



Organics in Canterbury

Issue No 40: March 2009

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This newsletter is published by the Canterbury Commercial Organics Group, in association with Heinz Wattie's, Canterbury Organics and the Biological Husbandry Unit, Lincoln University. Back issues of the newsletter (and other exciting information!) can be found on our website: www.organics.org.nz/

Newsletter contact:

Mary Ralston,
Back Track,
RD 12 Rakaia. Email:
mary.ralston@xtra.co.nz
Phone: 03 3029202.
Articles, notices, letters
to the editor and
advertisements are
always welcome.

Organic Dairy & Pastoral Group Field Day – everyone welcome – BYO lunch

Clearwater's Organic Farm, Peel Forest

Date Friday 27 March 2009
Time 9:30 am morning tea, 10:00 am - 2.30 pm
Venue Brian and Jackie Clearwater's dairy farm,
793 Peel Forest Rd, Peel Forest, near Geraldine

Objectives

- Learn about and discuss the Clearwater's pasture and animal systems.
- The challenges of irrigation restrictions. What are the options?
- A key part of the day - farm processing to add value - the joys of yoghurt making.

Price: Free to ODPG members and \$30 to non members or you are invited to join ODPG for \$120 annual subscription.

Directions from Christchurch – go down Highway 1 to Ashburton, then Tinwald. Turn right (off the highway) at Claas Machinery (the old Agrifarm), go for approx 30 km to meet Highway 72. Turn left, go over bridge. Turn right just 50 m past bridge to Arundel and Peel Forest, turn R at crossroads, go about .5 km to a Y intersection, go almost straight ahead to Peel Forest. The Clearwater's farm is about 3 km from here (Rapid No. 793).

Coming from the south: past Geraldine turn left to Peel Forest, stay on this road (Peel Forest Road). Look for signs.

Contacts: Dave Lucock, The AgriBusiness Group, 03 365 6804 or Brian and Jackie Clearwater, 03 696 3553



Following the field day there will be an ODPG meeting open to everyone

Date Friday 27 March

Venue Geraldine

Time 3.00pm - 5.00pm

Agenda 3.00pm - Afternoon Tea

- North South networking
- Summary of ODPG AGM (held around 18 March), reports and future direction
- South Island members representation and how to improve it
- The way forward for South Island ODPG

Calendar of events

Thursday 26th March 1 pm – 2.30 pm Effective Micro-organisms (EM) on the farm ~ Hear how to reduce your fertiliser costs by 50% and improve your soil and animal health. Workshop repeated in April & May. Held at Wastebusters Education Centre, Range Street, Riverside Industrial Park Ashburton. Phone 03 3089998 to book a place.

27 March Organic Dairy & Pastoral Group Field Day, Clearwater's Organic Farm, Peel Forest

25 April Canterbury Organic Field Day, Fruit & Vegetable Production, details page 3

Advertisements email mary.ralston@xtra.co.nz to place your ad in the next issue

FOR SALE:

Kelp Slow dried and milled NZ Giant Kelp. As seen on Country Calendar Sept 2008. Organically certified. Great for stock health and fertiliser use. Can be made into foliar spray/feed. Contact us nzkelp@farmside.co.nz or ph 03 3226115 fax 03 3226132.

Organic Baleage 45 Individually wrapped Medium Square Bales of very good quality organic baleage for sale. \$150 + gst. Assure Quality C1. Please contact Simon Manson phone 03 3297807 or 027 3333 216, email myra.manson@xtra.co.nz

Cider apples Kingston Black, spray free. Price \$1/Kg or negotiable if you collect them or pick them. Ph 359 2341 or faye-thompson@xtra.co.nz.

GRAZING AVAILABLE Organic Dairy Calf Grazing Harts Creek Farm and Mt Cass Station are seeking to develop mutually beneficial long term organic calf grazing arrangements. Harts Creek Farm is seeking weaned calves on irrigated pasture on a calf rate, then winter them on a May to May contract. The land would be full Biogro and NOP compliant and able to run between 100 and 200 dairy heifers.

Mt Cass Station is interested in numbers up to 600 on May to May contracts. This would suit dairy farmers considering or in the early stages of organic conversion. Both farms have good facilities and experienced stock handlers.

Please contact Tim Chamberlain, Harts Creek Farm, Leeston. Ph 03 3243549 or 0272606674.

