



# NASAA Newsletter

## Issue 12 - March 2015

Welcome to our first communications for 2015. Due to the number of changes, new programs and projects we have been working on over the last two years, the format of previous Newsletters has centred around NASAA & NCO, primarily to keep you abreast of what these changes have been.

As the majority of our changes have now been implemented, so too will the format of our Newsletter change. This Newsletter is more focused on articles of interest to members of the organic community. We have also decided to try out the Mailchimp electronic Newsletter format and would welcome your feedback: is it better than a PDF document?

My comments in these Newsletters will also be much shorter.... Yea, say many!! This edition will focus on five main issues of interest to the organic community, namely:

1. The current debate around Country of Origin Labelling
2. Truth in Labelling
3. Changes to Pre-certification / In Conversion requirements
4. NASAA's position on Coal Seam Gas and Fracking
5. Steve Marsh's appeal set down for 23-25 March

### 1. **Country of Origin Labelling**

This debate has been generated largely by Choice Magazine and is targeting labelling that doesn't accurately reflect the origin of the product. Its not necessarily aimed at organic product, but we are hoping organics gets pick up in the swell. Politicians have now jumped on board and next thing we know, the ACCC is involved.

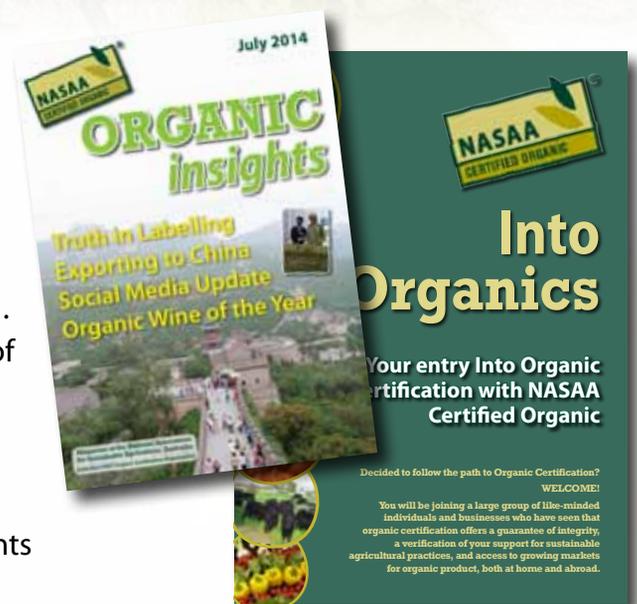
Funnily, the ACCC's own policies on this, are somewhat dubious. Below are some links that may be of interest in trying to keep track of this debate.

<https://www.accc.gov.au/consumers/groceries/country-of-origin>

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumer/labelling/coo/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://greens.org.au/country-of-origin>

<http://www.business.gov.au/business-topics/selling-products-and-services/importing/Pages/labelling-requirements-for-imports.aspx>



**NASAA Ltd**

PO BOX 768, Stirling, SA 5152

Tel: +61 8 8370 8455

Fax: +61 8 8370 8381

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## 2. **Truth in Labelling**

I have already been in contact with the ACCC and informed them of our own Truth in Labelling stance. Hopefully in some small way, we will contribute to a much more robust system that not only protects the integrity of the Certified Organic Brand but also protects the vast intellectual property tied up in you selling certified organic products. The fraudulent use of other peoples certification and of the NASAA label, will be a major issue for organics as the market becomes more attractive to those who do think they can defraud the system and avoid being certified but yet, claim to be so.



## 3. **Changes to Precertification and In Conversion**

There has been much comment on this from "pre-certification is gone" to "you can be certified in 12 months."

Please let me make it very clear: if you are a rural producer, the time taken from application to full certification HAS NOT changed. If you were a conventional farmer using conventional chemicals and inputs, it will still take you three years to become fully certified. The gains have been made in that Precertification is now a voluntary period and no fees are payable. You will however, need to demonstrate your compliance with organic management systems on your first inspection. The remaining two years will still be called "In Conversion" but if you can demonstrate no use of industrialised synthetic inputs, the two year period may be negotiable.

