
Welcome to [ASK] - Always Seeking Knowledge!
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1. Quick [ASK]

Do some little things really well every day. Train yourself to repeatedly complete a task every day. For example, why don't you update your biological plan every day?; perhaps you should call someone for a reinforcing chat; or every day deliberately moving yourself further away from negative news or influences and closer to positive people and circumstances. It is marvellous what changes come about when you practice getting the little things right. Sink some putts in your business, every day! Gain focus, and the winning strategies will develop more easily.

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2. Welcome

This Newsletter was mostly written on the run, in WA, where I was touring with my son, David. It is a great and rewarding experience to spend time with one of your family doing this sort of thing, and far too long since we travelled together. David is an independent agronomist based in Quirindi, NSW, and this is his first trip to the West, so interesting to watch his assessment of situations as they crop up.

Talking of crops, there are some pretty flash ones in the making in the West. And there are some disaster crops looming as well. Basically the season is now within six weeks of the end, and many people are still operating on below 100mm of rainfall for the year. Pretty hard to make that work, under any circumstance.

The Eastern states situation is generally grim as well. I don't want to spend time on this, as it is more important to plan forward, even if stuck in the middle of problems now.

I was discussing this aspect with a few other people recently. One fellow mentioned he had discovered that droughts are not about lack of rain or feed. They are, he said about 'lack of hope'. That is an interesting thought, isn't it? One thing we are each allowed to do is mentally build and rebuild our own confidence and hope. That alone is a comforting thought.

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3. Around the Traps

WA

You have the synopsis above. Generally, very good close to the coast, and worse as you move east.

Great group under way in Perth at the moment, with 24 people attending.

Vic

Pretty ordinary in much of Victoria. Graeme Hand tells me that Port Fairy is great, and Colin Twigg tells me he has never seen anything like the drought at Bears Lagoon, near Bendigo.

NSW

Crook! Except for the coastal strip and the Monaro.

Peter Howarth and Garry McDouall had their annual Composite bull sale this week. This year they were supported with bulls bred by James and Ted Laurie of Gloucester. If you want to know more about the science behind composites, then I would have a yarn to one of these blokes. They all 'know their oats'.

If you are interested in attending an Arden Anderson workshop (he wrote *Science in Agriculture*) then your opportunity is coming up at Narrabri on September 9 - 12. Arden will be supported by Elaine Ingham and Christine Jones. For bookings, call Brett (the Vet) Warren on 0428 215 599. I would consider this a must if you grow crops and are looking at moving towards biological (which are not the same as organic - but a mix of conventional and organic) management programs.

On another tack, Sylvia Marina will be running a program at Byron Bay on October 8 - 10. Sylvia focus's is accessing energy within the theta and delta brain patterns. She has for 20 years worked with cancer patients around the world. If you are interested in talking to Sylvia, her contact details are sylvia@facegenius.com.au or phone +61 (08) 9457 3763

NZ

Generally things are going well in the Land of the Long White Cloud. No doubt winning the tri-Nations was a boost for them as well!!

I note that Elaine Ingham is going to be at Blenheim, presenting her Soil Food Web workshop on September 5th. If you want to know more, give Alison MacKenzie a call on (03) 572 4411, as she is getting a group together. Highly recommend attendance at this one.

Sylvia Marina will be in Timaru October 4 - 6 and Auckland October 18 - 20. See details above.

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4. Strategies and Focus

1 Strategies

As I have been driving around - and looking and talking, I see that there is a massive swing towards cattle. Sheep are being 'sacked' all over the place. Regretably, the sins of the past still haunt us even in the open wool market that now exists. How much damage did we do to the consumer base over the last 30 years, one wonders?

I have talked before about the low cost building material that was developed more than 10 years ago, made from wool. The old guard at the AWC made sure it didn't get a start. I believe the words of rejection revolved around the premise that wool was an apparel material, not a construction material. In my mind we have a human creativity problem here. If you take a 'helicopter' view, it is my view that we have a shortage of mouths and feet on the ground, and need more animals to regenerate this country - and probably in NZ as well. We also need to make money from them, so if a building product does the job of absorbing the production of these animals, let's do it.

I see a few problems - and opportunities - arising. One problem is the 'ferry' syndrome. If everybody moves to one side of the ferry, it tends to tip over! I am concerned about the cattle ferry, taking into account the normal cyclical nature of the US cattle market, and its effect on us in the southern hemisphere.

