



Annual Open Day - Living Soil 2011 **Summary of the 2-day Event 28-29th July**

After a warm welcome by **NutriSoil CEO, Graham Maddock**, we enjoyed the return of **Dr Christine Jones** who introduced us to her dynamic friend and colleague from New Zealand, **Nicole Masters**. Their joint presentation covered all the fundamentals with a fresh and passionate delivery. Christine really wanted to get across to us the importance of embracing the principles of farming biologically, rather than just replacing products and retaining unsustainable conventional practices.

The **Vermiculture Recycling System** (aka NutriSoil “worm farms”) were described in detail with reference to a “5-star” healthy topsoil full of worms, biology you can see and micro-life. This was followed by the DVD and a mechanical (tractor) feeding demonstration after lunch.

Graeme Hand gave an inspiring talk on regenerating grasslands and how this could actually be enhanced with heavy-footed animals and appropriate rest periods. The day culminated in a facilitated Q and A with the panel of speakers including broadacre biological farmer Ian Haggerty from Western Australia.

The Friday seminar was an attempt to bring “**Theory into Practice**” by assisting farmers to make the first or next step towards achieving biologically active soils. Whilst a difficult process for some, it fleshed out the challenge for all farmers to face change and demonstrated the need for some careful planning. A list of **Transitional Stages from Chemical to Biological Management** was created on the day by all attending. The first stage was to acknowledge that the **Process of Change begins with YOU**.

This report was compiled from the feedback forms sent to attendees two weeks after the event. Landholders described how they experienced the day, what they learnt, what they were challenged by and most importantly a **Take-Home Message** regarding what ‘**YOU (they)**’ need to do to make desired **changes on-farm**. There are so many stimulating ideas and thought processes that you will no doubt find useful in relation to your own situation.

Rachelle Armstrong, Co-Director, NutriSoil



Who Attended?

NS Open Day - Living Soil 2011 (Day 1)	150 people attended.
Theory into Practice Workshop (Day 2)	86 people attended.
Feedback forms	57 returned representing 78 people attending Therefore 52% return rate.

Abbreviations used in report: NM – Nicole Masters, CJ – Dr Christine Jones, GH – Graeme Hand, NS – NutriSoil

Farm description	TOTAL	%
Income Producing and/or >100a	47	82
Hobby Farmers <100a	4	7
Stock / Pasture	50	88
Cropping	16	28
Orchards / Horticulture / Nursery	5	9
Organic	4	7

NB: Attendees could & usually did fall into more than one category.

Other Reasons for Attending:

- I have an interest in landscape enhancement and improved profitable farming systems.
- To learn more about biological farming.
- NECMA
- Update on latest info.
- Want to learn more about how to biologically farm.

- We attended the field day looking for more pieces in the biological farming jigsaw.
- We like to hear from scientists about latest developments in sustaining our environment.
- Currently moving from a conventional system to a biological one.
- Consultant, self-education.
- Regional Landcare Facilitator, interested in learning more and plan to hold similar information day in Orbost for East Gippsland farmers.
- Interest in biological farming, compost, worms.
- Wish to improve pasture grasses and renovation of paddocks with cropping then introduced grass.
- Interest in biological farming. Have a worm farm and interested in learning more about biology and soils.
- Wanting to develop biological farming concepts.
- Interested in biological farming.

Take-Home Message

Any change begins with YOU, what do YOU need to do to make it happen?

- Be aware and being open to trying different things, firstly on a small scale.
- Buy some land and don't let past learning's trap me into an inflexible approach to management.
- Any change begins with you. Continue what I'm doing, fine tune and experiment more.
- Get stock on, a lot of for a few days, off rest. Put NS on, rest – see paddocks improve.
- START
- Persist with transition to biological farming and continue to learn.
- Let air into NS containers that you have stored for a lengthy period. Keep following the biological pathways – important to break down the alcohol barrier in anaerobic soil.
- Assess your property, start in an area to change and work up one step at a time.
- Longer rest times, up to 150 days, now 75 days reinforce, feed microbes not plant.
- Money
- We began implementing change in 2008.
- Start doing it.
- Learn about your land (farm) and make it happen. Educate yourself – visit others.
- Hopefully it is happening. The 2 days gave me a bit of rejuvenation that I needed – thankyou.

- Keep on “keeping on” more of the same. Used chicken manure this year, looks pretty positive on the poor soils.
- We have been trying to make it happen with mixed results.
- START beginning with small achievable things.
- Focus on soil health and not be carried away by popular fads.
- Soils aint soils need to look at the big picture.
- Just keep chipping away in the direction we are, and have faith that it will work in the long run (early days yet).
- Make a resolution to start somewhere and let it evolve.
- Have begun subdividing paddocks more to facilitate longer rest period.
- Use the product and see it happen.
- We need to get into the “How To’s”.
- Need to get you (NS) and the speakers to come to East Gippsland to give the message to EG farmers.
- Look at my overall operation, see how I can improve soil health, think about perennial grass and ensure my animals are healthy.
- Have already created a plan – started better stock rotation – paddock resting – weed control.
- Have already made it happen! But will continue to improve our ongoing management after getting many tips from GH.
- Change our ways.
- Reminder! To manage for what you do want, not for what you don’t want.
- We need personal advice and networking with farmers like Ian Haggerty that have done it.
- Already practicing a lot of things that were mentioned. Want to try SAP brix, pH and EC. Need to concentrate on managed grazing.
- Revisit whole farm plan of 1966 re further subdivision of land on capability, aspect, topography, to further develop cell grazing.
- Make changes incrementally and set up experiments with pastures and weed management, and see for yourself.
- Have started 3 years ago.
- I need to bring the boss along next time!