So yes, in certain circumstances if you can demonstrate supporting facts, a rural production unit may be able to progress to full certification after a much reduced In Conversion period. The gains are:

1. It should be cheaper as the first 12 months are voluntary
2. It may be quicker if you can demonstrate that there has been no use of prohibited inputs

## 4. **NASAA's position on Coal Seam Gas and Fracking**

Touchy subjects at the best of times. There appears to be a general consensus within the organic community that CSG is not aligned with organic production principles. One of our competitors released a statement last year claiming that CSG was not necessarily incompatible with Organics.



NASAA acknowledges that potential contamination may affect the biological diversity and ecological sustainability of a property and feel that fracking may pose a risk to certification. We will be releasing a Position Statement on this shortly.

## 5. **Steve Marsh's Appeal**

A reminder to you all that the appeal against the decision to reject Steve Marsh's High Court claim for losses incurred as a result of GM contamination, was heard by the Full Bench of the WA High Court this week on 23-25 March. By now, many of you will have seen the first of two Australian Story episodes on this unfortunate battle.

If you missed the Australian Story, please go to <http://www.abc.net.au/austory/content/2015/s4197189.htm> for the full transcript. I am sure you will all join with me in sending Steve and Sue our very best wishes for a successful outcome.



Finally, NASAA is your organisation. Our capacity to continually deliver workshops and education programs depends on Membership fees and member involvement. This newsletter goes to many people who are not members of NASAA. For \$55.00 pa if you are a certified operator and \$99.00 pa if you are not, it is very cheap way to assist in the growth of the organic industry in Australia. I urge you to please become a Member of NASAA Ltd.

Thank you and best wishes.

**General Manager, Ben Copeman**



# Certified Organic Wine of the Year 2015:

## Entries are rolling in...

**NASAA's sponsorship of the Organic Wine of the Year in 2014 was a roaring success, and appears to have generated some very solid interest in organic wine.**

NASAA is supporting the Organic Wine of the Year again in 2015 and encourages all NASAA Certified Organic Wineries to submit their wines for judging.

Entries close soon and judging takes place at the end of March.

We will also be attending several other Winestate events throughout the year, please contact us if you would like us to offer your wines or accompaniments (olives, cheeses, chocolates, biscuits):

- March 25th** Submissions close
- March 31st** Judging (Adelaide)
- May 23rd** **Shiraz Challenge** (Adelaide)
- June 26th** **Organic Wine of the Year**

Wine from any region in Australia may be submitted, provided that the wines meet the following criteria:

- Carries a certification label from an Australian Government approved certification body such as NASAA Certified Organic
- Not labelled "In Conversion", or "Made from Organic grapes"
- Complies with the Australian Standard for Organic and BioDynamic Production.
- Commercially available at the time of publication (early July 2015)

Wine will be judged blind by expert Organic judges and the awarded wines will feature in the magazine as well as being promoted to Winestate trade and consumer readers.

The winner will also receive a trophy as well as a Marketing Package valued in excess of \$10,000 compliments of Winestate Magazine.

Following the judging all wines will be used by NASAA for their promotions.

To submit, please send TWO bottles of each sample with carton(s) clearly marked, to:

**Winestate Publishing**  
 Australian Organic Judging  
 81 King William Road  
 UNLEY SA 5061

Tasting Coordinator: Madeline Willoughby

Telephone: (08) 8357 9277  
 Email: [tasting@winestate.com.au](mailto:tasting@winestate.com.au)



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# International Year of Soils 2015



2015  
International  
Year of Soils

***The 68th United Nations General Assembly  
declared 2015 the International Year of Soils...***

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has been nominated to implement the International Year of Soils (IYS) 2015, within the framework of the Global Soil Partnership and in collaboration with Governments and the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. IYS 2015 aims to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of soil for food security and essential ecosystem functions.

The specific objectives of IYS 2015 are:

- Raise full awareness among civil society and decision makers about the profound importance of soil for human life;
- Educate the public about the crucial role soil plays in food security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, essential ecosystem services, poverty alleviation and sustainable development;
- Support effective policies and actions for the sustainable management and protection of soil resources;
- Promote investment in sustainable soil management activities to develop and maintain healthy soils for different land users and population groups;
- Strengthen initiatives in connection with Sustainable Development Goals and Post-2015 agenda;
- Advocate for rapid capacity enhancement for soil information collection and monitoring at all levels (global, regional and national).

