



THE SFAG RAG

NEWSLETTER OF THE STABLE FLY ACTION GROUP INC

JULY 2006



From the SFAG desk ...

Although the stable fly situation is relatively quiet in our Shire just lately, you can be assured your Committee is not.

BULLSBROOK OUTBREAK

On 17 May the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of SFAG visited a Bullsbrook property that was experiencing a severe outbreak of stable flies affecting their livestock and other animals. Also in attendance were Mr Bob Paulin (Dept of Agriculture) and Mr Llew Withers (Manager Environmental Health, Department of Health) and a number of neighbouring property owners who were similarly affected. These people, and their animals, had been tormented by stable flies since before Christmas. This outbreak served to emphasise the fact that stable fly infestations are not limited to the Shire of Gingin. It was noted that a horticultural property, with links to the May 2005 outbreak at Lancelin, was in close proximity. The Environmental Health Officer from the City of Swan was unable to attend. The SFAG has written to the City of Swan alerting them to the existence, aims and objectives of the Group and asking them to forward us the contact details of affected residents who make complaints to them. Since the Bullsbrook site visit, one of the affected families from Bullsbrook have become SFAG members, and have also made a donation of \$80 to the Group. As with all organizations, the SFAG needs funds to operate effectively. The SFAG is most appreciative of their support. Thank you very much. The Group presently has 76 financial members.

REGULAR REPORTERS

A SFAG member has suggested that members from different localities volunteer to be Regular Reporters of infestations to SFAG and the Shire of Gingin, so that a record can be kept of where the outbreaks are and if they persist, increase, or decrease. The Committee thinks this is a good idea, so it would be appreciated if 6 or so members from across the region could volunteer for this. Could you please register as a Regular Reporter with SFAG, so we know who is doing it, and report to Wayne or Joe at the Shire.

NEW PEST CONTROL OFFICER

Joe Silvestro is the Shire's new Pest Control Officer. The SFAG Committee welcomes Joe to the position and will be giving him our full support in the stable fly effort.

UPDATE ON STATE OF PLAY

At the instigation of the SFAG Committee, we invited to our Committee meeting on 25 May Hon Gary Snook, MLA (our local MP and Shadow Minister for Agriculture); Mr Bob Paulin (Department of Agriculture representative), and Mr Dave Peckitt, (Department of Health representative) on the Stable Fly Management Steering Group (SFMSG); Cr George Gifford, Shire President, Shire of Gingin; Mr Simon Fraser, CEO Shire of Gingin; and Mr Wayne Harris, Environmental Health Officer, Shire of Gingin, in order to share information and strategies to control stable fly breeding. Discussed were - the lack of a decision by the Minister for Planning & Infrastructure on the Poultry Litter Fired Power Station at Muchea, the Protocols drawn up by VegetablesWA to control stable fly breeding in raw poultry manure, and the results of temperature studies carried out by the Department of Agriculture, at the request of the SFMSG, in order to establish if the months included in the current open season (1 May to 31 August) remain appropriate. The studies subsequently had deter-

mined that May temperatures were sufficiently high to be conducive to fly breeding, and it was recommended that May should be removed.

Mr Bruce Roe, past Shire President and current SFAG member, has resigned from his position as cattle producer representative on the SFMSG, and Bob Wilson has taken his place. The SFAG thanks Bruce for all his past efforts, over many years, to solve the stable fly problem.

SFMSG RECOMMENDATIONS

The SFMSG is a government appointed committee made up of representatives from State and Local Government and representatives from the Horticulture, Livestock and Poultry industries. Bob attended the SFMSG meeting in Perth on 16 June, along with the Gingin Shire representatives, at which three decisions were made: (1) The open season for use of raw poultry manure should be from 1 June to 31 August (May to be removed) reducing the open season from four months to three; (2) the VWA Protocols should be accepted, as amended, and be put in place, and a total ban in the relevant Shires be placed on the use of raw poultry manure to land by 31/12/2011; and (3) the SFMSG will formally request the Minister for Planning & Infrastructure to make a decision on the Poultry Litter Fired Power Station. A decision, one way or the other, would mean that all the affected industries, poultry, livestock, horticulture and composting, can plan ahead. These are not legislative changes, they are recommendations that the SFMSG will be making to the relevant Ministers for implementation.

