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GRAZING MANAGEMENT - NEW OPTIONS TO EXPLORE

An action packed workshop recently held in the Goolma Hall for local farmers from the Mebul and Goolma Creek catchments explored a number of grazing management techniques.

The Grazing Management Day is part of the Footprint Project funded by the Central West Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and coordinated by the staff at the Mudgee office.

Central West CMA Catchment Officer, Colleen Farrow said, "The workshop was a great success and attracted over 25 land managers who discussed grazing management options."

The day also provided opportunities for farmers to connect, work together and to share what they have learned."

The program for the day included three informative guest speakers. Firstly David Marsh, a sheep grazer from Boorowa talked about how his grazing management practices have changed over the last twenty years. David emphasised the importance of groundcover, native pasture management and the long term protection of soils.

The second speaker, Mary Goodacre, a merino and trade cattle grazer from Eugowra. Her presentation focused on salinity issues, how farmers need to address the cause not the symptoms and the potential advantages of grazing sheep and cattle together.

Lastly Bruce Maynard delivered a presentation titled, 'Grazing on 'Willydah' a cattle property near Narromine. He outlined his 15 years of grazing management experience where he introduced time control grazing in 1994 that involved increasing the moving of stock. This saw benefits of better control, rationing of feed and improved production.

Bruce stated, "We introduced more subdivisions that meant better analysis of available feed and stock with our overhead costs declining."

Mary Goodacre then lead the group on a native grass identification exercise where the group identified a number of native grasses and discussed their potential pasture benefits.

A workshop participant Jo Doherty from 'Pine View' Goolma, said "The most valuable part of the day for me was the field trip, identifying the various native species present in the Goolma area. It was interesting to learn more about the value of various species and how we can better manage them on our property."

"The Grazing Management Day exposed us to a wealth of knowledge and options. New knowledge stimulates change and introduces us to new options that can not only benefit the farming enterprise but work in harmony with the environment," Colleen concluded.

More information on the Central West CMA Footprint Project can be found by visiting the website: www.cw.cma.nsw.gov.au or by contacting the Mudgee Office on (02) 6372 4044.

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