

## Good News Friday Edition 10 – Renewables in Agriculture 2022



### RENEWABLES IN AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE 2022 (18<sup>TH</sup> AND 19<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST IN ALBURY) – DON'T MISS OUT!

#### What to Expect

Many of the topics I have been introducing over the last months are covered in detail with farmers and industry experts presenting who have actually done this and lots of opportunities for Q&A. The conference is held annually (excepted 2020 due to Covid) in different NSW Regional locations to support local economies. This time it is being held in Albury.

There will be an amazing line up of speakers including 11 farmers talking about what they're doing with energy sharing, batteries, grazing under solar, bioenergy, hydrogen and there will even be a salmon farm from Tasmania, talking blue tech and energy efficiency.

A 'Future Farm Vehicles' panel will see experts discussing the opportunities and challenges of converting agricultural equipment to electric, knowing where and when hydrogen fits in and what about swapping batteries out during harvest?

#### Field Trip – Grazing under Solar Panels

Also available on the 19<sup>th</sup> August (limited tickets), is an opportunity to visit a large scale solar farm in Corowa to experience how grazing works under solar panels works. A topic we covered last edition of Good News Fridays. Such a great chance to see this in action and to have your questions answered.

This is for everyone who has an interest in renewables or experiencing our positive future today. For more info see link below.

[home \(renewablesinagconference.com.au\)](https://renewablesinagconference.com.au)

In November 2019, my daughter Yasmin and I attended the inaugural Renewables in Agriculture Conference (In Wagga NSW). As she has an interest in renewables, engineering and conserving nature I thought it important to take time out of school to be in the company of people who are leading this change – real world solutions, real people. In fact, I applied to her High School for this activity to be included as school days to further her

interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering & maths). The school approved this. I encourage anyone out there to do the same.

This conference provides a wonderful opportunity for our younger generations to witness and experience a positive future today. My hope is that many regional areas will send student representatives from high schools and universities to attend this conference, especially those within a 1 or 2 hr travelling distance.

At this first conference in 2019 Yas and I were moved, inspired, overwhelmed with what is possible with the courage shown by the farmers; big picture plans from research institutions; funding and on the ground support from Government Depts and amazing Australian innovators displaying their technology and services to make it happen for farmers. The quality of the speakers, the professional organisation of the event can be attributed to vision and hard work of Karin Stark the Conference Convenor.

The opening address was delivered by Ken Baldwin from the ANU (Aust. National University) Director - Energy Change Institute and set the tone for the Conference with a positive presentation of the opportunities and solutions for the very near future. Ken and his team at the Institute (a multi-disciplinary team) helped shape the success of the transition of the ACT to 100% renewable energy and continue to work with the ACT with green hydrogen and opportunities in Australia as well as with Pacific Island Nations. His main messages were Australia's future prosperity lay in utilising our access to the sun and wind resources, becoming a green manufacturer and a clean energy superpower with renewables and green hydrogen. He showed us how and of course the financials as well.

[ANU Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions | The Australian National University](#)

One of the main points that came through from the conference is that the price of implementing renewable energy systems had turned a corner, it was now becoming cost effective through cheaper solar panels and increases in electricity and diesel prices. e.g. Karin Stark and her partner are cotton growers from Central NSW. They had just installed a 500kw solar irrigation pumping system to save on diesel – which is a challenge something many irrigators are facing.

One of the memorable farmer presentations for Yas and I was from Jarad Smith, a pig farmer from Kia Ora property in Victoria. His presentation wasn't memorable because he was a polished presenter but rather the ingenuity shown by himself & his father in the development of their bioenergy system presented in a can-do manner. No challenge seemed to phase them. The plan was simple – how to take pig manure and make methane gas to drive generators to make electricity... save money and save the environment. Yas and I really enjoyed talking with him in the break after his presentation.

Their early attempts involved simple ways to biodigest (anaerobic fermentation without oxygen) the manure to produce methane fuel which was fed into old motors from ford falcon cars connected to truck alternators to make the electricity. They were cheap to build and cheap to maintain.

Overtime they worked with professionals to develop a balloon that is fitted over a manure treatment dam capturing effluent from the piggery and trapping any methane from going into the atmosphere. As the gas filled the balloon it looks like a dome over the top of the dam. They receive carbon credits from not allowing this to go into the atmosphere. The business has grown to take organic wastes as well as the pig manure and stop this waste going into landfill and creating methane.