



The Leucaena Network News

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Date claimers...

- The Leucaena Network 2010 Conference and AGM at Biloela on Thursday September 30 and Friday October 1, 2010
- Leucaena Network Management Group Meeting will be held at Brian Pastures at Gayndah on Tuesday July 14, 2010

Executive member contacts

President – Andrew Lawrie (07) 4934 7526

Vice. President – Bryant Ussher (07) 4665 5118

Treasurer – Ruth Wagner (07) 4627 9230

Minutes Secretary – Ken Murphy (07) 4936 0337

Executive Officer – Kevin Graham 0418 411 351

Past President – Robin Cruikshank (07) 4995 1236

Research and Training – Scott Dalzell (07) 3365 1172

Accel. Adoption of Leucaena – Stuart Buck 0427 929 187

Grower Representative – Steve Farmer 0428 347 555



Wajatrjn 2010 sale bulls line-up for their share of leucaena

Preparing bulls for sale

Preparing their 2009 draft of Droughtmaster sale bulls provided the Wajatrjn Stud with a new challenge as they were the stud's first mob to be feed on a combined leucaena grass pasture.

Warren and Carolyn Kenny trialled 50 acres of combined leucaena grass pasture at Wajatrjn as their first planting.

Forty-one Droughtmaster bulls with an average age of 16 months were selected to graze the 50 acre paddock in early March, 2009. Warren said that as this was the first time they had used the leucaena he did not know what to expect, therefore monitoring the weight gains of the mob was important.

Following are the results that this group of bulls achieved:

- average weight at first weighing on 2 March, 2009 – 479 kg/hd
- grazing period on leucaena grass pasture – 122 days

- average weight when they came off leucaena on 2 July, 2009 – 649 kg
- daily weight gain – 1.39 kg/hd.

Warren and Carolyn were very pleased with their first year's results. Warren said 'as we were not familiar with leucaena, one of our initial reservations with preparing this mob of bulls on leucaena was whether or not the semen quality would be affected. All of the 2009 bulls' semen tested with top quality, freeze-able quality semen.'

Also in early 2009 another 50 acres of combined leucaena grass pasture was planted at Wajatrjn.

Warren and Carolyn acknowledge drenching their cattle with the rumen bacteria supplied from the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), at Brian Pastures, Gayndah was an important part in obtaining these results.

A dozen or so steers from the 2009 draft were retained on the leucaena

as the bug carriers for this year's sale bulls and they were tested in February for the presence of *S. jonesii* rumen bug using the test kit developed by the University of Queensland team. The test showed that all of the steers had retained the bug.

The steers referred to as 'the bug carriers' were boxed with the 2010 draft of 50 bulls to start their sale preparation on the 22nd February. The bulls averaged 14.5 months and they will rotate within the 100 acres of the leucaena grass pastures paddocks.

It will be very interesting to hear more news from Wajatryn and we wish Warren and Carolyn all the best for this year's Droughtmaster Sales.



Wajatryn Droughtmaster bulls enjoying leucaena

Cows and heifers off combined leucaena grass pastures grade MSA

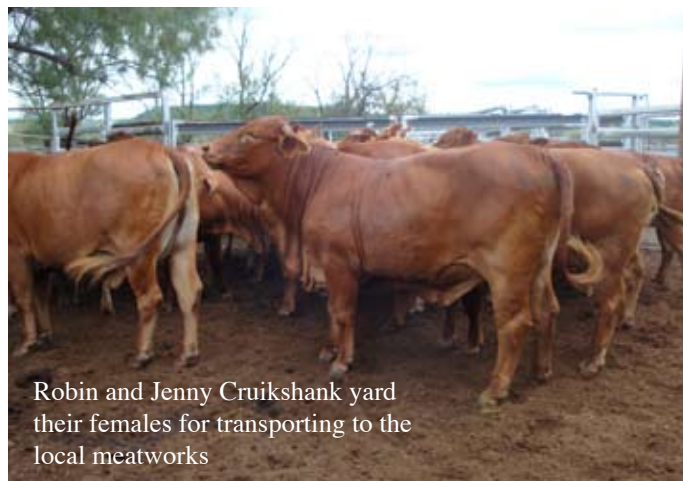
With only 230 mm of rain recorded between 28 February, 2009 and 1 February, 2010 Robin and Jenny Cruickshank faced a tough time keeping their cattle alive let alone thinking that they would have stock ready for the meatworks in late February, 2010.