What did you Learn & or what were you Challenged by?

- Challenged by implementation of biological farming.
- I increased my knowledge, Christine reinforced last years' learning's, Nicole gave depth to Christine. Graham Hand changed my thinking on many pasture related practices.
- Plenty of tips and ideas to think about.
- Confirmed my thoughts on unsustainable inputs. The challenge is in the management of soils and pasture ie rest periods.
- Growth of grasses in paddock to put stock in and take out of.
- CJ statement "water soluble fertilisers stop root development because bugs are not needed to make nutrients available", hence OM declines with salt fertiliser use. The slide she went onto show the extra carbon / biomass should be on your advertising material.
- CJ presentation was fantastic, it was just really good to think about the big picture of plant/soil health evolution and why/how things occur in the soil the way they do.
- Some of the steps needed to move to a more biological system. Better grazing management.
- Hay soaking to enhance protozoa increase. The importance of tall grass – "tall" roots.
- I liked GH ideas on grazing management.
- Refreshed what I knew already. Great to see family business and support circle.
- Found out a lot about NS product. I need longer rest times for pasture. Plants make topsoil.
- How the bugs work in the soil to make a healthy soil.
- A different way of farming.
- Some soil biology / microbiology.
- Reinforced biological farming. Already an holistic manager.
- As a 10yr biological farmer, our motivation was rejuvenated. More biological understanding and knowledge.
- I have been studying the biological approach for the last 18 years and implementing. Still picking up tips from your speakers and other like-minded farmers.
- Many ways to change a farm to better performance. No one secret ingredient – all should start with soil analysis tests, digging and looking.
- More commitment to biological farming. Have learnt that my pasture regeneration strategy (above) not really necessary – just encourage the grasses and improve the soil health – NS!
- GH - that was good!

- Where do I start? 100% groundcover – that’s a challenge. 5 months pasture recovery – that’s a challenge; establishing perennial grasses could be interesting and costly – I’m not saying it’s wrong but flies in the face of what we have learnt by experience in the past??
- Learnt about the origins of soil.
- The long term health of soils by using biological methods rather than unsustainable conventional methods and using grazing methods to achieve (reduce) weed problems.
- Only to reinforce that we are on the right track.
- Carbon is not the enemy.
- Lots of things, the importance of microbes. The fact that I don’t check my microbes like I should.
- That you don’t have to put any minerals on as such, that if you feed microbiology the minerals will just be available.
- CJ wasted the first third of her time with the rubbish on evolution only to contradict herself later by showing how with healthy soil and microbes major minerals become quickly balanced – suggests a creator. She needs to read Romans 1:20 in the bible.
- Chairs are too hard – distracting from excellent programming speakers. Learnt – many like-minded people out there/lots of new info sources/refresher on soil biology/management tools.
- I found GH grazing management talk very useful especially how long he suggests rest periods ie:150 days.
- It was encouraging to be reminded of the soils as living with GOD-given organisms being able to flourish in the soil when using natural produced food for them such as NS.
- The overall concept of why biological farming works; the penny dropped for me. NM and CJ presentation very good for that. New thing for me to learn how is the liquid carbon cycle – very interesting, not covered sufficiently, but is probably why the biological system works sustainably.
- A lot about soil biology and grazing management.
- 1/ The great importance of keeping the soil covered with vegetation. 2/ The use of hard-hoofed animals to stir up the topsoil.
- Challenged by everything. Fantastic day – went away feeling very positive and motivated.
- To change to biological farming gradually plus planned.
- Learnt lots on soil and cycles and organic matter.
- Try to improve soil biology to healthy optimum level and the results will follow.
- Science lesson from CJ challenging but enjoyable.
- Always good to hear and see different fert. methods. And speak to other farmers. I really enjoyed the day.

- Learnt about importance of soil health for plant health and yield. Liquid carbon pathway through microbial bridge particularly interesting. CHALLENGED BY THIS THOUGHT: WHY AREN'T WE ALL DOING IT!!!
- Still challenged by the concept of being chemical free – but can see the future much clearer. One step at a time. Very impressed from results of other farmers.
- Learnt new things from GH eg. the importance of litter pushed by livestock into the ground to promote microbial activity.
- We learned more about the value of carbon in the soil.
- I realised the damage that former and current farmers are doing to the land with their practices and chemicals and how biological management can change this.
- Indicators to managing grazing of pastures.
- How important fungi is in the health of soil and that their life is sitting in the ground it just has to be activated, including natural seeds.
- SAP – pH & Brix, Managed Grazing, Looking after perennials, Symbiosis in soils.
- I was impressed by your speakers and attendees willingness to share ideas unfortunately I was not able to be with you on the first day.
- Learnt so much about soil, the microbes, fungi, bacteria etc and just how they play a key role in the “circle of life”.
- Learnt from the other guests – what they were doing - with the product - their stress and challenges. Would like more stories about their farms success and failures. Would start at 9.30am so as to return home a little earlier.
- Without the soil fungi and bacteria the soil won't hold the nutrients. Didn't know there were so many little critters!! Challenge is to implement.
- Soils aint soils. There's more to pasture than meets the eye. The collection of people willing to think “outside the square” was quite thought provoking coming from a “we do it this way because that's the way our fathers did things” background.

