



Above, from left: Reaghan Shalders, Freya Spencer and Ron Masters doing some groundwork for the masterclass. Photograph Justin Hardy.

Taking on the salinity challenge

The Gillamii Centre's very successful masterclass in saltland management is coming to the Jerramungup Shire in September.

The workshop will run over two days. On the first day, farmers will visit a successfully revegetated saltland site in Fitzgerald and hear from DPIRD and CSIRO scientists about its history, new developments in reclaiming salt affected and marginal land and the data and tools needed to assess them for reclamation. Emphasis will be placed on water management in salty landscapes.

On the second day we visit a challenge site in Gairdner. This site provides the chance to have a go at designing a plan to reclaim saline land. You can expect to assess piezometer readings, EM mapping data, the current conditions of the area, its management history, drainage, soil types and the plant species currently growing there to develop a strategy that suits the site.

Topics will include what plants can grow in a defined salt affected area, the agronomy of the different species and best practice ways to manage different plant species. Information will be provided on selection and preparation of sites, establishing relevant grazing and revegetation systems, and grazing use and management of improved pasture systems.

The opportunity to hold this workshop comes through the Gillamii Centre's *Regenerating saline and marginal landscapes in Southern WA* project. CSIRO and DPIRD staff have worked closely with Cranbrook farmer Ian Walsh for decades to refine management practices that have turned unproductive salt affected soils into highly productive land. This initiative by the Gillamii Centre provides an excellent opportunity to tap into that expertise.

For more details about the day and to register please see page 8 of this newsletter.

Fauna Recovery in the Fitz-Stirling Landscape – Project Update

In the February Sustain-a-Bulletin we introduced the fauna recovery project being funded by Lotterywest for the next five years. This project involves integrated control of foxes, feral cats and rabbits in the central Fitz-Stirling area surrounding the Corackerup and Peniup Nature Reserves. It includes farms, public land and reserves in private ownership by Greening Australia and Bush Heritage Australia. The aim is to increase populations of fauna subject to predation by foxes and cats.

After a few months delay due to Covid-19 Jeff Pinder has been employed by Bush Heritage to run the project for the next five years. He comes to us from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) where he worked for 12 years on threatened species recovery, with a focus on the ground parrot. He is planning the next 12 months of work, which includes obtaining permissions to use the bait Eradicat™ to target feral cats. Baiting will occur via aircraft in the larger reserves and by ground baiting, with a focus on creeklines and other vegetated corridors on farmland. One of the first tasks for Jeff will be monitoring Tammar

using remote cameras and fauna pitfall trapping in Spring this year. This will give us an idea of the number of foxes, cats, rabbits, Tammar, Malleefowl, Chuditch and other species of interest prior to control taking place. The control part of the project will kick off in Autumn 2021 after extensive liaison with landholders and land managers.

There will be a project launch at the Micheal Tichbon Field Station in October. This will be open to all those involved in the project as well as anyone who is interested in finding out more about it. The date will be advertised soon.

Angela Sanders



Community Water sources update

The following information was provided by the Shire of Jerramungup and the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.

Community water sources in water deficient areas

Rainfall in July 2020 resulted in enough runoff into on-farm and off-farm dams to provide some relief to farmers in the southern and south eastern area of the dryland agricultural areas. As a result, water carting has been temporarily suspended to all three Water Deficiency Declaration areas in the Shire of Jerramungup including Jerramungup North, Jerramungup east/Ravensthorpe west (Fitzgerald dam) and Gairdner. All sites are currently being reviewed including assessment of the capabilities of on-farm supplies and strategic off-farm sources to determine whether Water Deficiency Declarations can be revoked.

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) will continue to monitor the situation to track rainfall and capacities in Strategic Community Water Supplies. The department will continue to administer the Community Water Supply Program (up to \$100 000 available for Shires and Communities to upgrade or build non-potable water supplies) to build on the non-potable Strategic Water Supply Network across the dryland agricultural region. The department supports the Shire's proposal to develop non-potable water infrastructure

projects under the Drought Communities Programme. DWER, as well as the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development are planning to meet with targeted grower groups in coming months to discuss water issues, best practice catchment and dam management and promote the Farm Water Supply Planning Scheme.