NOTICES:

Stonecircle Organic Market Garden OPEN DAY and Autumn Harvest Thanksgiving

Sunday 22nd March 2-4pm, 50 Paritai Lane (off Webbs Road), Amberley

Meet John and Michele and the farmyard characters.

Please bring: Gumboots would be handy. Any offering for our Harvest Thanksgiving table... (All to be donated to Amberley Food Bank).

Coffee/tea and crackers provided. Let us know if you can come...(03) 314-9144

Canterbury Organic Field Day Saturday 25 April

'Organics in Action' – fruit & vegetable production

Venue: 1. TreeHugger Organic Ltd: 541 Main Sth Rd, St Andrews, Timaru
2. Alvina & Brendans: 76 Pudject Rd, Adair, Timaru

Date: Saturday 25th April. 10am until 3pm.

Presenters: (fully certified organic farmers)

1. Nathan Davis – fruit & vegetable grower for the past 4.5 years. Developed the property from scratch as manager and now as the owner. He aims to specialize & streamline the business.
2. Alvina & Brendan Murphy – fruit growers with 35 years experience (plums, apples and pears).

Cost: \$10 per person **Bring:** questions, a chair & lunch (refreshments provided).

Contact: Gilda to book a space at Canterbury Organic, (OFNZ) ph. 03 3251344 or email corganic@organics.org.nz

Rural Mentors programme

Experienced organic farmers: would you like to pass on your knowledge, and are you willing to help others progress in organics? Farmers who are new to organics: would you like the support and guidance of someone who has been through it before? Continuing on from last year's successful organic mentoring project, Organics Aotearoa New Zealand is now a partner in a national programme to help farmers learn from other farmers. We are currently seeking organic mentors and mentees.

If you have any questions, contact Rebecca Reider, 03 525 6111, rebecca.reider@gmail.com, or look at the programme website below.

There is a small fee for mentees, and we have funding to pay the mentors for their help. Valuable training (free to participants) will be happening very soon so if you wish to be part of this programme, get in touch as soon as possible.

Thanks to everyone who already participated in the pilot programme and made mentoring a success for organics. We have had great feedback from participants from last season, when 26 new organic farmers and growers were mentored on the South Island. Some feedback: "Good: different perspective on farm, ideas, brainstorming, crop protocols, motivation, stimulation, kindling passion!"

"It was good to able to discuss specific aspects of our property in situ. Seeing what we are doing, our mentor could offer advice, relevant to the situation."

"It's always very inspiring visiting them [our mentors] and there are always many useful bits of information for us." "The phone contact is very supportive. Great moral support and being able to ring with questions as the growing season progresses is fantastic."

Rural Mentor Programme: A new programme has been launched and is currently seeking both Mentors and Mentees for training in early April. The focus is sheep, beef and dairy farmers, both conventional and organic in the Waikato/King Country, Canterbury and Southland. The Rural Mentor Programme is a win:win partnership for both parties where the Mentor is able to give back to the industry by providing guidance, support and encouragement to the Mentee. The Mentee is ideally the driver, whilst the Mentor provides the direction. For more information visit www.ruralmentor.co.nz or contact 0800 Rural Mentor (787256) or email info@ruralmentor.co.nz

Field Day Report: Soil, Water and Carbon for Every Farm – Building soils, harvesting rainwater, storing carbon

Darren Doherty, from Australia, presented a seminar for the ODPG (Organic Dairy and Pastoral Group) at John, Trish and Kelvin Hicks's farm, Willowmere, at Hororata, on the subject of *Soil, Water and Carbon for Every Farm*.

Darren began by saying that farmers have a significant role to play harvesting carbon (C) from the air and storing it in the soil. Techniques developed specifically to increase soil carbon include:

- **Holistic grazing.** Animals are grazed intensively and moved each day to a new pasture, leaving behind large amounts of organic matter. The most palatable species are not overgrazed (see Organic Update No. 14 on the CCOG website <http://www.organics.org.nz>).
- **Non-inversion subsoiling** (also known in Australia as Yeoman's pattern ploughing) (more on this later).
- **Biological amendments** (such as soil food web compost teas or effective microorganisms) (see Organic Updates No.4 and No. 1 respectively).
- **Biochar** (a stable form of carbon that can be incorporated into the soil as a permanent carbon store. This would potentially create a major carbon sink that removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through plant growth and stores it as inert carbon in soils).
- **Integrated farm planning** using permaculture, Keyline Design, Zeri principles (zero emissions) and Holistic Management (more on Keyline Design later).

