

The SA Soils Scoop

with LUCY PORTER

Building networks and sharing knowledge about the health and management of South Australian soils

The SA Regional Soils Coordinator role is part of a national network of Regional Soil Coordinators (RSC), *supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust.*

The Regional Soil Coordinators work across all levels of industry to understand stakeholder needs and engage with regional and national networks to build the knowledge base and capacity in soil management. The RSCs aim to help inform, protect and develop healthy soils within agricultural systems.

Hi There,

I am pleased to share the first Soils Scoop bi-monthly update, in my role as Regional Soils Coordinator.

As a Regional Soil Coordinator, my role is about building networks among people to connect soil information, resources and opportunities. I work alongside the SA Drought Hub to connect with farming systems groups, State Government agencies, private advisors and university researchers to increase knowledge sharing and encourage collaboration. The role aims to promote and support opportunities to encourage the adoption of sustainable land management practices among farming communities across South Australia.

This role forms a part of a larger network, the National Soil Community of Practice, convened by Soil Science Australia. Together we consider soil related issues at a national scale, identifying synergies, differences and priority challenges for soil extension and industry needs. We collate resources into the SSA resource library database which contains hundreds of resources from across Australia in one location and provide local on ground knowledge to the federal government on soil related matters.

You can read more about the role here:

In each update I will be sharing innovative news, workshops and insights into soil science, soil health and management.

Please get in touch to share information and ideas,

Kind regards

LUCY PORTER
Regional Soil Coordinator
SA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub
The University of Adelaide, Waite Campus SA
M: +614 88 551 731
E: lucy.porter@adelaide.edu.au

Managing soil resources during drought



As the drought conditions continue across South Australia, we are seeing some dusty situations across our regional communities. We have compiled a range resources and fact sheets which contain information on managing soil resources during a drought.

These have been written by local soil research gurus and State Government advisors and include tips for maintaining as much groundcover as possible, soil testing to see what nutrients you have left in your paddock, fine tuning your fertiliser management, adjusting pasture management, crop rotation considerations, and emergency measures to curb wind erosion.

Soil moisture is exceptionally low, coming off the back of a dry spring last year and minimal summer rainfall. We made it to the end of May with minimal dust storms which is a testament to how far agronomic practices and farming systems have come in protecting and improving our overall land management. The adoption of no and minimal tillage, stubble retention, improvements in rotational grazing and implementing confinement feeding have greatly reduced the frequency of dust storm events.

See all our Soil Management resources at: Soil and land management - SA Drought Hub.



Driving knowledge exchange

Together with the SA Drought Hub Node Coordiantors, I recently attended the South Australian Arid Lands Pastoral Field Day at Pt Augusta with the Node Coordinators from the SA Drought Hub. While there, I helped the Soil Science Australia stand to provide support to pastoralists on soil management, pH testing, texturing, and discussing the biology behind the 'soil your undies' citizen science project.

The Soil Science stall also supported soil education sessions with School of the Air Pt Augusta students, who took part in soil painting, bolus making, pH testing and carbonate fizz tests. It was a great event with lots of muddy hands and soil health conversations.

We had a range of handy resources to distribute, which are compiled in our Soils and Land Knowledge Base at: Knowledge Base - SA Drought Hub



RSC Snowy Mountains Tour

The National Soil Community of Practice (CoP) tour was recently hosted in the Snowy Mountains NSW. The CoP is convened by Soil Science Australia, and funded through the Australian Government's Climate Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust. Members include the Regional Soil Coordinators, the Soil CRC, TERN Australia, CSIRO and representatives from the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF).

The tour showcased farmers' firsthand experiences with soil management challenges, and included visits to erosion and mass movement sites in the Snowy Mountains, education and discussions on the geological and farming history of the Snowy Mountains & Monaro region, a visit to the Bush Heritage Scottsdale site, and extensive soil knowledge shared by local soil experts.

A range of quality resources were shared, which may be of interest:

- We learned of the NSW soil app and web app eSPADE where locals can source publicly available soil data. The South Australian equivalent resource is NatureMaps which is well worth playing around with to see what soils occur in your local region, and explore soil variations across the state of South Australia. We even have a handy how to use guide.
- We toured the CSIRO National Soil Archive, to learn where the National Soil Monitoring Program soil samples will be stored
- We met farmers from the Monaro Soil Club, who discussed how they were using regular soil testing to inform their management decisions across the farm and learn from one another.
- We visited the Bush Heritage Scottsdale site, to discuss erosion management and land conservation and met with local Land Services staff to discuss controlling willows and improving riverbank stability
- We met with the Clean Energy Regulator to learn more about the Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme.

