTRW) (*Petrogale pencillata*). Emirates were chosen as they are the largest single landowner in the valley and are interested in conservation of native species.

[Read more](#)

### Green Army opportunities open

Community organisations and environmental groups are being encouraged to apply for round three of the Green Army project, with applications now being accepted.

[Learn more here](#)

### Keeping culture alive

Local students recently had the opportunity to learn and tell their own stories about Aboriginal culture through the 2014 Enviro-stories program Tools, Totems, Tucker - Exploring Aboriginal Culture.

Now in its sixth year, the local schools program is supported by Central West and Central Tablelands Local Land Services.

Students from Year 3 and 6 have been working with their teachers to produce five published books that explore Aboriginal culture.

[Read more](#)



## NRM on Farms

Are you interested in an in-depth report on the state of natural resource management on Australian farms. [Click here](#) to download the february edition of the Department of Primary Industry's NRM on Farms publication.

## Invitation to comment on invasive animals

The Invasive Animals CRC has identified that one problem in control of invasive animals is that legal, administrative and other institutional issues may be a barrier to citizens taking action. Around Australia, governments are proposing reforms like combining pest animals and plant agencies, changing the laws within the states, and reorganising national coordinating structures. These changes are important but we suspect that there are more fundamental issues that need more consideration.

[Download the 33-page document here](#)

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## Biosecurity

### Small beetle, big problems

With recent wet weather and ripening fruit, a small beetle can cause problems for fruit producers.

*Carpophilus* beetles, also known as dried fruit beetles, are 2-3 mm in size, and attack a wide variety of hosts including stone fruit, persimmons, fallen citrus, apples, and figs.

They do not breed in fruit on the tree. Adults lay eggs in rotting or damaged fruit on the orchard floor. Mature larvae emerge from the fruit and pupate in the ground.

[Read more](#)



### Stock surveillance essential

With 2015 now well and truly here, livestock producers across the country to are being encouraged to reduce the potential impacts from diseases, pests and weeds by making it their new year's resolution to undertake regular stock surveillance on their properties.

Duncan Rowland, Animal Health Australia's Executive Manager of Biosecurity Services, said undertaking general stock surveillance is already a core biosecurity practice for a number of producers, but more producers should be undertaking it in 2015 to protect their farm profits and stock trading options.

"The 2013 *Farm Biosecurity Producer Survey* showed that 33 per cent of livestock producers actively conducted routine stock monitoring as a biosecurity practice on their property and we would like to see that increase when we undertake the third biennial survey later this year," he said.

[Read more](#)

## Record and monitor mice

Now is the time to hop onto the [MouseAlert](http://www.mousealert.org.au) website ([www.mousealert.org.au](http://www.mousealert.org.au)) to record sightings of mice activity.

Recent monitoring across grain-growing areas of Australia has shown that mouse abundance was generally low; however several farmers have seen localised increases in activity.

Mice are not likely to cause much damage as crops mature, although Central Tablelands farmers should continue to monitor mice numbers or observed damage on their properties, and record that information in MouseAlert.

[More information](#)



## Minimising biosecurity risks when employing contractors



To stop the spread of diseases, pests and weeds, ensure that equipment brought onto your property at harvest time is washed down and disinfected before coming into contact with your crops.

At this time of year, many fruit producers will have contractors on their property to help with harvesting activities.

If care is not taken, contractors can spread diseases, pests and weed seeds on their clothing, equipment and vehicles as they move from farm-to-farm and region-to-region.

If armed with the necessary information your contractors can be an important part of the solution for maintaining good biosecurity on your farm.

Alison Saunders, Manager for Biosecurity Planning and Implementation at Plant Health Australia, says that biosecurity signs are a good way to alert people to your requirements and of the potential risk that their visit poses to your business.

From the minute contractors enter your farm they will know you take biosecurity seriously.

[Read more](#)

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## Animal health

### National BJD forum established

An open facilitated forum on bovine Johne's disease (BJD) will be the first step of a major review of the National BJD Strategic Plan kicking off in February 2015.

Originally planned for the 2015-16 financial year, the BJD Steering Committee has requested that Animal Health Australia (AHA) brings the review forward to as early as possible in 2015.