What Next? Suggestions for Future Educational Needs

- Something challenging.
- Come back next year.
- Perhaps you could have a speaker on marketing their produce after being grown with your product. Most of us grow a product and someone else sells it and usually gets more profit with less risk than the grower.
- Grazing management.
- Perhaps seek out a coordinator from the Gippsland Landcare Network that are exploring farming practices from high input to biodynamic – each Landcare group doing a specific discipline.
- Talk more about your product and information of ratios, best timing for use and updates.
- I could listen to those 3 again – tools and best way to use them – do we need to be putting out traces and lime?
- Too much to take in one day so I will turn up next year again.
- We would like to study field trials on NS.
- More of the 2 excellent speakers. How good farmers are making the transition to biological ag. Measuring the biological life in the soil (activity and changes).
- Make available power point/CD's/DVD's etc to those interested.
- We need some “how's” to underpin the “why's” we have heard about. The dinner was a great idea – the value of the learning and contacts made offset the Friday sessions.
- CJ made a brief comment on putting energy into the system – develop this theme – move on from the basics.
- Graham Sait – Dr Arden Anderson – more from Christine Jones – Niel Kinsey – Elaine Ingham.
- More on the same lines or theme.
- Stock health and how it can be improved could be of interest. * Elaine Ingham workshop locally.
- More of the same.
- I think you are on the right track.
- Could a speaker show us the difference between conventional vs organic vitamin/minerals etc in food ie: fruits, veges, or grains – have these been documented?
- Keep getting sincere, practical, fearless speakers who are passionate about their subject.
- If you hold future events like this I suggest 1/Charge more \$. You're event was ridiculously cheap for the educational value provided. Would get your numbers down and help you attract more seriously involved people to take the message more seriously and so achieve more in the long run. 2/You need to get speakers of the calibre of NM & CJ to explain why products like NS work.

NS at times looked like an inconvenient side show for the speakers. It was only when Ian Haggerty spoke that NS gained clear credence but Ian wasn't able to explain the science of why it worked. In fact, both NM and CJ kind of inferred that by embracing biological principals, the nutrient aspects would look after themselves. This is patently nonsense.

Biological farming enhances and facilitates nutrients in the soil (among other things) but can never replace them. If Ian Haggerty had not added NS when planting grain into white coastal sands in WA, would he have got the same results? Or any results?

If you guys did not fortify your worm composting heaps with important major, minor and trace elements, would Ian have got the same results using NS? I think not and would be delighted to be proven otherwise.

Tying together the nutrient and biological farming aspects of plant growth needs to be done to make the movement succeed (amongst other things!).

Biological farming/organics is not a religion but unless it can be explained fully and correctly, scientifically – it will run the gauntlet of being seen as “a way of thinking” in the same way as religion is, and be subject to dogma in order to explain and protect it's point of view.

This just gives ammunition to conventional agricultural interests, particularly those with vested interests, leaving biological farming and those who embrace it as being perceived cranks, weirdos, greenies, tree huggers, etc.

Unfortunately the organic movement is often held in such standing and it is indeed being strangled by dogma. You only need to read the Australian Organic Standards – an essay in what you can't do, rather than what you should be doing.

If you can't find speakers who can explain why your product works, then you need to. They are out there and the science is there to support them. A product like yours deserves this attention, and certainly you (NS) as a company, for what you are doing, also deserve the attention.

Open Day Overall Experience / General Comments

- The attendees were engaged and interested. There was very little chatting.
- Enjoyed the day and meeting like minded people.
- Please repeat.
- Very good day, well organised – will be giving NS a go in Spring. Many thanks.
- Excellent – come next year again.
- Perhaps you could have a CJ and NM day for us generalists and another day for graziers. I realise both overlap and I would probably go to both.
- Another “not to be missed” open day – congratulations.
- Thursday was much better than Friday. Speakers were relevant and informative and it made me keen to attend Friday.
- One of the best learning days I have been to.
- Great day.
- Useful info provided. Next seminar relate it to farm profitability.
- An extremely well organised day. We felt very welcome WELL DONE!
- Rewarding and informative. All 3 speakers great and have the ability and skills to talk at the grass roots level. The dinner provided another social period to talk with like-minded people.
- A great day. Generally enjoy CJ very much. GH is challenging and entertaining. It would be great to know when next years is so that as far as possible I keep date free.
- Good learning and meeting day.
- A great comfortable learning day, very inspiring and making me wish I was much further from my use-by-date, so I could get my teeth into it all!
- I was glad I attended. This was the best of the 2 days.
- Great to mingle with like-minded people.
- Very good.
- Lovely day.
- Once again the day has left us with many questions to answer. We need our brain-cells shaken on a regular basis.
- A great experience, very enjoyable and extremely thought provoking.
- Excellent! Really inspiring.