What's on in the soils space?

There are a great range of soils workshops, events and forums. Here's the round up for the next two months. Also check out the new Landscape Board soil resources, and head along to your next local landscape board event to pick up a hard copy for your glove box

Knowing your Soils ute guide_WEB.pdf - Google Drive

Landscape-SA-Knowing-your-Soils_WEB.pdf



EVENTS

June Events

2-6 **International Rangeland conference,** Adelaide IRC 2025 - IRC 2025

4 **Soil health and biochar field day** – Renmark
Soil health and biochar field day – Renmark

11 **Beginners guide to C farming** – Oakbank
Beginner's guide to carbon farming
(several dates and locations)

13 **Stewardship on the Fleurieu** – McLaren Flat
Stewardship on the Fleurieu - McLaren Flat

18 **Beginners guide to C farming** - Lobethal
Beginner's guide to carbon farming
(several dates and locations)

20 **Stewardship on the Fleurieu** – Yankalilla
Stewardship on the Fleurieu - Yankalilla

23 **N Budgeting: back to basics workshop –** Hatherleigh Events - Nitrogen Budgeting: Back to Basics workshop, Hatherleigh

24 **Spread smarter grow better** – Ouyen
SPREAD SMARTER, GROW BETTER! – OUYEN

25 **Spread smarter grow better** – Lameroo
SPREAD SMARTER, GROW BETTER! – LAMEROO

27 **More Bang for your fertiliser buck – spreader day** – Furner
Events - More Bang for your Fertiliser Buck - Spreader Day

July Events

3 **Mastering N application seminar** – Naracoorte
Events - Mastering Nitrogen Application (Seminar) Naracoorte

8-10 **Australian Grassland association Seeds of Change conference**
Australian Grassland Association - Seeds of Change Tickets, Adelaide Hills Convention Centre, Hahndorf | TryBooking Australia

14-15 **Soil Biology masterclass Uni Western Sydney.**
Find out more and register here.

14-17 **Soil Health Biology certification program Uni Western Sydney**
Find out more and register here

15 **Hart winter walk**
Hart Field Site Group - Winter Walk

18 **Grain automate expo**
– Loxton Grain Automate Expo | Loxton, SA

21-24 **Sandy Soils global conference Perth WA**
Home - Sandy Soils

22 **Wine Tech meetup** – Adelaide city
Wine Tech Meetup, Tue, Jul 22, 2025, 5:00pm | Meetup

23 **GRDC research update** – Loxton
View event details

23 **SAGIT Update** – Adelaide
2025 SAGIT Annual Update: Wednesday 23 July Tickets, Wed 23/07/2025 at 9:00 am | Eventbrite

30 **GRDC research update** – Wudinna
View event details

31 **Waite Research Institute Seminar**
- Dr Therese McBeath and Dr Stephen Davies
Transforming the agriculture productivity of agricultural sandy landscapes in southern and Western Australia
Events for May 2025

31 **GRDC research update** – Cleve
View event details



EVENTS

August Events

6 **GRDC research update** – Keith
View event details

14 **AgKI Conference**
AgKI Conference 2025 | AG KI

September Events

9 **AIREP Lower EP Crop walk**
AIR EP Lower EP Crop Walk (9 September 2025)

10 **SARDI Minnipa Ag Centre Annual Field Day**
SARDI Minnipa Ag Centre Annual Field Day (10 September 2025)

16 **Hart Field Day**
Hart Field Site Group - Hart Field Day

17-18 **Regenerative Agriculture conference** – Perth WA
Regenerative Food Systems Conference 2025 - RegenWA

30 **YP Field days** – Paskeville
Yorke Peninsula Field Days | South Australia

October Events

1 **YP Field days** – Paskeville
Yorke Peninsula Field Days | South Australia

3 **Soil Pit Day Young in Soil and Earth Sciences**
Young in Soil and Earth Science Society Adelaide

21 **Hart Spring Twilight walk**
Hart Field Site Group - Spring Twilight Walk

TBA **Mentoring Night, Young in Soil and Earth Sciences**
Young in Soil and Earth Science Society Adelaide

November Events

13 **Networking night Young in Soil and Earth Sciences**
Young in Soil and Earth Science Society Adelaide

23-26 **Soil Judging Competition** – Armidale NSW
Soil Judging - Soil Science Australia

CONTACT ME FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Lucy Porter, Regional Soil Coordinator,
SA Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub, The University of Adelaide • E: lucy.porter@adelaide.edu.au

SMART SOILS FOR AGRICULTURE

Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Future Drought Fund

SA DROUGHT HUB

THE UNIVERSITY of ADELAIDE

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