



Farming for Sustainable Soils

COMMUNITIES PROTECTING THE SOIL

Group Name

Mid-Loddon Sub-Catchment Management Group

Key Achievements

- Local Soil Plans produced
- Establishment of a rotational grazing trial site
- Soil Profile Assessments for rotational grazing site
- Two Soil Health Workshops completed
- Successful 12 week Integrated Pest Management (IPM) training for 35 landholders
- 10ha of paddock protection windbreaks
- Pasture establishment, sheep health and management workshops
- Precision Agriculture Workshop leading to the group's project direction for 2012
- 30 farms mapped for the production of satellite biomass mapping

Group Area

The group is centred around Woodstock, situated on the volcanic plain extending through the middle region of the Loddon River catchment. The groups boundary extends in all directions as far as Maldon in the south, Mt Moliagul to the West, and the Calder highway to the north and Marong to the west.

About the Group

The landholders have a long involvement in participative research into sustainable practices. The network was formed in 1999 and covers an area of around 95,000ha. A noticeable change in seasonal climate, especially reduced winter/spring rainfall, has meant successive failed seasons and a high risk of wind erosion and soil damage. The group has observed deterioration in soil organic matter and carbon levels through their own trials, measured and demonstrated by poor retention of moisture.

Land use

The group is situated in a mixed farming geographical zone. Both cropping and livestock are important in maintaining the viability of most farms so it is vital that the right balance is struck between enterprises and that they can operate in a way that complement one another. Mixed farming comprising grazing sheep for wool production and prime lambs, and cereal cropping are common practices in the area.



2011 Activities

- Improved grazing management to sustain groundcover and increase biomass
- Biological farming and Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Soil protection through native wind breaks
- Soil testing and learning
- Increased farmer knowledge of whole farm and landscape geology and soils
- Increased farmers skills in sustainable farming practices through training and education
- Cell grazing

2012 Activities

- Increasing farmers paddock and landscape knowledge
- Soil pH Mapping
- Pasture and sheep grazing management