NO REPLY TO SFAG'S LETTER

The SFAG Committee has received no reply to our most recent letter to the Minister for Planning & Infrastructure regarding making a decision. From information recently received, it appears less and less likely that the power station will proceed on the Muchea site, and it is possible it will not proceed at all.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Many of you will have read in the rural and local press that the Member for Moore, Hon Gary Snook, has expressed the view that *"the government and industry should put their maximum effort into the development of composting methods for all raw animal manure, crop waste and other fly breeding sources"* and that *"Ministers Chance and McGowan should be adopting the key recommendations of the Report to the Waste Management Board by the Working Group on Standards for Organics (including Compost) applied to Land."* Mr Bob Paulin is a member of this Working Group, and the comprehensive report is available on the WMB website www.wastewa.com. For those of you who are interested in this topic, the Committee urges you to obtain a copy and have a read of it.

In case you missed Mr Snook's media release, which appeared recently in The Advocate, Sun City News, Farm Weekly (Horticulture Section) and Countryman, we have reproduced it on Page 2.

COMPOSTING

Discussion and debate on support for the development of a viable composting industry to deal with organic waste will form part of the agenda for the SFAG AGM, which will be held ON TUESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER AT 7.30 PM AT THE GRANVILLE IN GINGIN.

MEET THE SFAG COMMITTEE!

Jo and David have been farming at Kildare, 10 km east of Ledge Point, since 1971. Kildare is a mixed farming property running 2000 merino sheep, with 500 of these raising poll dorset cross lambs each year, as well as 200 head of Shorthorn and Murray Grey breeding cows. In addition, Jo and David lease approximately 1400 acres nearby to increase the viability of their property.

Prior to embarking upon her farming career, Jo worked for the then Bank of New South Wales, now Westpac Banking Corporation, as Managers Secretary at the West Perth Branch.

Jo is a qualified Teachers Assistant (Junior Primary) and has worked in this capacity at the Lancelin Primary School since 1991.

She has been Secretary and Treasurer of numerous community organizations during the time she has lived in the Shire of Gingin, including the Lancelin Parents & Citizens Association and Nilgen Bushfire Brigade, and was actively involved in the now disbanded Coastal Theatre Group, both as an office bearer and treading the boards! During the 1980s she was very active with the Lancelin CWA Choir, Drama and Dance Group, which competed in that organization's annual Choir and Drama Festivals throughout the State. She is presently Secretary of the Neerabby Community Association, as well as Secretary/Treasurer of the Stable Fly Action Group. She is also a member of the Shire of Gingin's Heritage Committee.

Jo and David have a daughter, Rachel, who is a Muresk Graduate, is married with two children, and lives at Nyabing, east of Katanning.



Secretary/Treasurer Jo Ottaway

SFAG COMMITTEE FOR 2005/06

Chairman : Bob Wilson Ph 9655 1055

Deputy Chairman :

Rod Withnell 9575 2162

**Secretary/Treasurer: Jo Ottaway
9655 3024**

Bernard McCarthy Ph 9575 2281

Rob Kestel Ph 9575 2395

Reg Beale Ph 9575 7572

Murray Rudd Ph 9655 1323



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SFAG INC

PLEASE NOTE IN YOUR DIARIES ... !

The SFAG Inc AGM will be held on Tuesday 26 September at the Granville Centre in Gingin at 7.30 pm. Could members please bring a SMALL plate of supper to share afterwards.



Media Statement

Gary Snook MLA

Shadow Minister for Agriculture; Property Rights; Wheatbelt

31 May 2006

Composting should phase out raw animal manures

Agriculture Minister should act and wipe out stable fly breeding sources

Continued long term use of raw animal manure for horticultural and agricultural application is no longer an option. Shadow Agriculture Minister Gary Snook told attendees of a Stable Fly Action Group meeting in Gingin that composting chicken and pig manure—the main source of stable fly breeding—would largely eliminate the problem.

“Stable Fly infestations are severe again this year in the Gingin, Bullsbrook and Muchea areas,” Mr Snook said. “It is distressing to watch animals being bitten until they bleed by thousands of stable flies. Losses in production to livestock producers due to stable fly attacks is totally unacceptable and can be avoided with immediate action from the Agriculture Minister committing to a deadline for banning raw animal manure use in intensive agriculture.” Mr Snook supported the Group's proposal to phase out over two years the use of raw animal manure. However, industry and government should put their maximum effort in to the development of composting methods for all raw animal manure, crop waste and other fly breeding sources.

“Ministers Chance and McGowan should be adopting the key recommendations of the Report to the Waste Management Board by the Working Group on Standards for Organics (including Compost) applied to Land,” Mr Snook said. “With the continuing focus on identifying the causes of nitrification of our streams and river systems there is a pressing need to explore alternative options to our standard fertilizers, currently in use. Composted products will offer a viable alternative. The benefits of implementing the Waste Management Report recommendations would be multiple, particularly by moving to large scale composting. If Minister Chance would get on with the job and make a decision it would substantially eliminate the terrible effect of stable fly infestation.”