That farms can be a carbon sink as well as a source of greenhouse gas emissions is great news as we are often told that farms are responsible for a large proportion of emissions in New Zealand. The Lincoln University web-based "carbon calculator" only calculates emissions created from farms, not carbon accumulated. (Maybe someone should have a word to them?)

Carbon (C) sequestration – should we use trees or soil or both?

"Agricultural soils have short, medium and long-term potential to mitigate climate change by sequestering atmospheric carbon as beneficial humified organic matter. The carbon sequestration potential of appropriately managed farmlands can be higher than that of tropical forests." Porteous & Smith, 2008

Trees – not as high performing as soil/grasslands can be; they lock up the land for 10-15 yrs; generally they need high quality land and good rainfall, and they do not "build" soils. Yield is around 200t C /ha over 10-15 yrs. At this rate, 7 Earths are needed to sequester the C legacy we have now. However, they do have the advantage of being positive landscape and climate modifiers (i.e. they store moisture which remains in the system, and generally increase rainfall).

Soils – grassland can take in more C than trees. Grassland has the potential to sequester C quickly and cheaply. Every tonne of organic C stored in the soil has removed 3.76 t CO₂ from the atmosphere. The C in the top 10 cm of soil is in a state of flux (i.e. can be easily lost and regained), **but if C is stored in the lower layers of soil as humus it is very stable.**

Trees and soils together can be a stable and productive integrated system.

Six essential factors for soil formation:

- Bioactive minerals
 - Air
 - Water
 - Living things in the soil
-

- Living things on the soil
- Intermittent and patchy disturbance regimes (e.g., animals grazed using holistic grazing principles)

Compacted and biologically “dead” soils are not productive and will not be particularly useful for growing grass or storing C. Darren stressed that to maximise the potential of soils to store C, the root zone must be aerated so that plant roots can get down into the subsoil. A penetrometer should be used when the soil is at field capacity to assess whether the soil is compacted. If the soil is compacted a subsoiler should be used to “loosen” the soil, which will have the effect of letting air and water deeper into the soil and improving rooting depth. Deeper, healthier roots exude root sugars which are metabolised by fungi. More root sugars result in more fungi. Fungi gather minerals from the soil and release glomulin which is what leads to soil aggregation, which results in improved structure. Improved structure promotes rooting ability of plants, better water infiltration and storage, and increased organic matter (carbon) sequestration and storage.

Darren recommends the Yeoman plough for subsoiling. It has discs on the front to cut the sod, sharp points to go down into the soil, and a roller on the back to flatten the ground. Darren often mounts shank seed boxes behind the points and before the roller to sow deep rooting species and to minimise weed strike where the ground has been disturbed. (For pictures and further description, go to <http://www.yeomansplow.com.au/yeomans-plows.htm> or google “Yeomans plough” for other sites.)

Kelvin Hicks demonstrated a James plough (subsoiler). Darren said the points on this were not ideal as they were like “earthmoving” points which could lead to smearing. The Yeomans plough has points with an 8° angle so that there is no mixing between subsoil and topsoil. Subsoiling should be done when the soil is relatively dry, but when rain is likely. Tractor speed should be about 3-4 kph.

The Hicks’s paddock had good populations of “biological subsoilers” – i.e. plants with deep taproots that would go down into the subsoil, such as dandelion, chicory and plantain. Docks also have deep taproots but are associated with compaction and acidification. Subsoiling has a “liming effect”, in that it lets out hydrogen and lets in oxygen. Subsoiling is a remedial approach – do not use if your soil structure is already good.

Increasing the amount of C in the soil also increases the soil’s water holding capacity. A 1% increase in soil C allows an extra 144,000 extra litres of water to be held in the soil per ha. The Hicks’s carrot paddocks have a 5% organic matter content, which is very high, and they do not need to irrigate even in dry summers.