- A valuable day – we will be back next year.
- Excellent refresher and motivator.
- I think farmers want information that they can implement in their own situation on their farm such as “I apply this product at this rate and this is the results I ended up with”.
- Could have been a bit more technical even if just still day 1. Felt the crowd was ready for it.
- Very very informative and inspiring. We have changed our pasture management since attending☺
- Wished we'd arrived sooner – most informative.
- Excellent!!
- Well done.
- Very well worth while exercise for me.
- Very well organised and presented. However my own agronomist would like to see independent trials done on your product.
- Loved it and see comments.
- An excellent day. Good to hear how farmers are getting results.
- Generally very good – would like to have heard more on systems used for biological substitutes applications.
- Very valuable and enjoyable day.
- Morning speakers were excellent working together and GH was thought provoking for us as graziers and we got a lot out of the day.
- Great
- Great day a good chance to refresh the thinking.
- Excellent!! Well worth the trip. We are at the stage we know where we are headed but it would be great to hear more about WHAT we need to do next, like an ACTION plan but we realise this is what Friday was about.
- Great day, really enjoyed it. Overall great hospitality and a very enjoyable time, thank-you.
- Great food, Great presenters and loads of interesting information. Thankyou.
- Reinforced ideas we had – Good day.

Friday Seminar – Overall Experience / General Comments

- The day was informative and exceeded my expectations, your approach was credible and the speakers appropriate.
- Was very good – good to have second day – just ramp up two days – all good learning.
- Thank-you for 2 very good days.
- Sorry I've had to be honest. Usually love your days and keep doing them. I was probably suffering a bit from PIE-WITHDRAWAL SYMPTOMS!! Venue was nice and warm. Sandwich and soup were quite nice really. White board was a good idea. Thought Nicole was good – she probably had some interesting ideas which I didn't hear on day 1.
- The first day was better than the second, but your event was much better / informative than the many field days I go to. Thanks.
- Disappointing. I wanted to learn more about NS. I love the product but want to learn more about it (when, ratios etc).
- Parts were great. Morning apart from tools wasn't good.
- Apparently Thursday was more stimulating.
- Rewarding and informative. All 3 speakers great and have the ability and skills to talk at the grass roots level.
- Ok
- It was of value having been there but in hindsight not good use of my day.
- I felt Friday didn't build on the previous day enough. It bog down a number of times.
- Hope "Farming Secrets" video will be available. I must be a bit "thick" the "how" is still a bit vague.
- We found Thursday very interesting and Friday less so.
- Was a good day, a continuation from the previous day.
- We always enjoy CJ but were a little disappointed in her Friday seminar.
- Food for thought, challenging.
- Well done
- Very good.
- Not enough "how to" transition. I got more on "embrace and hope" message. I sensed audience were beyond that stage. I wonder really, do NM and CJ really have a good "how to" plan? – Could be just me.
- Whole system makes sense. We'd like to see a future in farming for our kids. At present there are too many free loaders in there.

- See you next time.
- Excellent day – found it setting me on a course for change – the process wasn’t so foreboding as I first thought.
- Practical parts of the day were very good. Group planning exercise too extensive – would have preferred it to be more prescriptive.
- Great
- Very good, took the information from the first day and was able to ask more questions. Enjoyed the discussions and stories that everyone was able to bring, like Ian Haggerty.
- Not as good as Thursday. I would have liked to have spent more time on tools, details, practices, etc. instead of recapping.
- Enjoyable
- I was quite happy with the day overall. I had expected a “hard sell use our product or else!!!” not being present on Thursday. Still felt a bit “left out” but generally ok!

Individual Sessions Comments – Thursday

9.00 Registration / Morning Tea – scones

Excellent x 6; Tick x 3; Very good; Good x 2; Tick x 1; Yum x 3; Ok x 2; Delicious; Perfect; Indulgence-great; Very nice; Perfect & smoothly run; Spot on; Good stuff; Lovely; Great morning tea; Really good food – excellent; Delicious scones; Usual high standard; Scones were great; Awesome; Great as always; Well organised top scones etc; Excellent ran smoothly; Scones were delicious; Oh what a welcome yummy; Great way to start a day and settle in; Very good friendly and well organised; Late arriving got lost without sons GPS; Very welcoming thankyou; Very smooth. Could be better organised. Long queues; 2 ticks - registration. After 1hr in the car we welcome a coffee, apple and time to meet others; Top quality a person had to get in early or miss out. The whipped cream was just to my taste; Well organised with minimal delay at registration and morning tea was a great bonus; Scones were fantastic. No need to provide polystyrene cups - we could have all used your great mugs for tea all day; mmmmm...yum hot and fresh! And fresh cream too. Excellent thankyou; Great - scones were delicious - table could have been out from wall to allow people both sides.

9.45 Welcome – Graham Maddock

Ticks x 5; Good x 5; Very good; Excellent; Ok x 2, Well done; Missed; Missed him; Very comprehensive; Modest, so modest; Great; Always good; Warm welcome; Short & sweet; Good start to the day; Good that it was brief & succinct; Good job keep it simple; Good – a warm welcome; Thank-you for the welcome to the day; Maybe some photos of trials to show NutriSoil working; Brilliant, dynamic, inspiring!; Smooth straight to the point; Briefly set the scene for the day; NutriSoil's thoughts and approach are credible and appropriate; Very interesting of NS where and how started; Clearly spoken but needs to stay on track; Sorry Graham we were late arriving due to lambing issues at home and missed your welcome; We all like to have a few words about the continuing developments with NS; Well done, well prepared and spoken with sincerity; First time attendee and the general overview was well presented in general, easy to understand manner; Explained the running of day and a good welcome.