AHA is ensuring the review will be undertaken in a manner that allows for all parties (including



industry, government and community) to provide input into how Australia is going to manage BJD into the future.

[More information](#)

## Barber's Pole warning for sheep producers



While summer rainfall has recently been welcomed in some areas of the Central Tablelands, livestock producers are being warned to be on the look-out for Barber's Pole worm.

This parasite which attaches to the lining of the gut can be fatal for all classes of sheep, and is particularly prevalent during wet conditions in summer.

Researchers at the University of Melbourne, in collaboration with AusDiagnostics, have recently announced a new DNA test for the specific diagnosis of roundworm species such as Barber's Pole worm.

The test can be conducted within 2–3 days, rather than the 7 days required for the conventional larval culture technique, and has improved sensitivity and accuracy.

To help protect their livelihood and income, producers are encouraged to complete the Farm Biosecurity Checklist [here](#).

## What not to feed your pigs

Some food materials are "prohibited substances" and it is illegal to feed them to pigs. The feeding of food wastes to pigs has traditionally been called swill feeding.

"Feeding "prohibited substances" to pigs has been implicated in major outbreaks of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in overseas countries including the devastating outbreak in the United Kingdom in 2001. The regulations prohibiting the feeding of this material exist to keep Australia free from FMD and other exotic diseases", said Lucienne Downs, District Veterinarian with Central Tablelands Local Land Services.

[Read more](#)

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## Funding opportunities

### **The Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project - Open**

The Blue Mountains Biodiversity Project has funding available for landowners to enhance the condition and connectivity of vegetation west from the Blue Mountains escarpment. Central Tablelands Local Land Services is seeking applications from landholders interested in this funding. For further information or to obtain a fact sheet and expression of interest form please contact Huw Evans at [huw.evans@lls.nsw.gov.au](mailto:huw.evans@lls.nsw.gov.au)

### **Norman Wettenhall Small Environmental Grant Scheme - Closes February**

The objectives of the Small Environmental Grant Scheme is to support biodiversity conservation

projects in Australia that are concerned with one or more of the following: monitoring and recording data, community education, community capacity building (training), research and science and sustainable land management. [More information](#)

**The IMB Community Foundation - closes 28 February.**

The IMB Community Foundation was established in 1999 to provide financial support to community groups with positive ideas and concepts to help them convert their ideas into working projects. Since its inception, the IMB Community Foundation has granted \$7.1 million to support over 450 projects with a diverse range of project themes, throughout our local communities. [More information](#)

**Drought Concessional Loans - closes 30 June 2015, or earlier if funds are fully committed.**

To assist farm businesses recover from and prepare for future droughts and return to viability in the longer term. Loans are for eligible farm businesses for the purpose of restructuring existing eligible debt, providing new debt for operating expenses or drought recovery and preparedness activities, or a combination of these.

You get: a maximum loan term of five years, loan amounts will be up to 50 per cent of total eligible debt to a maximum of \$1 million, a variable concessional interest rate initially set at 4 per cent, a concessional interest period of five years, interest only payments available for the loan term, at the end of the loan term, the farm business must repay or refinance the remaining loan balance. [More information](#)

**Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate - closes 30 June 2015 or when the funding allocation is exhausted.**

The NSW Government has announced \$20 million in additional support for farmers to establish permanent water infrastructure to assist with the immediate water supply needs and long-term risk mitigation for the farm enterprise.

The Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate (EWIR) scheme aims to help severely drought affected livestock producers install on-farm water infrastructure such as pipelines, bores, tanks and troughs. The rebate is 50 per cent of the cost of purchase, delivery and if applicable, the labour cost to engage a person to install water infrastructure installed for animal welfare needs. The maximum that can be claimed is \$20,000 per farm enterprise.

