



Moore Catchment Council
P.O Box 337
Moora WA 6510
 Phone **(08) 9653 1355**
 Fax **(08) 96531366**
 Email: moorecc@bigpond.com
www.moorecatchment.org.au

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Koojan soil improvement trial inspires local farmers

Do you ever wonder what to do with that gutless worst paddock on the farm that you wished would make some money?? Ian McGillivray at Koojan has been experimenting with various soil conditioners to generate more income from his poorest paddock and shared his trials and findings at a field walk on 25th March. Rachel Walmsley from Moore Catchment Council (MCC) said “Ian’s been testing variable rates of chicken manure, organic soil conditioner, clay and Agflow on non wetting sand using a grant obtained by Moore Catchment Council through the Federal Government. He wanted to strategically use the conditioners in strips to maximise effect and reduce costs, and then plant Tagasaste and saltbush as sheep feed.”

The field day attracted over 20 people and started with egg and bacon rolls in the woolshed before moving on to the trial. Rachel said “Ian was brilliant at sharing every aspect of the trial including costings of each treatment and homemade machinery to spade the soil and plant/cut the tagasaste. Some of the plants were huge - including the biggest 8 month old saltbush ever seen !!” Next stage for Ian is to monitor the trial site for the next few years to see changes and plan which application is the best - both cost effective and beneficial.

Take away messages included:

- deep rip twice at 350mm and then 600mm
- spading non wetting sand definitely helps with establishment
- adding clay is good, but not on its own, need organics
- improving poor soil with organic material massively improves establishment and vitality of plants
- cut tagasaste regularly, and crash graze both saltbush and tag to get the most out it

Rachel concluded “Huge thanks to Ian (and family) for being a diligent trial manager and allowing the field walk, to Phil Barrett-Lennard for sharing his perennials words of wisdom, to Elders for the use of their BBQ, and to the Australian Government for funding the trial.” 4 min video interview with Ian here: <https://youtu.be/pGc-Hxklq80> Further information, contact MCC on 9653 1355



Local farmers inspired by trial field day



Ian McGillivray inspects his well established saltbush

1st
April
2015



The Moore Catchment Council promotes Natural Resource Management in the Moore River Catchment

PO Box 337 Moora WA 6510 www.moorecatchment.org.au ABN 13 033 232 342

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