

EUCALYPTUS ACTION GROUP NEWSLETTER

Editor: Graham Milligan Ph 03 248 5147

Milliganseeds@xtra.co.nz

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Editorial

At the Farm Forestry National Conference in Invercargill there were some changes in the office bearers (see page 3). Ian Nicholas has been our newsletter editor since the group's inception in 2003. Like any newsletter of this ilk, content is greatly reliant on you as members letting the editor know of stories and experiences with all things eucalyptus. As the new Editor perhaps a little about myself. My wife, Heather, and I live adjacent to the Oreti River in Southland. From a farming background our main income these days is from tree related endeavours – mostly the sale of eucalypt seed. We have between 90 – 100 species on our own property. Although the main thrust of the Eucalypt Action Group is growing eucalypts for solid wood production, the species we grow here cover everything from foliage to essential oils, food for birds to amenity, and shelter to biomass. Biomass is the boom industry right now with considerable plantings being undertaken world wide. Whether for wood chips, wood pellets, power generation, ethanol or simply firewood, eucalypts are the species of choice in temperate countries for their adaptability and speed of growth. We sell seed to a nursery in France because of the dearth of oaks and hence shortage of domestic firewood. In Ireland firewood is at a premium due to a shortage of trees. This is all good for our business.

We live in *E. nitens* country. The species grows supremely in Otago and Southland and, as those of you that visited our property will attest to, we have trees of some size here. The best of the 25 year old trees are well over 40 metres tall and DBH over 75 cm are not uncommon. We are selling logs to a local mill for green mine props and another exciting project which the owner wants to keep 'mum' for commercial advantage, but he has put a lot of effort into the project and, if it comes off, could be a lucrative outlet for our trees. Another small mill is sawing eucalypt into appearance grade timber for export (there will be a story on this in the next Tree Grower).

One thing I am learning in the forestry business is that we don't know what the trees we are planting now will be used for in the future. Carbon trading was unheard of 20 years ago, but is creating a lot of interest in generating potential extra income from our trees. Most pundits (including me) said there was no money in growing eucalypts for firewood but, believe or not, we now are.

I was rung by one of our Australian seed dealers to inform me of the discovery of Myrtle Rust (see page 5) He told me both Tasmania and Western Australia had already banned the importation of plant material from NSW and, if the disease can't be controlled, it could have serious implications for the importation of Australian eucalypt seed here..

Most of the articles in this newsletter are sourced from offshore. Remember we want your experiences or anecdotes to share.

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Milligans NZFFA Conference 2010

Ruminations from President Angus Gordon



Farm foresters are an interesting group, scattered nationwide, individualistic and community minded who gather together every now and then to swap stories and helpful hints for the greater good, and then retreat back to their own little corner of the world to continue with their creative vision. And this is the interesting bit....so often we work away in isolation coming up with good ideas and doing lots of stuff under the radar, but every now and then one of our crew does get onto the radar screen for doing something really special.

One of our team who did that was Allan Levett. Allan a Wellingtonian and retired University lecturer bought a beaten up hill country farm in the Wairarapa a few years back and turned it into a tree huggers paradise. There were experiments galore, some of them his own, some of them in partnership with Scion and others in partnership with our many enthusiastic experimenters from within the wider NZFFA membership. For those of you who have not visited Allan's forest farm out at Tinui there is something very special in store for you when you eventually do....hopefully at next years national conference.

Unfortunately when you do visit it will be without Allan (in a physical sense), as he passed away after a brief struggle with cancer as this last autumn drew to a close. For those of us that got to know Allan you could not help but admire his courage, drive and give it a go attitude. He worked quietly and asked lots of questions and most importantly, he walked the talk. On behalf of all the EAG members I would like to acknowledge Allan for the time and effort that he put in as chairman of our group and for what he achieved in the relatively short time that he was at the reins of his Tinui farm forest, his will be big boots to fill.



U.S. clears a test of Bioengineered Trees by Andrew Pollack, The New York Times

Federal regulators gave clearance Wednesday for a large and controversial field test of genetically engineered trees planned for seven states stretching from Florida to Texas.

The test is meant to see if the trees, eucalyptuses with a foreign gene meant to help them withstand cold weather, can become a new source of wood for pulp and paper, and for biofuels, in the Southern timber belt. Eucalyptus trees generally cannot now be grown north of Florida because of occasional freezing spells.

The Agriculture Department, in an environmental assessment issued Wednesday, said no environmental problems would be caused by the field trial, which could involve more than 200,000 genetically modified eucalyptus trees on 28 sites covering about 300 acres.