Farm water audit scheme

The Farm Water Supply Planning Scheme provides rebates for WA broadacre farmers experiencing water shortages. A farm water auditor will help farmer develop a water supply plan which will identify ways to improve the sustainability of their on-farm water supplies. Funding is provided up to \$1000 to cover 50% of the audit cost.

The first step in the process is to contact an approved [farm water auditor](#)

For more information call 1800 780 300 or email ruralwater@dwer.wa.gov.au.

Federal Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme

The Commonwealth rebate scheme is currently oversubscribed – all applications submitted but not assessed due to lack of funds have been placed in a queue. DWER is seeking further funds to meet the demand and is still accepting applications, which will be added to the queue. Should DWER get more funding, the applications will be assessed on a first come first served basis. For updated guidelines go to www.dwer.wa.gov.au/NOFEWIRS

FBG Cat Sterilisation and Microchipping Clinic 2020 Wrap-up

FBG would like to thank all the community members who supported our 2020 Cat Sterilisation and Microchipping clinic where 14 cats were sterilised and four cats being microchipped.

This clinic was funded through the Regional Land Partnership Program for the RLPFBG EPBC Project where FBG implements key recovery actions for EPBC species, including Malleefowl and Chuditch. Feral cat populations are having an ever increasing effect on native animal populations within Jerramungup Shire reserves, privately managed remnant vegetation and the Fitzgerald National Park.



FBG would like to specifically thank veterinarian Dr Cathy Wishart and veterinary nurse Jess Brown and the Shire of Jerramungup for their contributions to the clinic. FBG would like to remind cat owners of their responsibility to register their pets with the Shire. To be compliant with the cat laws all cat owners must ensure their cat is microchipped, sterilised and registered with the local council.



FBG NRM Project Officer Reaghan Shalders with cat clinic participant Choccy.



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Global grains markets look to Australia to fill impending European export shortfall



Rabobank

All eyes are on Australia's developing winter crop as global grain markets look to Australia to offset a poor European harvest hit by drought, an international grains strategist has told local growers.

Rabobank London-based global grains and oilseeds strategist Stefan Vogel, speaking on the bank's Australian Grain Mid-season Webinar, said when it comes to wheat and canola in particular, "we are all looking for good crops in Australia to make up the shortfall caused by the poor season in Europe".

Wheat

Mr Vogel said after an excellent 2019/20 European harvest where the European Union exported 38 million metric tonnes (mmt) of wheat, this year's EU export volumes are set to fall at least 10 mmt with most European grain-growing nations – including France, Germany, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria – beset by dry conditions and poor yields. While Ukraine, another significant global wheat exporter, is expecting an almost 10 per cent smaller crop than last year.

And this shortfall would remain, he said, even with Russia, "the big guy in the room", still expected to produce a bigger wheat crop than last year, bringing some harvest pressure to recent market tightening. "So who can offset that shortfall in European production that would be going to export markets? Everyone is banking on Australia to make that happen on the world market because no one else has a whole lot of buffer to make that up. So if we want to keep stable or even growing global export volumes, Australia is actually required to give us a decent amount of wheat on to the world export market", he said.

Canola

For canola too, Mr Vogel said, a poor harvest in Europe will likely see the EU producing its lowest crop since 2006 in the 2020/21 season. And this spells good news for Australia, pushing EU import demand to likely exceed last season's record high.

This will potentially see Europe double its volume of canola imports from Australia, he said.

"Once again in Europe, we have an extremely poor rapeseed/canola crop this year, after suffering the adverse effects of very warm and dry conditions during last year's autumn plantings and during yield development this April and May. Last year, the European rapeseed crop was bad, but this year the already-harvested crop is even worse," Mr Vogel said.

Added to this, he said, Ukraine – a country from which Europe usually imports as much canola as is available – will also deliver a diminished crop this year. And Canadian canola – which usually makes up the residual in the EU import mix – is less favoured by EU oilseed



Above: Stefan Vogel and Cheryl Kalisch Gordon

processors and canola meal feeders due to its typical GM content.

"So Europe is actually going to need a lot of Australian canola – depending on how much you can ship to us, maybe close to doubling the amount we took last year and getting back to volumes seen in 2017 and 2015 of around 1.9 million tonnes," he said.