Darren told us about the system of soil carbon credits that has been developed in Australia by soil scientist Dr Christine Jones. The Australian Soil Carbon Accreditation Scheme (ASCAS) has been established to give farmers credits (\$) for storing carbon and building soils on managed land. ASCAS is a vehicle to demonstrate through farm trials that with perennial (long lived) deep-rooted pastures and annual crops, measured increases in soil carbon can be achieved quickly and rewarded with incentive payments for the CO₂ sequestered. The scheme is the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere, making Australia an leader in the recognition of soils as a verifiable carbon sink. Read more about this on

<http://www.amazingcarbon.com/Jones%20-%20Australian%20Soil%20Carbon%20Accreditation%20Scheme.pdf>

See also the website <http://www.amazingcarbon.com/> This site has numerous articles on the subject of storing carbon. One I found particularly interesting was “Farming a climate change

solution” by James Porteous and Frank Smith; another good one is “Mitigating Climate Change: Conservation Agriculture Stores Soil Carbon”, by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

Keyline design Another of Darren’s areas of expertise is keyline design. This is a type of functional landscape design: “an integrated system of water harvesting and gravity irrigation, soil development and farm layout”. The principles are to hydrate ridges not valleys by ploughing or ripping not on the contour but at a equidistant spacing so that water flows to the ridges. This system “captures” a lot of water into the farm system, which can be stored in dams for later gravity-fed irrigation, and when used alongside extensive tree planting and other methods of capturing carbon (e.g., subsoiling and holistic grazing) can build soils, improve water retention, and store carbon. Farm tracks can be built so that they can be used as water channels.

The **keypoint** in a valley is the place where the valley suddenly gets steeper. This is the highest place in the valley that is practical to place a dam. The **keyline** is a contour line carried in both directions from the keypoint. Cultivation with a subsoiler or ripper for tree planting can be done parallel to the keyline to bring water out from the valley to the drier ridges. For more information see <http://www.wiserearth.org/group/keyline/section/details#About>

It was a thought provoking presentation and exciting to hear of the potential of farming to be at the forefront of reducing greenhouse gases. The figures are compelling – a mere 1.6% increase in soil C in the soil that is currently grazed and cultivated (which is 12% of the Earth’s land area) would reduce atmospheric CO₂ to below 300 parts per million (ppm). It is now at 380-400 ppm; pre-industrial levels were 280 ppm. Methane emissions from animals, and cultivation for cropping, especially in an organic regime, remain areas we all need to work on. Thanks Darren for a great discussion – we all went away inspired to lock away as much C as possible!

Mary Ralston

Soil Carbon: The Real Carat of a Dirty Diamond *John King*

The recent visit of Darren Doherty highlighted the importance of soil carbon. But while there is a lot of hype around the potential income earning opportunities in trading soil carbon, what is the cold hard reality of mining soil carbon?

Remember Darren’s comment from some cocky that his fertiliser consultant told him his soils had carbon levels too high for fertilisers to be effective? An untold truth is that as soil carbon levels rise, the response to conventional fertilisers decreases. That’s despite the fact as much as up to 60% of fertiliser applications are not readily available to the plant anyway.

What is the true cost to the farmer of manipulating soil carbon levels? How can we compare changes in biological capital in financial terms like net worth?

Take two 200 ha farms: Farm A: Has made an \$120,000 net profit but has lost 0.5% organic matter in the process. Farm B: Has just managed to pay its expenses and salaries but gained 0.5% organic matter. Which farm is accumulating the greatest wealth?

0.5% organic matter = 11200 kg organic matter per hectare plus trace minerals and soil moisture holding capacity or tilth.

11200 kg of organic matter = 6720 kg of organic carbon per hectare and with the standard C:N:S:P ratio (100:10:1.5:1.5) holds around 670 kg N, 94 kg of P, and the same of S. To calculate the biological value of carbon in common farming financial terms, I’ve used the most

concentrated fertilisers for each element from Ravensdown's 2009 prices to demonstrate the commercial reality of changes in soil carbon.

Urea = \$695/tonne (GST exclusive) and constitutes 46% nitrogen

$$\frac{695}{(46 \times 10)} = \$1.51/\text{kg}$$

$$\$1.51 \times 670\text{kg/ha} = \$1,012.28/\text{ha}$$

Triple super = \$1,600/tonne and constitutes 21% phosphate

$$\frac{1,600}{(21 \times 10)} = \$7.62/\text{kg}$$

$$\$7.62 \times 94 = \$716.28/\text{ha}$$

Maxi sulphur super = \$595/tonne and constitutes 50% sulphur

$$\frac{595}{(50 \times 10)} = \$1.19/\text{kg}$$

$$\$1.19 \times 94 = \$111.86/\text{ha}$$

In total, these three elements add up to \$1840.42/ha. Across a 200 ha property, that adds up to \$368,084 for a change of 0.5% in organic matter. For farm A this would mean a loss of true net worth of around \$248,100 through lost biological capacity while farm B has increased its biological capacity by the equivalent of \$368,100. This is a classic example of how the loss of biological capital is masking the real net worth of the property. While the ability to accumulate 0.5% OM over a year is very difficult, the consequences of mining it are staggering.