An opportunity now available is to invent ways to make wool profitable - by creating new and undreamed of markets, and by increasing production to meet them. At the farm level, increasing production should tend to decrease unit cost and increase profitability.

Clearly, the wool industry needs to consider where its Weak Link is in the chain of production, and also consider what the Future Resource Base must look like, in order for the industry to survive. I am still not seeing much evidence of industry wide good thinking about this at the moment.

This much I know, if we lose the wool industry, we could also lose everything if we rely on meat production alone. Here is why.

Disease!

FMD in either New Zealand or Australia would overnight decimate our respective meat industries. Markets for our products would evaporate at the speed of thought. But I reckon we should still be able to sell our wool. I urge you to do the research, and to **develop strategies for such a development**. Don't take my word for it, but please think about it deeply. Your future may depend on it, and you will need to configure your strategy in the light of an overall industry strategy as well. If you don't like the industry strategy (is there one?) and direction at the moment, do something about it!

2 Focus

I recently read a most interesting article. It seems amateur golfers practice losing, whilst professional golfers practice winning. Not being a golfer myself, I had to think this one through a bit. What the writer was saying was this: Most golfers practice taking on tasks far too big for their skill base - eg putts that are too long or too awkward. Very often they fail to put the ball in the hole. They practise failure rather than success.

Professional golfers do the exact opposite. They practise short putts for instance - which they repeatedly and consistently sink. They will spend hours sinking short putts, so that when the big ones come, their brain only knows one thing - sinking every putt when it matters most.

There is a idea for us all here. Do some little things really well every day. Train yourself to repeatedly complete a task every day. For example, updating your biological plan every day; or call someone for a reinforcing chat; or every day deliberately move yourself further away from negative news or influences and closer to positive people and circumstances. It is marvellous what changes come about when you practice getting the little things right. Sink some putts in your business, every day! Gain focus, and the winning strategies will develop more easily.

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5. Update your Diary

Events we have planned include:

Monday, September 2	Perth, WA	Financial Planning/Wealth Generation
Tuesday, September 24	Perth, WA	Grazing and Land Planning
Wednesday, October 9,	Braidwood, NSW	Overview
Thursday, October 10,	Bega, NSW	Overview
Monday, October 28,	Quirindi, NSW	Grazing and Land Planning
Monday, November 11,	Wauchope, NSW	Introduction to Holistic Management

Coaching

Coaching in holistic goal formation, wealth generation planning and biological planning is provided either by regular phone schedule, or at your location. Call 02 9929 5568 to slot in your coaching time.

In addition, the Holistic Decision Making Association will be providing a series of intensive one day revision programs. Full details will be with you soon.

The first of them will be held simultaneously on October 21st and 23rd - covering **Financial Planning and Wealth Generation**. Locations are:

<i>21st October</i>	<i>23rd October</i>
Christchurch, NZ	Perth, WA
Harden, NSW	Wingham, NSW
Yarrawonga, Vic	Tamworth, NSW
Mundubbera, Qld	Hamilton, Vic

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6. Books and Materials you can use

"Gettysburg"

This five hour video, based on the book *Killer Angels* by Chianti, is about the American Civil War battle at Gettysburg. General Lee suffered his first setback in this battle, although the war dragged on a further three years. In this monumental battle, which lasted three days, more than 53,000 soldiers died - and they died fighting their own countrymen. In all, more than 540,000 people died in this civil war.

The movie contains powerful images and stories of the strengths and flaws of the Generals involved, and of Lee's refusal to take a step back, because he feared loss of faith with his men, even when he knew he was at risk. In particular, it is a study of the strategies each side took in positioning themselves for best result.

You should be able to hire this double length movie from your local video store.

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7. Quotes that mean something

"We cannot discover new oceans until we have the courage to lose sight of the shore."
-- Muriel Chen

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world."

Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

-- Margaret Mead"

"Winning is not a sometime thing. You don't win once in a while, you don't do things right once in a while, you do them right all the time. Winning is a habit. Unfortunately, so is losing."

-- Vince Lombardi

"In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing. The worst thing you can do is nothing."

-- Theodore Roosevelt

"Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself."

-- Unknown

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Regards

Bruce Ward