This European supply shortage had been helping to support canola prices, Mr Vogel said, despite temporarily-reduced demand for biodiesel – a key end use for canola oil in the EU market – due to the decline in travel during COVID-19 lockdowns.

"The European price for biodiesel was down during April and May on the back of low demand, but has since largely recovered as we have now chewed through stocks and driving has almost normalised again," he said. "COVID-19 has clearly hit the prices of canola in Europe, although they are in the meantime still holding above the last few years given improved demand and the extremely poor European crop."

COVID impacts

Overall for the global grains and oilseeds market, Mr Vogel told the webinar, the immediate effects of the coronavirus pandemic had primarily been felt in the biofuel sector, as well in malt and cotton.

"Clearly we've seen with the lockdowns, people were not driving as much to go out or go to work, so the demand for biofuels as a whole suffered. And the same is true for malt where food service and hospitality was closed for the most part and sporting events were shut, so people weren't consuming the same volumes of beer," he said.

"And for cotton, people have not been buying as many clothes because they have not been going out or to the office as much, but instead stayed home."

Mr Vogel said the bank predicts recovery in all these sectors in the next 12 months – albeit potentially not

fully, but to “between 85 to 95 per cent of normal levels”.

For the feed grain sector – which, along with food grain, had been relatively unscathed by the effects of the pandemic so far – the impacts of COVID-19 may become more pronounced in the coming 12 months, he said, as the economic downturn triggered by the coronavirus resulted in reduced meat consumption in developing countries.

“We are actually thinking this could get worse in some countries where reduced incomes may see consumers not being able to afford as much meat as they normally consume. We have to consider if there will be a reduction in meat demand and therefore a reduction in livestock feed demand,” he said.

Australian outlook

Rabobank Australian senior grains and oilseeds analyst Cheryl Kalisch Gordon told the webinar the bank maintained a positive outlook on the year ahead for Australian grain growers.

While Rabobank had slightly revised down its forecast 2020/21 wheat production to 25 million tonnes due to dryness in some production areas, Dr Kalisch Gordon said Australia would be back as a significant player on the global grain export markets this year.

“With production prospects higher for grain growers in most areas, it will be a year that will start to make up (although not entirely) for the troubling years we’ve had recently,” she said.

In terms of pricing, Dr Kalisch Gordon said, “basis was always going to be moving down from the highs of recent years, which had been fuelled by drought-driven supply shortages”, however prices were expected to find

a level of support from the rebuilding of grain stocks needed in Australia.

For wheat, while prices were expected to come in below the current five-year-average – which has been elevated by some ports recording AUD450/tonne wheat for extended periods during the drought – prices should be above the 10-year average.

In addition, she said, growers, particularly those in the eastern states, had a greater – and increasing – capacity for grain storage than in the past, and therefore more capability to avoid harvest sales.

“Added to this, our house view is the Australian dollar will be closer to 64 to 65 US cents by the end of the year and harvest period, and therefore a correction from the higher level it is now at,” she said. “Plus we’ve also had fairly favourable input pricing, especially the cost of urea, which is helpful in boosting yields and protein levels.”

Barley – which typically accounts for between around 20 per cent of Australian farmers’ cropping programs – was going to be “less easy to deal with”, she conceded, with the challenge of finding new export markets to replace being shut out of the main Chinese market due to recently-imposed trade tariffs, and with global stocks high.

“Moving our barley is going to be tricky. The capacity for the barley price to find strength is really going to depend on how farmers hold barley for that feed grain complex in Australia,” she said.

“But globally there is still an animal proteins deficit, so feeding stock isn’t going to be a bad outcome, especially if you are a mixed farmer.”

A case of great timing

Some exciting results are starting to emerge on Meechi Road where the FBG and Shire of Jerramungup are working in a joint venture to revegetate a realigned road edge.

The point of difference for this project is that it includes the placement of ‘instant habitat’. The prunings from trees growing on the site have been distributed over the area to disperse endemic seed when the climatic conditions suit. The area will be infilled with seedlings that have been grown from seed collected from the site. Some seed has already been hand broadcast.

