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DAIRY NEWS

NEWS ABOUT HOW DAIRY FARMERS' LEVIES ARE INVESTED

A special *On The Land* supplement



GOOD SOIL MEANS YOU'LL BE HEALTHIER



Sustainable agriculture expert Graeme Sait.

Expert spreads message of healthy soils and healthy profit

A TWO-DAY short course highlighting the importance of healthy soils in producing healthy profits and healthy lifestyles has been presented for the first time in south-west Victoria.

"We are what we eat and it all comes from our soils."

"The same applies to our livestock," said Graeme Sait, a recognised world leader in sustainable agriculture/horticulture, who conducted the course.

Mr Sait is co-founder of Nutri-Tech Solutions, an Australian company that specialises in the relationship between soil health, animal health and human health.

Glenelg Hopkins CMA sponsored the course at DemoDAIRY in Terang on July 7 and 8.

The course was in response to requests from primary



Graeme Sait talks to participant in the two-day sustainable dairy production workshop.

producers in the area. It covered two days of learning taken from the Farm Ready-approved four-day course, Certificate in Sustainable

Dairy Production. There was strong demand with all 32 places being filled by local farmers and service providers. Mr Sait said that

biological farming was proactive, working with nature. "Poor soil nutrition is poor animal and poor human nutrition." "We have to get

the mineral balance and the microbiological balance right to deliver nutrients into the soil and plants, which in turn can provide healthy food to our livestock and humans," he said.

However, Mr Sait said farmers could correct mineral imbalance with relatively simple changes and that there was growing interest in sustainable and biological farming.

"You don't have to go all the way into organic farming, just be aware that you are dealing with a living system in your soil."

"Simple adjustments can make a profound difference, but you need to understand the science of the soil."

Mr Sait said it was important that farmers had the right mix to allow soil to "breathe".

"This promotes photo-

synthesis which leads to better yields and more profits."

He urged farmers to undertake soil tests to get the right information about their land.

"It is most important to have the calcium to magnesium ratio right to make sure there is gas exchange in the soils."

DemoDAIRY project manager Louise Sheba said the two-day short course had been a great opportunity for farmers and service providers to learn about the importance of soil biology and how 'alive' soils are.

"Participants learnt about how to get the right balance of minerals and microbes in their soil to maximise productivity, and were encouraged to consider lifestyle activities which aim to improve their personal health, mental agility and general wellbeing."

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