As the basis for healthy food production, healthy soils are the foundation of sustainable food production systems. They are critical to the development and promotion of biodiversity and have been shown to remediate the effects of Climate change.

For more information, check out the IYS 2015 website and the publications available for download at:

[www.fao.org/soils-2015](http://www.fao.org/soils-2015)



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# Going Green in Bali

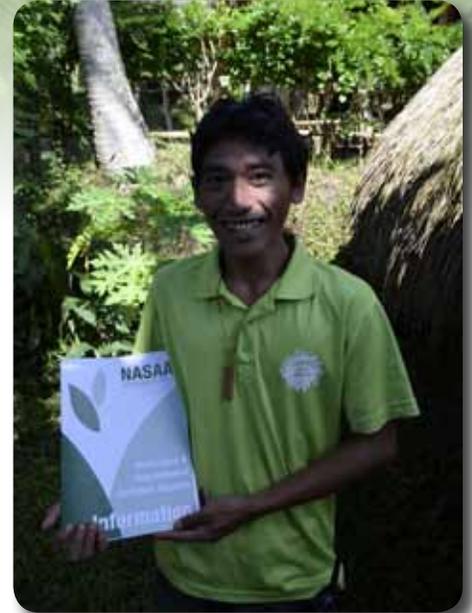
## **Organic and Sustainable practices at the Green School and IDEP Foundation in Ubud, Bali...**

The Green School ([www.greenschool.org](http://www.greenschool.org)) was founded by John and Cynthia Hardy's vision was to create a uniquely sustainable education environment for children from all over the world. The school itself is world renowned for its amazing eco-friendly structures without walls, built almost entirely from locally-sourced bamboo.

The campus challenges traditional school concepts by embracing sustainable organic food production, solar and hydro power, free range chickens, aquaponics, whiteboards made from old car windscreens, composting toilets and even its own cows.

The goal of Green School is to help create the Green Leaders of the future, and to be the #1 model of sustainable education.

The IDEP Foundation ([www.idepfoundation.org](http://www.idepfoundation.org)) work with Indonesian communities to increase local resilience and sustainability through education and research around organic food production, disaster response and permaculture.



## **Ridge Spring**

### **A rare opportunity to build your dream in Central Victoria!**

80ha (200acres) Highway frontage, great new home site with panoramic views, productive volcanic red & black loam soils, 2 paddocks, 2 dams, crystal clear water flowing from your own permanent spring, 80% arable. Price range: **\$580,000 - \$600,000**

- On highway frontage (95min drive north from Melbourne, 80min drive to Tullamarine)
- Only 28km west of Bendigo train station, a leisurely 25 minute drive, on Wimmera Hwy between Marong and Newbridge
- Ideal location for solar & wind energy production and close to single & 3 phase power
- Not flood prone
- Abundant underground water, has its own permanent spring .... in fact it's drinkable!
- A mix of volcanic red and black loam soils
- Spectacular westerly views over Loddon River plains
- Certified organic with NASAA - certified organic for export hay to South Korea & Japan
- Ample space to create your dream lifestyle property and/or business, close to school bus route
- Rural zoning, two allotments on title
- An option to purchase irrigation water
- Limited only by your imagination - permaculture, organics, biodynamics, holistic farming, grazing, cropping, orchard, hemp, poppies, irrigation, aquaculture, horticulture, nursery/landscaping enterprises, pet cemetery, composting, farm forestry!

### **Contact**

Mark & Helen Chambers

Mark: 0418 371964

Helen: 0429 976777

## **FOR SALE**



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# AusTrade Hong Kong

## The “Natural” Destination for your Organic Products

In 2014, Australia’s organic sector grew to a value of more than \$1.8 billion, with exports of \$340 million. Hong Kong is one of the top five export markets for Australian organic food, and based on growth patterns here, this trend looks set to continue.