I really wanted to share how pleased I am with the care

and dedication the Shire staff and contractors have shown. When climatic conditions are more favorable, this site has a very strong chance of getting back to the natural looking bush that surrounds it by the time the project finishes in 2022. No mean task since the area was farmland for more than 40 years before it was generously donated by the Swarbrick family to enable the road realignment that increases the safety of road users. Hats off to Steve Elson, Jamie Turner, Edward (Ted) Schulz, contractor Harry van der Maat and the Swarbrick Family. And then just like magic it rained.

Therese Bell FBG



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Canola pest surveillance on the South Coast

Turnip yellows virus and green peach aphid early warning system

Project lead: DPIRD Research Scientist, Ben Congdon. Green peach aphids (GPA) are vectors and can rapidly spread turnip yellows virus (TuYV). This virus can halve yield and degrade seed quality as seen in field trials. The greatest losses occur when infection takes place during the early rosette stage until stem elongation. GPA are the most resistant insect in the world and sulfoxaflor (Transform) is the only effective foliar insecticide. In WA there are some GPA populations that have reduced sensitivity to sulfoxaflor therefore the judicious use of this insecticide is strongly encouraged. This season's monitoring occurred at three locations; Gairdner, Bremer Bay and Jerramungup in the Fitzgerald Biosphere Group area, and other locations throughout the Albany and Esperance port zones.

Traps were set up when the canola crops were germinating and changed fortnightly until the start of flowering. Traps were processed using a DNA technique called LAMP. Only one aphid was identified at Gairdner in June with no virus detected in it and the crop has tested negative to the virus (monitoring completed start of August). There were very low numbers of aphids at the Bremer site but no virus detected (site still being monitored).

The site just east of Jerramungup had no GPA in the canola crop and no virus detected in crop. This could be due to the dry growing conditions and typically higher populations are seen in spring. Most canola crops are now flowering when the virus doesn't cause major damage if GPA carrying the virus are in the crop at this stage. Areas east of Esperance had early detections of GPA with some transmitting the virus. Thanks to the farmers hosting the traps.



Above: Native bud worm trapped at the start of August in Gairdner.

Survey of summer/autumn brassica refuges for Diamondback Moth in the western region to predict early season risk of infestation – GRDC project: DAW1905-010RTX

Project lead: DPIRD Research Scientist, Dusty Severtson. In addition to Diamond Back Moth (DBM) pheromone traps there are also traps for Native Budworm and Fall Army Worm (FAW) set up for the 2020 season across the state. One of the traps in the Albany port zone is located in Gairdner. A budworm moth was captured at the start of August however no caterpillars were found. Crop sweeps (5 lots of 10 sweeps) found only one DBM caterpillar and a Looper. There has been no FAW at any site in the Albany Port zone however one was found in the Geraldton area at the end of July. These traps will be monitored until harvest and adjacent canola crops will be swept on a fortnightly basis. Thanks to the Jones family for hosting these traps.

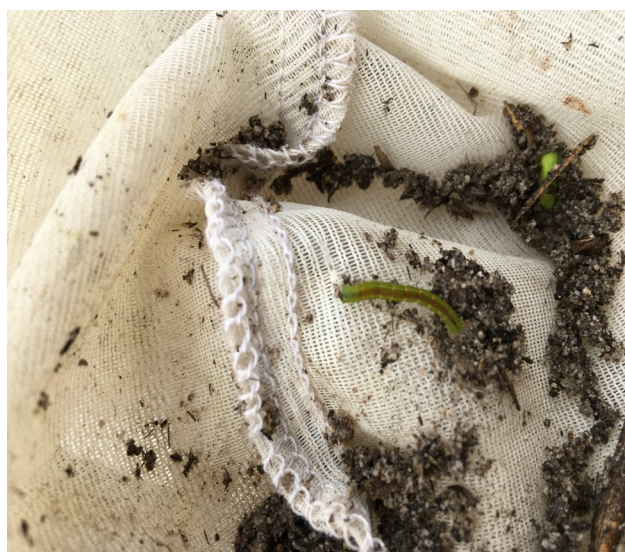
Identification of insects

The MyPestGuideCrops app is almost as helpful as cable ties and gaffer tape when you're out in the paddock checking on crops. It's a free app which allows you to search by either crop type, the damage you are seeing, the type of pest or by the size of the pest. If you are still unable to confidently identify the pest, a good quality close up photo can be submitted to PestFax Reporter to be identified by an entomologist. You can request a response to advise you of the identification. Any diseases you are seeing on plants this time of the year can also be submitted to PestFax Reporter for identification.