Robin and Jenny's first experience with leucaena was back in the 90s. At the time they were going to plant sorghum and decided that cropping was not viable or the best way to go for them. They heard about leucaena being of high feed value and more drought tolerant. The first paddock of 40 hectares was planted to Tarramba in November 1999 on the alluvial flats.

With 10 years experience managing leucaena under his belt, Robin knew he was back in the game with 57 mm of rain in November, followed by 71 mm in December and 32 mm in January.

Twenty-four Droughtmaster cows and heifers were drafted out of the mob to finish on a fresh paddock of leucaena and grass. On January 16, 2010 they were weighed into the paddock, the average weight of the mob was 422.5 kg.

By the middle of February, Robin and Jenny could see their cattle were going ahead in leaps-and-bounds and were close to market-ready. To check their progress the cattle were once again yarded on February 21, 2010 and



Robin and Jenny Cruickshank yard their females for transporting to the local meatworks

weighed. The mob had been in the paddock for 36 days and their average weight was 459.37 kg, an increase of 36.87 kg/hd during the period.

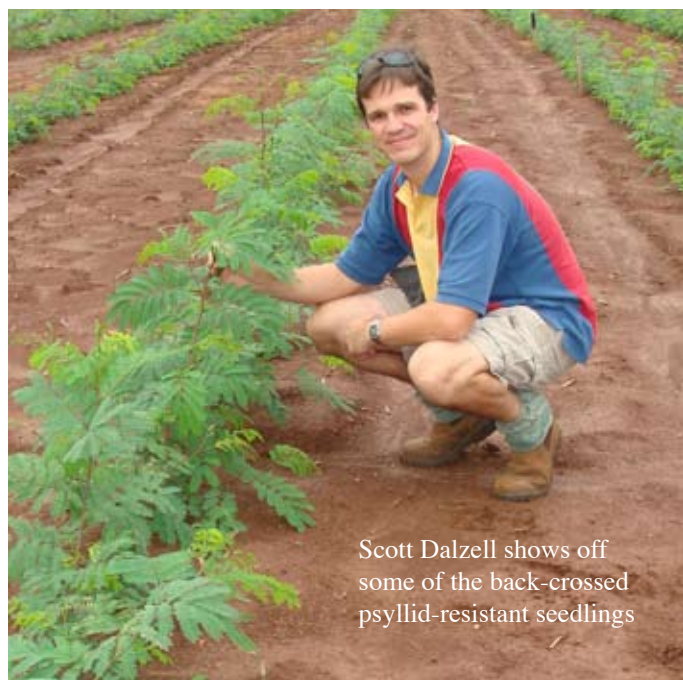
At that time, a kill space was arranged with Teys Bros at Biloela for March 1, 2010. The average carcass weight of the draft was 232.1 kg and 22 of the 24 head graded MSA.

Research and development on psyllid-resistant leucaena varieties

Wayne Hall, the Manager Northern Production Research with Meat and Livestock Australia confirmed that phase two (2) of the psyllid-resistant leucaena research by MLA and the University of Queensland is underway.

The first back-cross of psyllid-resistant leucaena seedlings varieties were planted out by the University of Queensland at the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), Research Station at Cleveland during September, 2009.

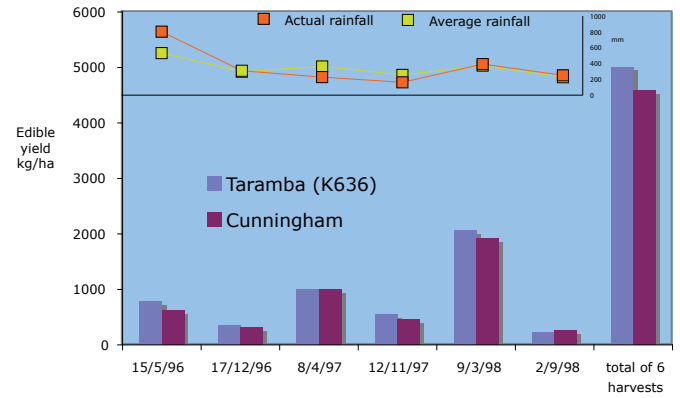
Growing conditions since December have been excellent, as can be seen in the photos. Researcher Dr. Scott Dalzell is confident that seed will be available for commercial use in 2015.