10.00 Dr Christine Jones: *Restoring Subsoil* & Nicole Masters: *Soil Micro-life*

Good x 2; Excellent x 4; Great; Very good; Very good & informative; Ok; Informative; Excellent duo; CJ 2 x ticks NM 1 x tick; Very well spoken; Excellent & challenging; Well presented easily understood; Both very interesting, down to earth, easy understanding what we are doing wrong, learn what to do right; I have heard CJ speak many times over the last 6-8yrs. I have never been disappointed. I would like to listen to Nicole on her own even though it would develop what CJ has said because there would be little insights that would be left out in a co-presentation. This is not a criticism of the co-presentation; Both were wonderful energetic speakers that were knowledgeable and passionate about their subjects; A very interesting session with 2 differing but similar perspectives; 4th time I have heard CJ. With Nicole, this was the best; CJ - Excellent. "Top notch" speakers - a thrill to hear CJ again and Nicole a wonderful and knowledgeable speaker; Worked well in tandem. Disappointed - horrified with CJ's discussion; Good - though too much focus on soil bugs and not on how to get soil RIGHT to make bugs work. No clues to how to raise soil carbon!!; Really good - perhaps some repetition from last year. Not as advanced as I anticipated. CJ as always brilliant and NM really really good. Both such easy speakers to listen to; Excellent presenters - enjoyed them both - admired CJs knowledge and NMs enthusiasm; Wonderful presenters. I was hoping to hear about CJ trials in 5 states of direct sowing into pastures. I will follow that up with her; Dynamic duo! Informative; interesting well presented. Easy to follow and understand; Excellent presentation & informative; Once again challenged to build humus in the top soil/subsoil. We still struggle on "specific how to's"; Excellent, CJ great as usual but NM for me was awesome!!!! To have someone young and so passionate was inspirational. Its good to have someone young talking as I'm so used to hearing older people talk. (no offence); Nicole is a dynamic presenter - helped by audience participation made us think and realise that we have much to learn yet; CJ spoke at easily understandable speed but NM spoke a bit too fast or less clear to hear and understand; Very good structured introduction to a complex concept for many; FANTASTIC - both very interesting. Enjoyed Nicole; Came away with a lot of new information. The confidence and knowledge of their delivery was first class; I would like separate presentations rather than a combined presentation; CJ - bit hard to follow at times. NM – fabulous; The two speakers explained things really good. Easy to understand

and very interesting; Found some disconnection between speakers. Might be better to give each speaker separate topics; CJ - another good presentation on mychorizal fungi. NM NZ experience complimented this well; Excellent – extremely interesting to listen to; Very interesting. Nicole is an excellent presenter and public speaker; CJs information was unnecessarily scientific and I found the detail a bit boring and uninteresting. Nicole was brilliant; We did not think the two speakers in tandem did NOT flow for us - Dr CJ presentation last year – excellent; Enjoyed presentation for both speakers. They worked well together.

12.15 Vermiculture Recycling System and DVD

Good x 10; Very good x 4; Excellent x 2; Very interesting x 3; Interesting x 2; Ok; Tick x 2; Good to see; Have seen that before; Good & informative; Interesting to see your system; Good explanation; Informative & very clear; Worth watching; Loved it. Simple is good; Explains it all; Most interested; We arrived at this point; Well presented; Good to know process; Very good – should do this more often; You put this into the day at the right time; Of particular interest. Very good; Interesting, though light on science; Again to see is easier sometimes than just listen; Great new DVD especially the worms gut; Important to be open in the production & operation of NS; Interesting how to make NS. What work goes into making of it; Interested to see how it all worked & how you get your NS.

12.45 Lunch – Homemade Pies & Soup

Very good x 2; Excellent x 7; Yum x 2; Great; Ok; Good; Tick x 3; Tops; Tasty; Spot on!; Beaut pies; Beautiful lunch; Great pies; Scrumptious!!!; Ideal & nutritious; Thankyou; Scrumptious; Special; Always excellent; Great soup & pies; Good food & excellent pies; Awesome!!; Excellent best pies I've had!; Best pies I've had; Indulgence again great; Lovely pies, best soup; Pies ok, soup lovely; The pies were very good & the soup also; Great steak mushroom pies; Extremely well organised, very good & delicious; Great as always; Tasty much better organisation than last year. Went well; Excellent. Disappointed they were not back for Friday; More finger licking food. I put on 3kgs; Best pies I have ever eaten & soup was beautiful; Well organised gluten free food; Absolutely mouth watering pies!; Beef & red wine – tick; Delicious soup. Great to find the pies I buy in Canberra on their home territory; Very good (again). Especially the pies; Lunch was tasty, wholesome & delicious; Very good. Good to move around & speak to other guests; Delicious – especially the mushroom soup.