It takes 3-4 years of pasture through pulse or tall pasture grazing or no-till practices to replace the organic matter lost in a single year of conventional cropping. Losing organic matter lowers the water retention capacity, increases the likely dependency on fertilisers, and essentially erodes your most valuable asset – the soil.

Of course, an option open to farmers is to steadily build organic matter reserves over a period of time and cash them in by reaping crops from the accumulated biological wealth. This practice is worthy only if part of a lifelong land management strategy. As Darren mentioned, the Holistic Management decision framework helps farming families to determine when such a practice is best for their situation.

John King is the Director of Succession and a Holistic Management educator. He is currently producing financial workshops for the OAP.

Organic Vegetable and Mixed Farming Association

Demonstration Evening on Reduced Tillage, 15 January 09, Methven

Objectives of the evening were:

- to hear about the FAR (Foundation for Arable Research) Grass2Crop research project, which is investigating different levels of cultivation used to return paddocks to the cropping phase after pasture, and
- to discuss cultivation practices of organic farmers, especially when returning paddocks to the cropping phase from the pasture phase.

David Musgrave began by introducing Nick Poole from the Foundation for Arable Research (FAR). David said that he had been to several field days on reduced tillage and non-inversion agriculture that had been run by FAR and he wanted other organic farmers to have this opportunity too. His motivation to attend these were the variable results achieved from ploughing contractors, a desire to save soil structure and an interest in reducing fuel use.

Nick Poole organises research and extension activities for FAR. The trials on non-inversion agronomy began in 2003/04 with the goal of reducing the amount of cultivation required for cropping. The trial is looking at the effects of cultivation on the crop and the “downstream” effect of reduced tillage – i.e., how the crops later in the rotation were affected by the cultivation practices used when pasture was returned to cropping. They began the investigation at the hardest part of the rotation, trying to reduce establishment costs for crops. There have been some interesting results already – one was that straw burning improved pest and weed control and reduced diesel use, and so from a technical standpoint, there was a strong case for straw burning. Another surprising result was the effectiveness of broadcasting seed (which has led to growers using this commercially). Using a fertiliser spreader takes one cost out of the system. Looking at direct drilling and where it fits into the rotation is another aspect of the research.

FAR conducted a survey of cropping farmers and found that ploughing was used least after cereals and most after the grass phase, which is ironic as grass is seen as a restorative part of the cropping rotation and ploughing is the most damaging way to cultivate in terms of loss of structure and organic matter. David said there is greatest loss of N in the first winter after ploughing grass. Wheat is usually grown first after grass as it is the crop requiring the highest levels of N and is also the most profitable. An alternative route to wheat from grass is to firstly grow a brassica.

In the trial paddock where we held the demonstration evening, farmer David Grant is growing a sprouting radish crop for seed. David has been using direct drilling for 15 years and finds the difficult point is taking a paddock out of grass back into cropping. This paddock was previously in grass – seed had been harvested for two years and dairy cows grazed in winter. After a wet winter and then a dry spring, the ground was very hard.

The trial paddock we observed had three treatments:

1. glyphosate spray, plough, Heva disc roll (disc and press), then drill radish with cross-slot drill
2. glyphosate spray, direct drill (same drill was used for all treatments to eliminate one variable)
3. glyphosate spray, 2 passes with Heva disc roller, then drilled as above

Don Pearson commented that controlling weeds and cultivation are two separate phases in conventional cropping but cultivation does both these jobs in an organic regime. Nick agreed, saying that there is often an agronomic value in cultivation, such as grass grub control or twitch control, but is this benefit big enough to offset loss of the benefits of grass (restoring structure and accumulating organic matter)?

Although the trial is using conventional treatments, there was great value for organic farmers to have the opportunity to discuss the trial and cultivation practices, and we thank Nick Poole, FAR and David Grant for sharing their information.

ODPG field day, Aatahua, Banks Peninsula, October 2008

The Organic Dairy and Pastoral Group of OANZ held a field day at Roger and Nicki Beattie's property, Aatahua Farm, at Kaituna, Banks Peninsula, last October.