The permit would be issued to ArborGen, a biotechnology company owned by three big forest products companies: International Paper and MeadWestvaco of the United States, and Rubicon of New Zealand.

The Agriculture Department would have to grant separate approval for the trees to be grown commercially, clearance that ArborGen is already seeking.

Although two genetically engineered fruit trees — virus-resistant papaya and plum trees — are already approved for commercial planting in the United States, no forest trees have yet received that clearance in this country.

Genetically engineered trees have the potential to arouse even more controversy than genetically modified crops like corn or soybeans, which are made using the same techniques. That is partly because many people have an emotional attachment to forests that they do not have to cornfields.

Moreover, because trees live longer than annual crops and generally can spread their pollen farther, there are concerns that any unintended environmental effects may spread and persist longer in a woodland environment than in crop fields.

The Agriculture Department said Wednesday that it had received com-

ments opposing the field trial from 12,462 people or organizations, compared with only 45 supporters of the trial. But a vast majority of the opposing comments were nearly identical form letters, it said.

Critics say that the eucalyptus trees, even without foreign genes, may become invasive. They also said the trees were heavy users of water, could spread fires faster and could harbor a fungus that sickens people.

"They've been a disaster everywhere they've been planted," said Anne Petermann, coordinator of a coalition called the Stop GE Trees Campaign.

The Sierra Club, in a comment submitted in February, wrote, "ArborGen's plans to grow 260,000 artificially developed, highly experimental, alien, genetically engineered cloned trees in extensive field trials raises many troubling ecological questions about the short-term and long-term environmental impacts and risks that these trees pose in the United States."

The Agriculture Department said it had found those possibilities to be unlikely. "The species of eucalyptus in this permit has difficulty establishing without human intervention, even in warmer climates," the department said in its initial environmental assessment, dismissing concerns that the genetically engineered trees would spread like a weed. It said other impacts would be limited because each experimental plot would be no larger than 20 acres and isolated from the others.

ArborGen, based in Summerville, S.C., had previously received permission to grow the trees on the 28 sites. But on only two of those sites, covering 7.6 acres, had it received permission to let the trees flower.

The new permit would allow more trees to be planted at the 28 sites and to allow flowering on 27 of the sites. While flowering would normally mean the possibility of reproduction, the trees in the trial have also been engineered to produce no pollen.

ArborGen argues that because they grow so fast, eucalyptus trees would minimize the amount of forest land needed for commercial plantations. "You are able to produce more wood off fewer acres of land," Barbara Wells, the company's president, said in an interview. "It's very positive from that standpoint." 12/05/2010

Eucalyptus Action Group Formed 2003 A NZ Farm Forestry Association Group

OBJECTIVES of Eucalypt Action Group

To encourage the dissemination of information concerning the growing, utilisation and marketing of eucalypts in New Zealand.

AIMS

To share experiences and research activities of farm foresters, processors and researchers with those involved in the eucalypt industry.

To encourage the adoption of the best available silvicultural techniques.

To assist farm foresters with appropriate species selection.

To encourage communication between buyers and sellers of eucalypt logs and timber.

To encourage the growth of a New Zealand eucalypt industry.

ACTIVITIES

To compile a mailing list of action group members.

To publish a regular newsletter.

To provide a forum for NZFFA members to discuss eucalypt issues.

Chairman: Angus Gordon

Secretary: Gary Fleming Ph 03 312 9274 Email Garyfleming@xtra.co.nz

Newsletter editor: Graham Milligan Ph 03 248 5147 Email Milliganseeds@xtra.co.nz

Committee:: Denis Hocking, Dean Satchell, Paul Millen, Richard Davies Colley, Ian Nicholas, George Shallcrass

Membership fees \$15 per annum - through NZFFA membership .Subscriptions available via:New Zealand Farm Forestry Association, PO Box 1122, Wellington Phone: (04) 472 0432; Email: nzffa@clear.net.nz

MOROCCO: Renault details Tangier plant's green credentials 4 June 2010

Renault has released details of environment measures at its new EUR600m (US\$724m) plant in the northern Moroccan city of Tangier.

The automaker will start manufacturing vehicles based on the low-cost Logan platform from 2012 with one line producing around 170,000 models per year. This is expected eventually to rise to 400,000 vehicles.

Renault claims its new plant will reduce CO2 emissions by 98%, that no industrial water will be discharged and water used by manufacturing processes will fall by 70%.

These advances will be achieved through energy consumption improvements and renewable energy use, while some CO2 reduction will derive from either offsetting, buying carbon credits or generating renewable power on site.