For more information, contact Research Scientist Sarah Belli at DPIRD, 0436 826 937



Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development



Above: Looper found during crop sweep in Gairdner.

What hides beneath? The 2020 pulse and oilseed root pest and disease survey is on!

Do you have a poor performing pulse or canola crop or patches of poor growth in your crop? The Department of Primary Industries (DPIRD) is offering a free test of plant roots to see if a root pest or disease may be the problem. This is the second year of a national survey of root diseases and nematode pests of pulses and canola made possible by investment from the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC). Samples are visually assessed by DPIRD's Disease Diagnostic Laboratories (DDLs) and sent to the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) for molecular testing for 24 soil pathogens and plant parasitic nematodes.

Results will be reported to all contributing growers.

The survey aims to find the main diseases and nematode

pests to watch out for in the roots of Western Australia's pulse and canola crops. This season we are hoping for 124 survey samples. If you have a crop to sample please contact Miriam Connor

(miriam.connor@dpiird.wa.gov.au; 0400 201 755) for a sampling kit, or Research Agronomist Sarah Belli

(sarah.belli@agric.wa.gov.au; 0436 826 937) are happy to look at your crop and take a sample for you.

In the 2019 survey of the Albany Port Zone, Pythium root rot was found at many sites, along with blackspot (*Didymella pinodes/Phoma pinodella*), nematode species *Pratylenchus neglectus* and *P. quasitereoides*, *Rhizoctonia* AG8, a phytophthora and other unusual diseases. These results help with future management in these paddocks. Forewarned is forearmed!

Carla Wilkinson, Sarah Collins, Daniel Huberli and Andrea Hills DPIRD Research Scientists

Below left: Poor performing patch in a lupin crop, Below right: 2019 survey sample from Albany region. Credit Sarah Belli DPIRD



Want to learn how to monitor your dung beetles?!

We are being given an opportunity to find out more about our local dung beetles. Kathy Dawson and Lee Fontanini from Warren Catchments Council work on a Dung Beetle Ecosystem Engineers project (DBEE). They recently passed through our area and did some opportunistic monitoring in Jacup and Bremer Bay. At the Bremer Bay site Kathy said they were pleasantly surprised to find a good quantity of winter active deep tunnelling *Bubas bison* and spring - autumn active *Onthophagus taurus*.

Kathy has offered to conduct an information session/field walk on dung beetles, and to show farmers how to undertake monthly intensive monitoring that builds more specific data for the area (about 3 hours work in setting up and returning to process trap the following day). Monitoring sites need to be 30 km apart.

You can find out more about the DBEE project on the following website: <https://dungbeetles.com.au>.

Contact us at the FBG office or email eo@fbg.org.au if you are interested in learning more and we will organise a visit from Kathy.



Above: Bremer Bay, Bubas bison beetle. Photo: Lee Fontanini



FITZGERALD
BIOSPHERE GROUP



Presents

Esperance Study Tour

13th-15th September

FEATURING:

- Ag-Tech, grazing crops @ Coolindown Farms
- Alpha Disk & iPaddock with Mic Fels
- Soils & Amelioration, data driven decisions with Brad Egan
- Farm visit & presentation with Mark Wandel
- Weather Station Trial & Ag-Tech from Sanderson Farms
- Long Season, High Yielding wheat trials @ SEPWA
- On farm trials of soil amelioration with DPRID
- Guided tour of Esperance Quality Grains with Neil Wandel
- Precision Ag & salt management with Phil Longmire

AND MUCH MORE!

*Study tour will be partially subsidised by FBG for members only

*Cost of tour to be determined once numbers are final - expected to be approx \$250 - \$350 (depending on twin share / single room INCLUDING all meals, bus and accommodation

*Sites / agenda may change

*only a limited number of spots available

Please email admin@fbg.org.au to register or for more information

Master Class in Saltland Management for WA JERRAMUNGUP



Highly Interactive and Entertaining 2 Day Workshop
21st-22nd September 2020

Skills development in the latest knowledge and technology in Saltland management and extension.