Scott Dalzell shows off some of the back-crossed psyllid-resistant seedlings



Healthy back-crossed psyllid-resistant leucaena varieties growing under trial at Cleveland in February, 2010



Edible yield cut from two varieties over six harvests compared to actual and average rainfall

Tarramba variety total yield was 11 280 kg/ha while the Cunningham variety yielded a total of 7614 kg/ha.

Table 1: Height and yield of two leucaena varieties

	Height (m)	Total yield (kg/ha)	Edible yield (kg/ha)
Tarramba (K636)	2.8	1808	787
Cunningham	1.7	994	617

The edible yield for the period from Tarramba was 5011 kg/ha with Cunningham variety edible yield for the same time, 4586 kg/ha, the percentage of edible yield for Tarramba was 60% in comparison to Cunningham edible yield being 70%.

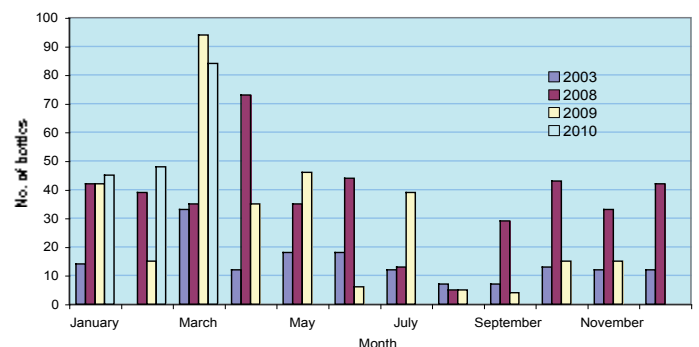
Edible yield includes leaf and stem to 6 mm diameter and the total yield was all material harvested by cutting plants 0.5 m above ground.

Demand for rumen fluid on the increase

Joanne Campbell, Technical Officer for Department Employment, Economic Development & Innovation (DEEDI), at Brian Pastures Research Station Gayndah reported the demand for rumen fluid is increasing.

In the following diagram it was noted that February 2009 sales appears so low and March high, this was because there was a back log of orders and Brian Pastures were waiting on supply of bottles.

Also a reminder that you can now order the *S. jonesii* rumen bug via email.



Monthly orders for rumen bug fluid from 2008-2010 compared with 2003

No time to rest, your feedback is required

Since the first commercial leucaena plant materials were introduced into Australia by CSIRO in 1954, the requirements from the leucaena industry stakeholders has increased.

As combined leucaena grass pastures are becoming more the pasture of choice for livestock producers, The Leucaena Network and its research partners realise that the varieties currently available and a psyllid-resistant variety will not address all the industry's needs. As a result, The Leucaena Network is developing plans for their next Research and Development Program for Leucaena.

Leucaena plant materials for developing new leucaena varieties to suit seasonal conditions in Australia are available to researchers, so to help The Leucaena Network and our partners understand what you want from future R&D, we invite you to participate in our survey to help identify the leucaena variety you require. Details for the survey can be found at: <http://www.leucaena.net/survey.htm>

Comparing trials on leucaena

From time-to-time, The Leucaena Network is asked about the yield of the different commercial varieties of leucaena that are available, so it might be time to remind you of some of the research available.

Well known and respected pasture researcher Dr. Bob Clem undertook trials on the edible yield and total plant yield from six harvests of *Leucaena leucocephala* cvv. Cunningham and Tarramba planted at Brian Pastures Research Station on September 13, 1995.

From the time that the two (2) varieties were planted in September 1995 to their first harvesting in May 1996 the following information was recorded.