1.30 Vermiculture Feeding Demonstration

Good x 7; Excellent x 2; Very good x 2; Interesting x 6; Double Tick; Tick x 2; Very interesting x 2; Ok x 3; Well set up & interesting; Missed it. Was talking; Fascinating; Good explanation; Worthwhile; Great idea to show us!; Most interested; Informative & interesting; Did not see x 2; Good to see how it is done; As per DVD – good to see how it all works...; Didn't get to see it, too busy talking; Brother said very interesting. I did not see, unable-sitting down; Had seen that before too, but not the railway line leveller; Farmers love to see machinery working; Yes, this was good to experience. The combined manure was a lot darker colour than I expected; Good - Graham's question time helpful afterwards; Very interesting. So much compost just goes to waste. Not these guys!; Why does something have to go wrong when you have an audience? It was very good;

2.00 Graeme Hand “Grazing Management”

Excellent x 3; Good x 2; Very good; Quite inspiring; Alright; Ok; Good to listen to; Presented food for thought; Excellent & thought provoking; For me, the best; I'd like to hear more of GH; The best speaker; Tick; Have heard before but this time I understood a lot better (I must have been ready to move on); Informative, amusing, thought provoking, motivating; The best, really learnt a lot. Down-to-earth. Very easy to learn, listen to; I have heard Graeme talk a couple of times. I have been to his farm. He was the first one to make resource management conceivable for me; Always interesting - importance of trampling / disturbance reinforced; GH talks were good. I cell-graze and he filled in some of the missing links; Not much said about the topic and recounted some of what CJ was saying. Not a high calibre speaker; Great - I find GH really interesting as he is a logical person; Excellent - not applicable to dairy though; Interesting - but I missed the message - like a good fire with no heat; Challenging - the length of rotation challenged me. I don't see how I could fully implement this on a dairy farm milking all year round; I came to learn and I certainly have been stretched; He approached from a different perspective we had not seen before; Weed management and don't have to go to great expense with weed killers - use animals instead. A humorous and informative speaker; Good, was at the same Allan Savoury seminar when I was 11yo and practicing a cell-grazing system; Very good presentation, learnt that longer spells between grazing could help with weed management - amazing pictures of the capeweed and mobile chook coup! Green manure - shallow incorporation; Sometimes difficult to follow the theme of what GH was presenting. We need unhurried practical workable facts; Most informative - we're keen to give it a go. Backing up what we have been doing. Better planning, lower inputs, less work, let the bugs do it; Fantastic – very motivational; Only disappointing area - whilst what was suggested is fine, it is not always practicable in farming with weather so unpredictable; Sorry but this bloke was absolutely hopeless. Explained nothing. Waste of good time. Did not answer questions properly; Also brilliant and inspiring would have liked more background; Some good tips - expected more system applications and results; Fascinating - added more to our knowledge of pasture management; Found what he had to say very interesting; Very informative and gets to the point. His humour makes presentation more enjoyable; Interesting and informative on timing and grazing management of weeds; Excellent - great info on how to get started and boosts your confidence that you can make a difference; Interesting, entertaining, captivating, learnt a lot, great presenter; A

brilliant, interesting, informative and practical presenter with good advice; Possibly more suited to larger acreage - a challenge on smaller or dairy properties.

2.30 Afternoon Tea

Very good x 3; Great x 2; Ok x 2; Good x 5; Excellent x 2; Double Tick; Tick x 2; Yum x 3; Indulgent – great; Missed out - still talking; Good to have fruit; Great mandarins; Great as always; Spot on!; Plenty; Beautiful; Good as ever; Thankyou; Enjoyed all the fresh fruit; Again much appreciated; Very good – more than enough; Awesome; Good. Mark with the sprayers was very good & helpful; We had to leave early to attend to lambing ewes at home; Don't remember was talking too much; Short break is good to stand up; Cakes were beautiful thank-you very much; I'm getting pretty full at this stage; Good to get a chance to talk to others.

3.00 Panel of all speakers answering questions from audience

Good x 4; Ok x 2; Good idea x 2; Very good & informative; Very challenging; Excellent; Generally good; Good summary; A very important part of the day; Answered questions very well; Again the 2 ladies stood out; Could not stay for this – time constraints; Very good answered questions; Apart from GH dominance it was good; Good was interesting, probably could have been longer; All very good. Good to hear the Haggerty's experience; Excellent – really felt good to have actual farmers tell their stories; Enjoyed the panel – should have lasted longer – once again good feedback on experience; Good especially Ian with his practical WA experience; Great to hear other farmers questions & answers; An interesting session for the exchange of info; Extremely interesting – good to hear the WA farmers again; Not a machinery person or cropping, I get bored easily; Not enough time - but there will always be more questions. The panel approach allows for many perspectives; I feel it is better to have their answer questions straight after their talk and then have a combined session; Really good but I was surprised with the questions - not really strong - perhaps the audience has learnt the messages?; Great to hear the different questions posed from the audience allowed to clarify issues – good; This a vital part of the day to help clarify what we can take away with us. Great to have the WA people participate; I was pleased that Ian Haggerty stated his application of nutrients for his cropping enterprise in the end when questioned; Absolutely fascinating, especially the WA farmer - would like to hear more of his experiences. Go over and have a look at their operation; Very good and useful, especially the cropping farmer, he should be a speaker telling more about his farming experiences. Very useful!; Very interesting. Really good to hear from the WA farmer explain things and all panel except Hand; The questions asked were well answered by your very good speakers; Good to hear from each speaker plus someone on the land complimenting what we were learning; Need to start on time. Have you thought about a 1 hour small group discussion - with a lead speaker?; Good to get a variety of different views for the same question - very interesting.