Workshop Includes

Farmer knowledge and site visits, Group challenge on a real site, Saltland Genie App and Website, Access to key resources, including: reference material, publications and equipment for on-site assessment and decision making, Fully catered, Water and soil monitoring, training and analysis, EM38 training and result interpretation, Economics and Whole Farm Analysis.

All attendees will receive a FREE EC Probe.

Register now via the FBG website

<https://www.fbg.org.au/master-class-in-saltland-management-for-wa>

Or contact Reaghan Shalders (FBG) on 9835 1127 or nrmprojects@fbg.org.au

Registrations due by the 14th of September.



natural resource management program





Clean up Bremer Bay Day

Thank you to everyone who took part in our clean up Bremer Bay Day on Sunday 12th July. Another amazing effort by everyone involved. We finished the morning off with BBQ lunch that was generously sponsored by Bremer Bay Roadhouse, Bremer Bay General Store, Bremer Bay Resort, Bremer Bay Rural & Hardware and Goin Hard Concrete. Thank you for your ongoing support, it is greatly appreciated by the FBG staff and our community.

Therese Bell



9TH SEPTEMBER 2020 SPRING FIELD DAY



Highlights Include:

- RABOBANK - Grains and the world market
- NVT's CEREALS - GRDC / Living Farms
- FARMER TRIALS - Seeding rates, deep ripping, claying, DPIRD
- AGTECH, Phillip Honey S2CF
- AGTECH, Tamara Alexander Rural Edge
- iHSD, Stephen Hill, McIntosh & Sons
- FARMER & PRESENTER PANEL
- CBH UPDATE
- SUNDOWNER SPONSORED BY CBH

The day will start at the Jerry CRC at 8am, before the bus takes us to Gairdner for the rest of the day.

Register Now!!

Visit our website at www.fbg.org.au, or email admin@fbg.org.au

Members Free, Non-Members \$30.00



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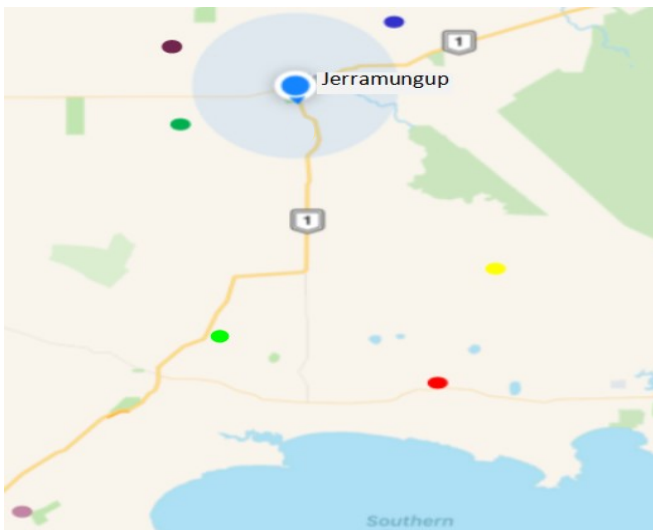
SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 14th October
More details to come



Jerramungup district rainfall



Location		Jan-Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Total YTD
Jerramungup		90.8	40.4	29.6	29.5	190.3
Needilup Nth		64.5	35.5	31.5	32.5	164.0
Needilup Sth		94.0	35.5	26.5	32.0	188.0
Jacup		75.0	38.0	29.0	34.0	176.0
Bremer Rd		68.5	33.5	12.0	43.5	157.5
Gairdner		64.5	19.0	18.5	27.5	129.5
Boxwood		59.0	16.0	18.5	24.5	118.0
Mettler		94.2	32.2	17.0	32.6	176.0

FBG Acknowledges the support of



Upcoming Events

- FBG Spring Field Day– 9th Sep 2020
- FBG Study tour– 13th-15th September
- Saltland Management Masterclass– 21st-22nd September 2020
- FBG Annual General Meeting- 14th October 2020
- Dancing in the Dirt Gala Ball– 27th March 2021

Contact FBG for more details ph. 9835 1127

Email: admin@fbg.org.au

Visit our website to view this issue of the Sustain– a– Bulletin (Scan this QR code to take you directly to the online version) or visit www.fbg.org.au