The plants were harvested six (6) times between May 15, 1996 and September 2, 1998. The trial showed that the

Russ Tyler, Extension Officer (Beef) with Agri-science Queensland, Department of Employment Economic Development and Innovation at Brian Pastures, Gayndah advises that they now have an email address to take rumen fluid orders. It is rumenfluid@deedi.qld.gov.au If you are experiencing difficulties with the telephone landline into Brian Pastures, please ring Russ Tyler's mobile, the number is 0408 780 597.

Renewing the permit to use Spinnaker and Vezir on weeds in leucaena

The permit issued by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority to use imazethapyr on weeds in leucaena expired in March, 2010. The Leucaena Network realises what an important tool it is for growers, therefore an application was submitted to Canberra for its renewal along with the necessary payment.

APVMA are currently considering our application. The cost to The Leucaena Network for renewing this permit has been ongoing since 2002. Early feedback from APVMA suggests that if this permit is renewed one of the requirements for its continued use will be that manufacturers of imazethapyr will be required to include its use for leucaena on their labels.

Leucaena information days

Leucaena combined with grass pasture is now recognized as one of the most productive and sustainable free-grazing cattle forage system available to cattle producers, so the demand for information about establishing and managing leucaena pastures continues to increase.

To help meet the requests, The Leucaena Network in conjunction with The University of Queensland and Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI), plan to hold Leucaena Information Days at Dulacca, Wallumbilla, and Dalby on the 11th, 12th and 13th of May, for full details go to:

[Information Day - Dulacca 11th may 2010](#)
[Information Day - Wallumbilla 12th may 2010](#)
[Information Day - Dalby 13th may 2010](#)

More Leucaena Information Days are being planned for central and northern Queensland and they will be rolled out during the second half of 2010.

Leucaena for north-west Queensland

Do you want to know more about Leucaena for north-west Queensland?

The Leucaena Network, in conjunction with The University of Queensland and Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) wants to know how much interest there is to attend Leucaena Information Days in north-west Queensland.

Have you wanted to:

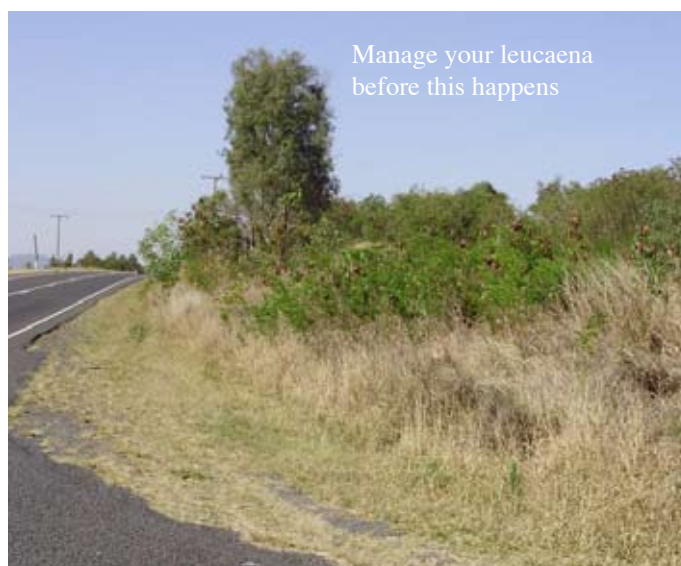
- know more about combined leucaena-grass pasture for your livestock?
- plant leucaena but don't know how to get started?

If you would like to have a Leucaena Information Day in your local area, please register your interest before June 30, 2010 with Rebecca Matthews or Stuart Buck.

Rebecca Matthews, DEEDI, Cloncurry
Phone 47 421 311 Mobile 0417 726 703
Email Rebecca.Matthews@deedi.qld.gov.au

Stuart Buck, DEEDI, Biloela
Phone 4992 9187 Mobile 0427 929 187
Email Stuart.Buck@deedi.qld.gov.au

Manage escaped leucaena



The Leucaena Network has received calls from concerned farmers and councils about the problems that they are experiencing from leucaena escaping from paddocks where some property owners are not managing their pastures correctly, this lack of action from some could put the leucaena industry at risk.