Individual Sessions Comments – Friday

9.30 Christine Jones & Nicole Masters

Transitioning to Biological Farming –Group Planning exercise

Loved the day all great; Motivational; That was very good; Very good; Too much time spent on this area; I thought for me the morning session was a bit flat; Friday sessions too general; Worthwhile. Some comments got off the track; Helpful; Maybe CJ missed the mark a little as she was preaching to the converted; Excellent again & also challenging; Excellent strategic way to plan the next move; Arrived late; Disappointing – should have been more technical. Was too much of a repeat performance; Too much “politics” we didn’t need much convincing, just how to do it; Bit laboured & slow; Good subject matter but found it a bit disjointed; Good; Very good detail & in-depth discussion on important topics; I felt NM & GH had more practical advice delivered in an informative & sympathetic manner; I enjoyed the comments from around the meeting; If the day had been advertised as 'PLANNING' and I had understood that I was not going to get access to Christine's amazing factual knowledge, I probably wouldn't have gone - maybe it was advertised as a planning and I didn't read flyer; Good plan worked out. Need guidelines to raise soil nutrient levels which was lacking in discussion; A useful exercise but went too long at the expense of the next session that seemed not to be really addressed; Gave the listeners the logical steps to move towards biological farming; We need to have a reason to change - get off the treadmill. Take time out to see where you are at. Be brave enough to grasp the change & (DO IT); CJ should stick to her field of expertise - her personal comments on carbon making lacked a national economic basis. This session strayed from the talk at hand too much!; This day was more directed towards people who haven't been exposed to Biological farming and trying to get them interested. I didn't get much out of it, nothing new that wasn't covered Thurs came up on Friday really; Not being present on the Thursday I felt a bit in the dark on the direction and goals of the session it took a while to "fit in" so to speak with the direction of meaning of the session.

10.30 Morning Tea

Good x 5; Very good x 3; Tick x 2; Excellent x 2; Ok x 2; Great; As always very enjoyable; Great as always; Excellent as always; Plenty; Thankyou; Very good – long queues; Good – missed the scones; Lovely; Yum!; Perhaps more savoury foods – dry bickies & cheese etc.

11.00 Dr Christine Jones & Nicole Masters

Transitioning to Biological Farming – Formulation of Plan & Tools for Management

Great; Necessary sections; Both great – learnt a lot. Now take home & try; Very good; Ok; Helpful; Excellent x 2; Excellent idea; Good to know we can objectively measure improvements in pasture & crops; Bit laboured & slow; Enjoyed this subject, plenty of meat; Good; Once again a very enjoyable session; Helped put ideas into action a bit more; Good information; Again too general – I wanted to extend my knowledge; This part took much too long to get into the tools; Also interesting to hear other farmers ideas on steps needed to change; As above - I found this frustrating. I expected to get to the nuts and bolts / factual amazing carbon, perennials, biological farming etc, etc. I have spent many years of my 'other' life as a teacher doing the planning stuff; If the people there were not planning and getting into biological farming and already gained knowledge and planning they wouldn't have been there. We wanted NS practice; List of transition tools 2 out of 10. Learnt little things about refractometer that will help. Would have liked more about using tools; Ok but didn't get much from this. Good for people starting out looking at a better way of farming; I think I need to do this one again. I've checked my notes and don't have a clear plan - I have for years tried to increase organic matter as much as possible reducing use of chemicals - have been applying more fungi and bacteria; Gave listeners formulation to put questions, and allay fears; to clarify and begin to see how information can be used in individual situations; Designed well to enable participants to open up their minds and really look at the whys and how's; Disappointing. Have to assume attendees had been sold the sizzle the day previously - but this kind of repeated sales pitch CJ too often recapped audiences questions in her own view, not that of the participants. No plan was really established for audience - look to Graeme on how to do this; Not enough time for Nicole's tools for management - her Brix, CEC, interaction as a diagnostic tool was fascinating but too brief; Found the morning thoughts and ideas being bandied about a bit difficult to interpret and focus into a "hands on" plan. But still good and thought provoking.

12.30 Lunch - Sandwiches & Soup

Very good x 2; Great x 2; Good x 6; Yum; Tick; Great as always; Excellent; Very nice lunch; Enjoyed it all; Again delicious; Good – missed the pies; I liked the food; Another delicious lunch; Better yesterday love pies – not much first in best dressed; Bob came home raving about the pies & I thought they were yummy last year so was disappointed; Lovely soup – I talked to much & missed out on sandwiches; Excellent as always; Very nice, not quite enough for those coming late; Very good – nice chicken & corn soup; A bit of a let-down from yesterday!!! (was pretty good); Yummy – but sandwiches were packed together making people handle “non-target” sandwiches, had some concerns with hygiene issues with that.