Environmental services provider Veolia will help recover paintshop energy which will account for some 70% of the plant's thermal consumption. Renault said it will cut its thermal energy needs by 35% at the Tangier site.

Biomass boilers partly using fuel from locally sourced olive stones will produce the superheated water for the paint process ovens, as well as ventilation required in the factory buildings.

The rest of the fuel will derive initially from eucalyptus wood from southern Europe and within four years this will be from Morocco.

In a further development Renault said the entire plant would be powered by wind and hydraulic electricity while all industrial effluent would also be recycled.

<http://www.just-auto.com/index.aspx>

Production of Amazon wood in Brazil drops by half

A public-private study shows the production of wood in Brazil's Amazon region dropped by half over an 11-year period. The study says that production decreased from 28 million cubic meters (989 million cubic feet) in 1998 to 14 million cubic meters (495 million cubic feet) in 2009. The report compiled by the Environment Ministry and the environmental watchdog group Imazon was released Thursday.

Imazon's Denys Pereira attributes the drop to increased monitoring of the Amazon region coupled with anti-deforestation projects. He also cites the increased use of synthetic woods and eucalyptus from managed forests. The study says that nearly 80 percent of the wood produced in 2009 was sold in the domestic market.

<http://www.businessweek.com/> 10-06-2010

Minutes of AGM, Eucalypt Action Group NZFFA. 2010

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Thurs April 8th. Ascot hotel Invercargill

Apologies, A. Levett

Minutes of the 2008 AGM were circulated by Angus Gordon. *mov George Shallcrass, sec Ian Nicholas*

Chairman's report There was no report due to the sudden illness of Allan Levett.

Financial report was presented by Angus Gordon. *mov Angus Gordon, sec Dean Satchel.*

Newsletter editor. A verbal Report given by Ian Nicholas *mov Ian Nicholas sec Angus Gordon*

Election of Officers

Chairman Angus Gordon

mov Ian Nicholas, sec Graham Milligan

Secretary Gary Fleming

mov Ian Nicholas, sec Richard Davies-Colley

Newsletter editor G Milligan

mov Ian Nicholas, sec George Shallcrass

All current committee members be re-elected.

mov Angus Gordon, sec George Shallcrass

Committee: A Gordon, G Fleming, G Milligan, I Nicholas, D Hocking, R Davies-Colley, G Shallcrass, P Millen, D Satchel.

General business.

Joint action group meeting, it is probable that it will be held in Taranaki in 2010

Graham Milligan suggested that a South Island venue be booked for 2011, possibly Christchurch.

There was a discussion on whether we could look at combining some key roles with other action groups to gain some efficiencies. Possible secretary, newsletter, treasurer

Research

Dean Satchel commented on his sawing study into ash group Eucs, nitens, regnans, which were traditionally cut from large diameter logs, but are now being able to be cut from small diameter logs successfully. The results will be published mid year.

Graham Milligan commented that *E delegatensis* has sawn well for framing timber in southland with superior stress grade outputs to *D. fir*.

Ian Nicholas gave a brief summary of the project on land based effluent treatment using hardwoods (Eucs) and the results so far. He monitored sites from Warkworth to Invercargill. Nutrient stripping is the goal of this type of treatment system. *E. nitens* was the most productive species in the South Island, and *E botroides* the most effective at the Whiritoa site in the North Island. Ian thanked Angus Gordon, Paul Millen and Graham Milligan for their help on the project.

Ian Nicholas gave a summary of a MAF funded project that was looking at 3 suitable forest species for carbon farming on NI sedimentary hill country. *Radiata*, Redwood & *E. fastigata* are the 3 species chosen. There is a shortage of psp plots in the region being studied, especially of redwood and *fastigata*.

Ian Nicholas indicated that Scion have 2nd generation *E. fastigata* going out in trials now

Graham Milligan commented on the poor form of *E. fastigata* when young. Dean Satchel commented on the importance of matching species with end use. The decking market is a good use for many eucalypts with class 2 durability or better. Note - *fastigata* is class 3-4.

Dean Satchel wondered whether *E globoidea* is not a better general purpose planting species in warmer areas of NZ where it can be grown.

Tony Tripp commented on his trial area at Hororata. He is putting in Eucs in 2010, and already has chestnuts and cypresses planted.

Graham Milligan commented on the soil micro site requirements of *E* species and our need to get better at predicting what will grow where.

Meeting closed at 9 am.