It's recommended that if you are not growing leucaena in accordance with the Code of Practice it is time to take stock of your actions, leucaena pastures are for livestock production, please manage any plants which may have escaped from your paddocks.

A copy of the Code of Practice can be obtained by going to: <http://www.leucaena.net/codeofconduct.pdf>

Leucaena receiving good media coverage

The March and April editions of the Queensland Country Life have carried almost weekly articles concerning leucaena, the two (2) most recent being *Taking the Leucaena Leap* by Melissa Martin and *Leucaena rumen bug in demand* from Russ Boadle. Both appear on TLN Homepage under News, to view go to: <http://www.leucaena.net/>

On Friday April 22, 2010 the Queensland Country Life reported on their website <http://qcl.farmonline.com.au/news/state/livestock/cattle/> that the *Leucaena rumen bug in demand* story was the most popular article for the April 21, 2010 section of the edition.

Updating The Leucaena Network website

The Leucaena Network Website is important for communicating with members. At present our website administrator Denis Murphy from CQ IT Services is busy updating it. The website will have a new layout and look about it and be easier for you to navigate.

The wording for each page has been reviewed and updated with the latest information about leucaena and grass pastures. As soon as this work has been completed you will be advised and your feedback will be very much appreciated.

The Leucaena Network activities

Conference and AGM

The Leucaena Network 2010 Conference and AGM will be held at Biloela on Thursday September 30 and Friday October 1, 2010. Full details will be available shortly on the website at: <http://www.leucaena.net/conference.htm>

Next Management Group meeting

The next Leucaena Network Management Group Meeting will be held at Brian Pastures at Gayndah on Tuesday July 14, 2010, if you would like to attend to hear more about your Network please contact members listed on page 1.

Goals and objectives for The Leucaena Network to meet 2010 demands

The Leucaena Network Executive met on March 25, 2010 at the DEEDI Office at Rockhampton to review and update the Goals and Objectives of the Network to make sure they cover the ever-increasing use of leucaena as a pasture of choice.

The Executive sees the role of The Leucaena Network is to promote the responsible establishment and management of combined leucaena /grass pastures.

With our Goal being: *To provide a point of contact for all things leucaena*, five (5) Objectives were identified:

1. Gather and share information.
2. Encourage and remain current on research and development on all aspects relating to leucaena/ grass systems.
3. Facilitate links to extension services for establishing and managing leucaena / grass pastures.
4. Promote the environmental and financial benefits of Leucaena/ grass systems to the community.
5. Commercialise opportunities of the network, encourage membership and active networking and maintain financial viability of the organisation.

The Objectives will be supported by a number of Actions:

Objective 1 Actions

- Gather and share information
- Web-site with links and publications
- Leucaena manual (updated)
- Organise field days / seminars / workshops/courses

Objective 2 Actions

- Encourage and remain current on research and development on all aspects relating to leucaena/ grass systems.
- Recognise research and communicate with researchers.
- Pro-active support for research, development and extension.
- Identify areas for future research.

Objective 3 Actions

- Facilitate links to extension services for establishing and managing leucaena / grass pastures.
- Supply links to Government, commercial extension services, contractors etc.

Objective 4 Actions

- Promote the environmental and financial benefits of Leucaena/ grass systems to the community.
- Communicate with authorities to address the leucaena weed issue on creeks, roadways etc.
- Promote the responsible use of leucaena as per the Code of Practice.
- Counter mis-information.
- Promote the environmental and financial benefits to the community.
- Provide updated extension material in form of brochures.
- Publicise leucaena success stories e.g. MSA grading.
- Support Executive Officer with information to achieve actions.

Objective 5 Actions

- Commercialise opportunities of the network.
- Promote achievements.
- Network with agribusiness – Agforce / MLA and commercial companies.
- Identify funding opportunities for The Leucaena Network.
- To sign up new members through pro-active selling of The Leucaena Network at field days etc.
- Lobby politicians on environmental and financial benefits of leucaena in conjunction with Cattle Council of Australia.
- Enlist a committee member to continually encourage new and retain old members.

TLN 2010 Conference and AGM
Biloela
Thursday September 30 and
Friday October 1, 2010