

MEDIA RELEASE

30 May 2008



International grazing management expert speaking in Roma

Landholders in the Maranoa-Balonne will have the opportunity to hear and speak with Mr Dick Richardson, a world expert on the use of grazing planning for success. The day is being organised by the Maranoa-Balonne Catchment Management Association (MBCMA), in partnership with the Maranoa Regional Landcare Association (MRLA) on 27 June. The time and venue will be advised in the near future.

Dick has spoken at conferences, workshops and farming days all over the world and his sense of humour and light, logical way of sharing his knowledge makes him well liked and highly sought after. Dick loves to use the medium of the story to teach and generate learning. He has done a lot of hands on consulting to land based businesses around the world, and has much to share with grazing based enterprises in particular.

Dick said, "My presentation will concentrate on the use of grazing planning for success in a world of erratic and low rainfall. As global warming takes its toll and climate change becomes even more of a reality, so our grazing businesses must improve their drought risk management and productivity."

Alexis Wegener, coordinator of the MRLA, said, "The situations Dick has faced in his own experiences in South Africa are not dissimilar to the issues facing landholders in this region, from challenging environments and changes in climate, to the current high cost of labour."

"At the moment I am struggling with a shift in labour availability on the ranches in South Africa. Up to now labour has been plentiful and relatively inexpensive, as all the infrastructure and work methods are labour intensive."

The presentation will cover the basics and some deeper insights to the process of grazing planning. Further emphasis will be placed on the use of grazing planning to improve the ecological resource base, making rainfall more effective, while also making a positive contribution to the global warming situation through carbon sequestration. "This could also help graziers participate in the financial gains from future carbon credit exchanges," said Alexis.

Dick said that he believed very strongly that the future of grazing enterprises will lie in creating healthy ecosystems that use rainfall effectively and sequester carbon. He said that this future will only be possible if animal performance is maintained or improved throughout time. Human stress would also need to be reduced by limiting risk and fear with good planning, he said.

"I am looking forward to speaking with landholders in this district and sharing thoughts and ideas," said Dick.

Dick's presentation will be part of a joint MBCMA and MRLA community forum and has been supported by local natural resource management group, the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC).

For further information, please contact Angela Betts, Project Support Officer for QMDC, on 4622 8446, or Alexis Wegener, coordinator for MRLA, on 4622 6010.

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