Wither Hills, Blenheim, experiencing a feast of Tuis

Marlborough Express 09/06/2010

Tasty eucalyptus tree flowers and plenty of insects seem to be attracting tui to the Wither Hills this year, with more people noticing the birds in that part of Blenheim than last year. Marlborough District Council environmental scientist Nicky Eade said there had been 45 tui sightings recorded this year, which included multiple sightings in the same area last month. Nearly all the birds were seen feeding on flowering eucalyptus trees, which Ms Eade said were most likely to be *ficifolia* and *leucoxyton* species. "Tui will fly up to 30 kilometres to feed on nectar, and are obviously enjoying this sugar feast at the moment. They will also be feeding on native fruits and insects at this time of year."

Southland Times, August 1884

Value of the Eucalyptus

It appears, says an American paper, that wherever there is surplus of moisture a large eucalyptus will prove of great service, and a grove of them will dispose of a vast amount of house sewerage. But, where there is water which: it is not desirable to exhaust, as in a good well, it will be wise to put the eucalyptus very far away. The owner of the Bay Island Farm, Alameda County, California, recently found a curious root formation of the eucalyptus in the bottom of his well, about sixteen feet below the surface. The trees to which the roots belong stand fifty feet from the well. Two shoots pierced through the brick wall of the well, and, sending of millions of fibers, formed a dense mat that completely covered the bottom of the well. Most of these fibers are no larger than threads, and are so woven and intertwined as to form a mat as impenetrable and strong as though regularly woven in a loom. . The mat when first taken out of the well was water-soaked and covered with mud, and nearly all that a man could lift, but when dry it was nearly as soft to touch as wool, and weighed only a few ounces. This is an excellent illustration of the way in which the eucalyptus, absorbs moisture, its roots going so far to find water, pushing themselves through a brick wall, and then developing enormously after the water is reached. It is thought that one of the causes of the drying-up of wells is the insatiable thirst of these vegetable monsters



Yes. Angus Gordon,
we know who you are!!!!

Israeli wasps to check eucalyptus gall disease

Much to the relief of Indian paper industry, wasps of Israeli-origin brought to India to check the gall disease in eucalyptus plants have started showing signs of survival which could save the plants—a key raw material for the wood-based local paper industry from destruction.
12-06-2010

<http://www.financialexpress.com/>

Department of Primary Industries, NSW. May 2010 Pest alert: Myrtle Rust information

Myrtle Rust (*Uredo rangellii*) is a newly described pathogen that is closely related to the Eucalyptus/ Guava rusts. These rusts are serious pathogens of plants belonging to the family Myrtaceae including many iconic Australian natives like willow myrtle (*Agonis* sp.) and bottle brush (*Callistemon* sp.).

Myrtle Rust was recently detected on the NSW Central Coast on three species of native plants: *A. flexuosa* (willow myrtle) cv. 'Afterdark' and cv. 'Burgundy', *Syncarpia glomulifera* (turpentine) and *Callistemon viminalis* (bottle brush).

To date Myrtle Rust has not been found on Australian eucalypts. Overseas, it is also known to occur on *Syzygium jambos* (rose apple) and *Myrtus communis* (common myrtle).

The full host range of Myrtle Rust has not yet been determined and research efforts into the taxonomy and ecology of the pathogen are ongoing. At present, severe infestation has only been observed on *Agonis* Afterdark.

Myrtle Rust has been found on the NSW Central Coast and eradication and control measures have been implemented. Surveillance efforts are also ongoing in the surrounding ar-

reas including nurseries and bushland.

How does Myrtle Rust infect plants?
Myrtle Rust infects leaves of susceptible plants producing spore-filled lesions on young actively growing leaves and shoots, as well as fruits and sepals. Leaves may become buckled or twisted as a result of infection. On turpentine and callistemon rust lesions are purple in colour, with masses of bright yellow or orange-yellow spores. Older lesions may contain dark brown spores. Severe rust disease in young trees may kill shoot tips, causing loss of leaders and a bushy habit.

How does Myrtle Rust spread?
Rust spores travel very long distances on the wind and may infect stands of susceptible plants many kilometres from the original infestation. Rust spores are also gathered and spread by bees. These are natural means of spread that are difficult to control. Humans can also easily spread Myrtle Rust in infested plant material including cut flowers and nursery stock, on clothing and dirty equipment including containers and pruning shears, and on contaminated timber products. Always practise good hygiene when working with native plants and general nursery stock.

Please note, opinions expressed in this newsletter are not official action group opinions, also any materials advertised for sale is not specifically endorsed by this action group.

If you would like future newsletters sent via email, please contact us at.

Milliganseeds@xtra.co.nz.

You will have the advantage of colour photography.

The newsletter will be in PDF form and no bigger than 750kbs.