Roger Beattie gave some background to the farming operation at Aatahua. The property was bought 6 years ago with the aim of expanding wild sheep numbers. Aatahua is 309 ha and receives 625-750 mm rain/year. The farm is in the process of organic certification with AsureQuality, and will receive full status in May 2009. They run 2000 stock units; Murray Grey cattle make up 25-30% of this, and the remainder is Pitt Island wild sheep, some of these crossed with Romneys.

The Beattie's long-term plan was to move away from chemical farming in the belief that it is better for human and animal health. Roger had had a 20 year break from farming and when he came back to it, was sure this was the direction to head. He feels that issues such as BSE, melamine poisoning and foot and mouth will "come home to roost" and that organic food with good traceability will be in strong demand as well as being healthier and ethically more desirable. Roger is sure that the mainstream focus on productivity at any cost will have to change.

Roger and Nicki's Pitt Island wild sheep are "tough" says Roger. At this stage the focus has been on survivability, culling any sheep with dags, and later they will select for productivity. Dr David Scobie, from AgResearch, said that they don't know what traits are best so they take out the worst. Dagginess is mostly due to pasture in spring but if it occurs in autumn it will be due to internal parasites. There are no foot problems.

The Bohipi sheep are another venture on the farm, owned jointly by the Beattie's and Dr Scobie. These "easy-care" sheep are a mixture of eight feral strains, including Merino, and have a reduced amount of wool on their bellies and backsides. This reduces the likelihood of flystrike and also makes them cheaper and quicker to shear. They have good fleeces, as opposed to Wiltshires which lose their fleece naturally.

Lambing begins in July at Aatahua and lambing percentage is about 80%. The ewes are never drenched. Lambs are weaned in early December, a small number of fat lambs are sold at weaning, most are carried on. The lambs that we saw in the paddock are mostly from Romney ewes and Pitt Island rams. Salt (with the addition of 0.25% kelp) is supplied to stock. Roger has found that the cattle will eat any amount of kelp so limits intake by adding it to the salt. The Murray Greys do very well on this country, but it is a balancing act to make sure the tussocks are not chewed out.

There are only 65-70 acres of flat land on the farm, the remainder being rolling to hilly. Pasture is mainly ryegrass and some clover, and silver tussock. Productivity has been lifted enormously by the application of Optimise fine lime. Soil tests done a year after liming showed a huge increase in earthworm numbers, and thatching has been greatly reduced.

The greatest assets of the farm are the lack of weeds, it is easy rolling country (a motorbike can be used to get around), it is close to town, it is early country (some nice sunny faces) but also the southerly aspect grows grass in winter, it is not drought-prone (no drought in the last 6 years), it is good finishing country (unlike much of the Peninsula), and there is good natural water.

Disadvantages are the large size of some of the blocks, and the predominance of ryegrass pastures, which Roger is contemplating replacing with mixed-species pastures which may be more productive and have animal health benefits.

Roger's philosophy about organics boils down to: it is relatively easy because we were already farming without chemicals, so if there is a premium available we may as well get certification and collect the premiums.

Back at the woolshed, suggestions to help lift farm productivity were made. Some of these were:

- As it is good finishing country, try to finish off mothers
- Focus on niche markets and branding of Pitt Island sheep
- Look at lucerne/tall fescue mixed pastures. Existing pastures could be ripped up in dry conditions (Dec-Jan), turnips and Italian ryegrass sown in autumn and grazed through winter, spring sow rape, autumn-sow permanent pasture. Alternatively, on flat country, a crop of wheat (or other cereal) could be grown before resowing (or undersowing) into permanent pasture to take advantage of inherent natural fertility of soil that has been in permanent pasture.
- Plan lambing to fit pasture growth (i.e., lamb later)
- Use electric fencing to reduce paddock size
- Monitor soil biology
- Have clearer objectives with sheep flock (i.e., select an elite flock)
- Prioritise cost-effectiveness (i.e., don't go for big projects in current uncertain economic times)
- Have some lambs that can be sold early – need good pasture, e.g., rape and red clover, barley and oats, tick beans and oats (need slow transition from one to another – 2 -3 weeks)
- Hill blocks could be oversown with clovers (white, sub) and ryegrass (inoculated seed can give lift to wild populations of rhyzobia).
- Work in with other farmers with respect to stock movement, partnerships, marketing.

Organics in Canterbury

Newsletter

C/- Mary Ralston
 Back Track
 RD 12 Rakaia 7782

If any of your details are incorrect please contact Mary at the return address.

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