1.0 Graeme Hand – Regenerating Grasslands (inc Paddock Walk)

Good x 2; Loved the day all great; Needed more time; Interesting; The mind is truly stretched by this; Interesting to put the theory into practice; Very informative; Great & very interesting; Needed to be longer; Good practical advice; Fabulous; Good practical exercise; Very interesting; In the paddock discussion was good for broad acres; Wonderful, an informative & enlightening speaker. Truly learnt that grass aint grass; Hands on was good & seemed to get a lot of people involved; Found the paddock walk light on results; Enjoyed the presentation; I listened to his presentation but left before the paddock walk; Probably the best part of the day but the paddock walk got lost; Good to get out in the paddock & see first-hand how GH would go about his style of restoration; Enjoyed this practical walk. GH straight to point. Always good to walk with CJ; Too many participants. Had attended similar one with GH at Holbrook; Good dynamic speaker. This procedure will help build carbon in native grasslands; So easy to understand – Would like to hear him again. Paddock was so nice. Thank-you for the drive; I thought he needed more time because you have people who don't get it and people who do, people from the west (dry) and people from the hills (wetter); To get the most from GH probably needs several different paddocks at different stages of growth; Have heard GH before a few times. It was more of the same. (This is what I usually love about CJ - you never get a p.point type presentation. It's always inspiring.) Same for paddock walk. More of the same; * A few people commented on your paddock - not just today. It would be really good if the pasture in your front paddock was in better condition. Please don't take offence; Very good. Possible not the best area for the message but a very important message for Australia - Graziers would get it, others probably wondering what Graeme was on about; We learnt a lot - we're looking at our own paddocks with different eyes now. USING ANIMALS TO GET MULCH CONTACT WITH SOIL SAVING RAIN WHERE IT FALLS!!

2.45 Afternoon Tea

Ok x 2; Very good; Great; Tick x 3; Good x 6; Very enjoyable; Great as always; Kept us fuelled up!; Sufficient; Once again the ewes were calling; Excellent; Thankyou; Great fruit; Great food; DNA; Had to leave early; Very tasty; Lovely (I have now had too much)!

3.15 Wrap-up by all speakers & answering questions from the audience

Good x 2; Great x 2; Was great all questions answered; Sorry I had to leave after paddock walk. Cows calving; We missed this area as we had to pick up pump from one of your speakers before he closed for the day; Tick; Very good to hear of other farmers experiences & also questions; Excellent x 2; Ok; Very good; Interesting; DNA; A bit flat from previous session in day – I really don't think many audiences are well equipped enough to embrace biological farming if they are still gate sitting; Most informative, good to hear other people's experiences; Very good. Could post questions onto slideshow so it is readable for the audience; The whole audience was keen for information; Basically capped off a good day.

Transition Stages from Chemical to Biological Management

*CREATED BY ATTENDEES OF NUTRISOIL OPEN DAY 2011 with
DR CHRISTINE JONES & NICOLE MASTERS*

1. “The process is **YOU**”
2. Motivating factors: Family, Financial, Health, Responsibilities, Climate
3. Information, Networking, Mentors
4. Diverse Knowledge – Understanding – Building Confidence
5. Processes Vs Products; Simple Vs Complex
6. Farm Plan (flexible) but with ultimate Goal
7. Involve others, collaboration; family, friends, other farmers
8. Profitable, transitional period – subtle weaning off – economic thresholds
9. Utilise free services, Sunlight ...
10. STOP what’s doing harm
11. Observation and Tools, use 5 senses
12. Trials – gain confidence, Self Empowerment
13. JUST DO IT!
14. Celebrate the small steps forward
15. Monitoring, Benchmarking, Keep Records (tools, testing)
16. Managements of Plants (groundcover diversity, perenniality), Animals and Little Animals
17. Mechanical interventions – soil structure...
18. Repair disturbance
19. Change in fertiliser management - Change chemical management
20. Encourage Diversity
21. Review, Plan, Management
22. Mentor others

Event Logistics / Planning

How did you find out about the day?	TOTAL	%
Invite in Mail/Email from NutriHealth	34	60%
Invite fwd thru other network	1	2%
Farming Secrets	3	5%
The Border Mail (Country Mail)	2	4%
Weekly Times	1	2%
NutriSoil Website	7	12%
Friend told me	12	21%
Other	1	2%

How did you find the Venue & Equipment for Learning?

Great wouldn't change a thing **TOTAL** **46** **or** **81%**

If I was running the day I would have...

- Softer seats please.
- I found I could hear better if I stood up when sitting up the back.
- Moved day to a little warmer time of year.
- Maybe more toilets.
- Professionally video-recorded the day and use the discs to educate attendees & (others).
- Had the nice lady that made gluten free brownies for afternoon tea in 2010 make them again!!
- Changed nothing!
- Your excellent hosts. I would consider s/h carpet or rubber tiles on floor to help with the heating easily stacked up for the rest of the year.
- Much warmer this time.
- All the audio and video functioned well. Helped us appreciate the presenters - well done.

- I would have asked practical farmers who speak to give specific details of their operations where successful.
- A lock on the dunny!
- Maybe another toilet - otherwise FANTASTIC.
- Better chairs
- Ian Haggerty has a lease block where he used no NutriSoil because of the lease conditions. I would like to see some input cost comparison and gross profit comparison.
- Warmer seats.
- Would have had video screen higher, so all could see. I was sitting behind a rather tall person who obstructed my view.
- Venue very good. Would have an elevated platform for speaker would be easier to see them. TV screen perhaps to view them.

Was the day well facilitated/organised?

Great, everything ran smoothly... TOTAL 51 or 89%

If I was running the day I would have....

- The whole experience was kept on track for the program timing congratulations.
 - Questions during presentation must make it more difficult for presenters but helps the person doing the asking.
 - Keep to the format you are using ie involving independent true environmental scientists and practical farmers.
 - A little more in field stuff - did not do any soil digging - that is what it's about, no?
 - NS ran it excellent I could not do it better myself.
 - Loved the catering.
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Other resources from the day are available for download from the website for a limited time or contact NutriSoil office if you require further information. www.nutrisoil.com.au