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Letter from the Chairman

We have reached an interesting time with the Cicerone Project at present. In this Newsletter you will see a notice for the upcoming Annual General Meeting plus roadshow presentation and farm walk.

The Chairman and Board have been gathering details and values on Cicerone's facilities and assets for winding down the first phase of Cicerone and to be in a position to continue project work into a second phase.

Communications are continuing and decisions are being made with regard to the continuation of the Cicerone Project. Currently the project could go into a holding pattern for 6 months while future funding arrangements are finalised. One possible option is that the face of the project may change from the 'central learning farm' at Chiswick potentially to members' properties if, for example, the funding is secured primarily from the Catchment Management Authorities.

The current Board of Cicerone can continue on resolution at the AGM until the new direction of the project is finalised. However new Board members and new members to Cicerone are most welcome to nominate if they wish to.

New ideas from Cicerone members are being sought for how to best manage the farmlets during the ongoing lease until new funding is finalised.

The first phase of the Cicerone Project has had a very active and informative life. I would like to thank everyone that has been involved over the last six years of the project during research and data collection and prior to that with establishing

the farmlets. We are pleased that extension activities are still happening through NSW DPI.

Everyone is welcome to attend the final information roadshow, farm walk and AGM on Friday 10 November and stay on for a BBQ dinner to celebrate the achievements of Cicerone's phase one. This is your opportunity to have a say on the future of Cicerone.

Regards,



Terry Coventry
Chairman
The Cicerone Project

News from Justin Hoad, Farm Manager

The Cicerone Board would like to thank Dr. Betty Hall for her huge contribution to the Cicerone Project. Betty Hall has been a long standing member on the Cicerone Board, with active involvement and leadership in worm control and animal health on the farmlets, as well as providing guidance for researchers and PhD students. Betty has been a great advocate of the project, traveling around the country talking at conferences and publishing papers and newsletter articles on worm control, footrot results, and animal health outcomes from the Cicerone Project.

Betty has not only provided worm control and animal health advice to Cicerone and the district but also nationally and internationally. Dr. Hall will now be retiring to Tasmania.

The DPI has presented the findings of the grazing management trial in the surrounding towns in a series of seminars. The Cicerone Board would like to thank Michael Lollback, Clare Edwards and Alison Strong, of the NSW DPI for their professional promotion and delivery of Cicerone's results on these days.

Cicerone will be holding a final field day / farm walk / AGM and BBQ dinner on 10 November where all are invited to celebrate the completion of the first phase of the project funded by AWI and to talk about the second phase.

CSIRO has continued to support Cicerone by extending the land and office lease agreement to allow more time for the Board to secure continued funding, as there has been positive feedback from some funding organisations. The Board has been writing letters and traveling to give presentations on the proposed next phase of the project. To date there have been letters of support and small funding offers but not yet to the level that would allow Cicerone to expand into the next partnership phase.

The farmlets are still running but unfortunately with little measurement. The A farmlet is running 10dse/ha and the B and C farmlets are running 5dse/ha. None of the ewes were joined in 2006 and there are currently no cattle on the farm. The silage on the A farmlet has all been fed out and no animals are being hand fed at present.

The A and B farmlets are semi-set stocked, spread out to take advantage of any green grass that is growing, increasing animal live weight. The C farmlet is running a leader-follower rotation with the hoggets being grazed directly ahead of the ewes. The rest period was extended as long as 180 days as there was little growth since last spring. The graze period is now shorter and the rest period is reducing. With 40 paddocks and a two day graze the rest period will eventually be around 80 days.

At the most recent pasture assessment in mid-October all farmlets had about 1000kg green dry matter per hectare.

Please come and see the Cicerone farmlets on 10 November and celebrate the end of the first phase of Cicerone.

Justin Hoad
Cicerone Farm Manager

Roadshow Summary

During September, NSW Department of Primary Industries, on behalf of Cicerone, delivered four 'roadshow' seminars in areas of the Northern Tablelands to extend some research results from the Cicerone farmlets.

Over 80 people attended the roadshows held at Bundarra, Bendemeer, Walcha and Glen Innes. Only around 20% of the attendees had previously been to a Cicerone event in the last 6 years.

The roadshow has covered some of the key messages from the project so far, including information on pastures, soils, livestock production, the economic story, the worm trials and sustainability issues.

Attendees were also shown the Cicerone DVD giving more information on how the research was conducted.

There was a wide range of questions over the four days covering all the topics.

Feedback for the Cicerone Project and the roadshow was positive and many attendees expressed their encouragement in obtaining funds for the continuation of Cicerone.

Everyone's invited to a
Cicerone Project Celebration!

To recognise the achievements of Cicerone I and discuss the potential
2nd phase of Cicerone

plus the
Annual General Meeting

Date: Friday 10th November 2006

Where: Convening at the Liaison Centre, CSIRO Chiswick
(17km south of Armidale on the New England Hwy)

When: Starting at 1.00pm

Program: *(NB: if you attended the May 2006 Symposium and/or have already seen the Roadshow, feel free to join us from 3.30pm onwards for afternoon tea, the farm walk, AGM and BBQ).*

1.00pm: The Cicerone Roadshow Presentations

Summaries from the May symposium 2006, including:

- ❖ management systems and pasture outcomes
- ❖ animal performance under the 3 management systems
- ❖ worm control and grazing management in intensive grazing systems
- ❖ economic analyses and management system sustainability

3.30pm: Afternoon tea (provided)

4.00pm: Farm walk – around the Cicerone farmlets

5.30pm: Annual General Meeting

Notice of Motion:

1. In view of uncertainty of future funding of the Cicerone Project that the current Cicerone Board be endorsed to continue with its current membership for a further period of 6 months. (If this motion falls, an election of Board members will be held).
2. That the Cicerone Board be empowered to appoint an acting Executive sub-committee to continue Cicerone affairs on behalf of the Cicerone partners whilst a longer term solution is sought.

6.00pm: Finish with a free BBQ dinner!

Please RSVP
by 3rd November
to the Cicerone Office ph: 6778 3871
email: cicerone@northnet.com.au

Cicerone has produced two Symposium Proceedings for 2005 and 2006 with complete papers covering all topics researched over the past 6 years. They are available for \$25 each by contacting the Cicerone office.

For more information on the Cicerone Project, visit the website:

www.cicerone.org.au

Newsletters from the Project are available via the website or calling 6778 3871 or email: cicerone@northnet.com.au

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Newsletter Editors: Michael Lollback and Alison Strong, NSW DPI and Justin Hoad manager of The Cicerone Project Inc. This newsletter is copyright © and no part may be reproduced without due acknowledgment. The views expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of all members of the Cicerone Board.