

WIG Regenerative Farming Field Day 2022

Close to 30 people converged for a beautiful October day in Newdegate for the 2022 Wheatbelt Integrity Group (WIG) Regenerative Farming Field Day, exploring the links between soil, plant, animal and human health with an interactive session by Peter Norwood from Full Circle Nutrition.

WIG Chair Nick Kelly opened the day at the Newdegate Recreation Centre, highlighting the Kelly family's involvement with WIG over the years in bringing together farmers and stakeholders investigating regenerative agriculture and the restoration of rural communities.

Longstanding WIG committee member John Hicks provided participants with an insight into his innovations in improving farm dam water retention during his farming days in Pingrup.



Peter Norwood from Full Circle Nutrition

Peter Norwood then dived into all things nutrition. Peter is an agronomist, animal nutritionist and human nutrition consultant, specialising in nutritional balancing using hair mineral analysis.

Peter described the methods he uses, developed by Dr Paul Eck in the 1970s, to balance minerals in the human/animal body so that all the normal enzymatic and hormonal pathways are restored, reactivating a thriving healthy state.

He asked participants, “are you/your livestock thriving nutritionally?” Peter then explained some of the signs and symptoms of nutrient deficiencies, relating them to fundamental chemical processes in the soil, plants and human/animal bodies.

“Symptoms of magnesium deficiency are stress and lack of sleep. That is because our parasympathetic nervous system is affected. Magnesium helps regulate melatonin and our parasympathetic nervous system. Serotonin is the hormone that makes us feel sleepy.”

As well as deficiencies, Peter outlined that over-compensating when trying to rebalance minerals can also have adverse effects, so soil testing and getting hair mineral analysis tests are important in determining the right quantities. “Too little soil calcium means poor soil structure and poor gas exchange, calcium is critically needed by all cells for cell wall strength, cell division and cell signalling. Excess Calcium Carbonate affects plant growth as it can lock up trace elements in the soil such as iron, manganese, copper and zinc. Plants suffer in terms of quality and yield.”

After lunch, the group headed out to Nick Kelly’s property, Holland Track Farm, to contextualise Peter’s knowledge in a real-world setting. The group visited a paddock with diverse mixed species cover crops, an oat crop, and the family’s organic free range chicken production set up.



Field walk at Hollands Track Farm, Newdegate.

Nick demonstrated how he and his family have created a farming system which is sequestering carbon, reducing erosion, enhancing soil health and increasing moisture retention, all without chemical use.



Each setting provided great opportunities to learn how the Kelly family introduced new practices and principles over time, which is a fantastic example of profitably transitioning into a regenerative agriculture system.

This event was supported by Wheatbelt Integrity Group, Ken Bailey from Halsen Technology, and RegenWA through the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's Soil Wise Program.

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Article written by Bonnie Jupp (Perth NRM)

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