

# Soil Health Forum, Tenterfield Golf Club

Understanding the health of your soil has been encouraged by farming experts for many years, but a significant percentage of farmers still have limited understanding of how important soil health is to the productivity and profitability of their farming enterprise.

Granite Borders Landcare recently held a Soil Health Forum at Tenterfield Golf Club to highlight the significance of recognising the physical, chemical and biological components of healthy soils. The event was made possible through the Federal Government's 'Caring for our Country' Community Action Grant program.

Joel Williams, director of Biolife Agricultural and agronomist with Biological Farmers of Australia, spoke passionately on the subject of soil biology, describing its relationship with soil chemistry and physiology. Joel emphasised that our knowledge of soil biology was rapidly increasing, but that greater funding into research was required. Joel's enthusiasm was evident and engaging for the audience.

Dr Chris Guppy, soil chemist and lecturer at the University of New England, led an informal discussion focused on soil chemistry. With an audience largely comprised of beef producers, Chris spoke about different fertiliser applications, the importance of regular soil testing and consulting with soil specialists to ensure any remedial action did not compromise the environmental and economic viability of the farming enterprise.

Jeff Lowien, district agronomist with the NSW DPI, spoke about the importance of soil testing, giving demonstrations of simple tests to conduct in the paddock. Unfortunately the weather on the day resulted in a field trip being cancelled, so Jeff had to improvise within the confines of the Tenterfield Golf Club. Again, the audience appreciated Jeff's practical approach to what can be achieved with limited resources at your disposal.

Comments were very favourable on the day with interest in holding a follow-up event in the near future. Again, this event would not have been possible without the support of the Federal Government's 'Caring for our Country' Community Action Grant. For further information, contact Granite Borders Landcare on (02) 6736 3500 or email [landcare@halenet.com.au](mailto:landcare@halenet.com.au).



*GBLC Soil Health Forum*