



## An Introduction to Biodynamics, Royal Hobart Botanic Gardens, Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October

Building carbon and nutrient rich humus into the soil is the common foundation of all good farming and gardening; increasing quality production through improved soil health and higher soil water retention, providing drought and flood tolerance. To achieve this biodynamic growers work with soil and plants as living, dynamic manifestations of a relationship between two poles. The earth is the physical element, and the sun and cosmos is a non-material element extending to the farthest expanse of the universe, providing the energetic stimulus for life on earth. To enhance both these influences biodynamic growers use two sprays, horn manure 500 as a soil spray, enhancing soil biology, plant vigour and rooting depth, and horn silica 501 as an atmospheric spray, increasing photosynthesis and improving quality. Small amounts are sprayed sparingly over the land, promoting more balanced plants less susceptible to insect and fungal attack. Insect, fungus and weed problems are viewed as symptoms, or messengers, of imbalances in soil and stress in plants. Biodynamic farmers find that addressing the stress proves more effective than shooting the messengers. Use of these two sprays quickly brings renewed life and character to the farm.

A second element to biodynamic growing is using the rhythmic energies of the Moon and planets. We all use the daily and annual Sun rhythms as a matter of course in our lives. It is well known that the moon is connected to the tides but less well known is that it also works with all fluid elements in soil and plants. Biodynamic farmers widen their observations and rhythmic practices, learning to include these extra terrestrial influences in farm work. They use astronomy, the physical stars in the sky, not astrology. These astronomical influences exist independent of our willingness to work with them; you may notice that some plantings germinate fast, some slow, some bolt to head while others remain inactive. Working with the rhythms of the Sun, Moon and planets can lead to understanding these variations in growth patterns. Growers who plan their work to include these rhythms find great enjoyment and excellent results, lightening the work and optimising production.

Biodynamics may sound complex but it is remarkably easy and enjoyable to include in your farm or garden work. More people have failed by being shy of starting than have failed through getting it wrong. The responses are truly rewarding, personally and environmentally.

In this workshop Hamish Mackay will orientate biodynamics within our scientific world and describe the life of the soil. He will introduce the biodynamic preparations, their functions and practical instruction on how to use them. He will also indicate how the planting calendar can make gardening and farming more interesting and improve your outcomes.

Hamish Mackay  
October, 2010

**Hamish Mackay** is Executive director of Biodynamics2024 and board member of the Organic Federation of Australia. From a family grazing property at Braidwood on the Southern Tablelands of NSW, in the early 1970's he worked with Economic Wool Producers Ltd, introducing sale by sample and description to the wool industry. As part of the Demeter Bakery in Sydney, in 1977 he was involved in exporting the first organic (biodynamic) wheat out of Australia using controlled the atmosphere carbon dioxide method developed by the CSIRO. Hamish has been working with biodynamics for 35 years. In 2009 he established Biodynamics2024 with the objective that biodynamics be the farming and gardening method of choice in Australia by 2024. He travels the country presenting introductory biodynamic workshops, providing growers with clear and practical methods for adopting biodynamics as a cost effective way to produce high quality food and fibre and regenerating our environment. Hamish has seen many growers who have adopted biodynamics experiencing significant drought tolerance over these past ten years, maintaining greater production levels than anticipated from past drought occurrences.

Workshop bookings can be made through:

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[http://biodynamics2024.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/Rego\\_form18Oct20101.pdf](http://biodynamics2024.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/Rego_form18Oct20101.pdf)