The maximum amount includes any rebate already received under this program since November 2013. [More information](#)

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## What's on

### 25-26 February - Weather and climate workshops

Conducted in Bathurst and Mudgee.  
More information [here](#)

### 26 February - Grass Routes

A weed, pest, grass and creek management master class on a travelling stock reserve. Topics



discussed will include management of pests, pasture, vegetation and weeds. Located in Orange.  
[More information](#)

### 3 March - Silverleaf Nightshade Breakfast Meeting (Darbys Falls)

More information contact Phil Cranney on 0458 745 478

### March - Property Management Courses - Cowra & Mudgee

Central Tablelands LLS currently has positions vacant in a property management course to be held in the Cowra and Mudgee Regions commencing in March.

The course offers farmers and land managers the opportunity to develop a formalised farm/property management plan, to assist as a decision management tool. All of the materials required will be provided, including a large laminated property aerial image as well as plastic overlays and printed property planning resources.

[Find out more](#)

### 4 March, 2015 - MerinoLink Conference

Primary Industries Centre, Riverina Institute of TAFE Coolamon Road, Wagga Wagga. **Wednesday 4 March, 2015** - Peter Westblade Scholarship Dinner, Cache Function Centre, 214-220 Baylis Street, Wagga Wagga. **5 - 6 March, 2015** - Peter Westblade Memorial Merino Challenge 2015 shearing. [More information here](#)

### 5-6 March - Low stress stock handling workshop

More information [here](#)

### 7 March - Neville Show

Come along and chat with us at the show.

### 11-13 March - Soil Fertility Workshops

Looking at the most economical and sustainable ways of increasing soil fertility in cropping and pasture systems, then this might be the seminar to attend.

**11 March - Dubbo/Narromine** (venue to be confirmed);

**12 March - Blayney** Community Centre - 9:30am till 1pm and

**13 March - Temora** Agricultural Innovation Centre.

Contact LLS Central Tablelands for more information.

### 12 March - Nutrient cycling in pastures and cropping coils (Blayney)

More information contact Phil Cranney on 0458 745 478

### 13 March - Kalare Willow conservation tour (Cowra)

More information contact Casey Proctor on 0429 110 072

### 13 March - Pasture and soil health workshop (Rylestone)

More information contact Clare Edwards on 0428 435 615

## 16-17 March - Soil resource workshops

Information available at [Soilquality.org.au](http://Soilquality.org.au)

**Temora 16 March** 11am till 1pm - Temora Agricultural Innovation Centre;

**Grenfell 16 March** - 3pm till 5pm - Grenfell TAFE;

**Canowindra 17 March** - 7:30am till 9:30am Canowindra High School and

**Wellington 17 March** - 1pm till 3pm - Wellington.

## 19 March - AWI Grazing Management - Orange

More information contact Phil Cranney on 0458 745 478

## 19 March - Travelling Stock Route Field Day (Mudgee)

More information contact Martin Prestidge on 0437 131 230

## 20 and 21 March - Paddock Plants Workshop (Oberon and Glen Alice)

More information contact Clare Edwards on 0428 435 615

## 21 March - Pindone 1080 Induction Course (Neville)

Contact Joanne Lenehan on 0409 496 908

## 21 March - NRC Weed Review Public Meeting (Dubbo RSL Club)

[More information](#) on this event.

## 22 March - Sustainable Living Expo (Bathurst Showgrounds)

Drop in and say hello to us at the expo.

## 25 March - NRC Weed Review Public Meeting (Cowra Services Club)

[More information](#) on this event.

## 25 March - Pindone 1080 Induction Course ( Mudgee)

Contact Mal Leeson on 0428 721 860

## 28 and 29 March - Jenolan Caves volunteer day - weed removal

Come along to volunteer and help remove 50ha of weeds invading bushland at Jenolan Caves.

Volunteer weekends are run to help control invasive weed plants around the caves.

Professional bush regeneration contractors are on hand to train you in weed identification and control techniques, so experience isn't essential.

Tools, herbicides, training and PPE will be supplied for the weekend work, accommodation and main meals are provided, Saturday night BBQ dinner and a Saturday evening activity (TBC each trip) - such as a guided cave tour or native fauna spotlight walk.

[More information here](#)

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## Give us your feedback

Feedback is gratefully received.

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## Your contributions

Contributions to Tablelands

Telegraph are always welcome.

Please [email us](#) any content about events and activities across the region that are relevant to Agriculture, NRM, Biosecurity or Emergency Management.



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