Hong Kong consumers are eagerly seeking out products that are more beneficial to their long-term health. This was clearly evident at the recent **Hong Kong Organic Day 2015**, which saw more than 100 exhibitors and 38,000 visitors attend an organic street market in March.

Austrade is working with local distributors and customers to increase awareness of Australia’s quality organic products via a multi-market showcase in May 2015.

Organic products are proving increasingly popular in Hong Kong. According to the Hong Kong Organic Resource Centre, one third of the population purchase organic food at least once a week. Consumer demand for organic products is driven by concerns about food safety rather than the reputation of premium brands.

“Interest in organic products is growing – and consumers are willing to pay more for safe, quality products,” said Simon Wong, Chairman of the Chamber of Food & Beverage Industry of Hong Kong. “Hong Kong people take food safety very seriously and this means there are strong opportunities for suppliers of outstanding organic products.”

Amid increasing awareness of organic products, retailers and distributors are keen to expand the range of organic products available and are also looking for a larger variety of brands. The small number and limited scale of organic farms in Hong Kong means that local supply is often unstable and in small quantities. These conditions provide tremendous opportunities for Australian suppliers.

Building on this growth, Austrade Hong Kong is presenting the Australian Sustainable, Certified Organic and Biodynamic Food and Beverage showcase. This event will give Australian exporters an opportunity to establish local contacts with potential buyers in Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea. It will also be an opportunity for Australian suppliers to demonstrate the variety and quality of Australian organic produce and goods to buyers from across Asia.

If your company wants to export Australian natural and organic products, join us for the Australian Sustainable, Certified Organic and Biodynamic Food and Beverage showcase.

### Contact:

Wilson Tang  
Senior Business Development Manager, Hong Kong  
+852 2588 5307 or email to: [wilson.tang@austrade.gov.au](mailto:wilson.tang@austrade.gov.au)



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# OFA Internship Program

***OFA Launches a National Organic Intern Program to connect organic farms with young people***

***The Organic Federation of Australia has recently launched its National Organic Internship Program in February 2015...***

We have had unprecedented interest in the program in the last 6 weeks, from farms and young people in NSW, VIC, WA and SA. Finally we have a mechanism of linking together high quality host farms with young people wanting to make a career in organic farming.

As part of this internship program, we are trying to provide to businesses a way of retaining young people on the land. Part of this is setting up strategic partnerships with educational providers in organic agriculture, thus providing Nationally Accredited education.



The National Organic Internship Program is a flexible arrangement between the host farms and the interns, all based around appropriate wages rather than free labour. This is the only way we can protect a skilled workforce.

We are also looking for organic businesses who wish to sponsor an intern. In this way, every organic business can contribute to building the productive capacity of the Australian organic industry.

For more information, visit the OFA website at:

**[www.ofa.org.au/how\\_to\\_become\\_an\\_intern](http://www.ofa.org.au/how_to_become_an_intern)**

Alternatively, please email questions to:

**[intern@ofa.org.au](mailto:intern@ofa.org.au)**, or call Carolyn Suggate directly on 0448 778 074.

**Adam Willson**

**Chair, Organic Federation of Australia**



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# Healthy Soils Healthy Systems Healthy Food



**Get ready for the NASAA Industry Seminar and AGM 2015 - in Canberra!**

NASAA's 2014 industry seminar brought together farming communities in WA to promote similarities in practice, and the right for producers to be autonomous.

We are already working on the arrangements for the 2015 Industry Seminar and AGM, which will be held on 13th November in Canberra, ACT. We are organising the venue at the time of going to press, so this will be announced in the next newsletter.

In line with 2015 as the **International Year of Soils**, the theme of the Seminar will be **Healthy Soils, Healthy Systems, Healthy Food**. In the next month or so we will be putting together the program and list of speakers, and calling for sponsors to come forward to support the event, particularly those from the local regions in ACT, NSW and VIC. Please contact us if you are interested in being involved in the event as a sponsor.

## NASAA Hits the Road

We are regularly asked for information on the processes involved in becoming certified organic with NASAA, and we are committed to helping operators to move towards sustainable organic and biodynamic practices. One of the ways we are able to do this, is by facilitating regional educational workshops, to stimulate and stabilise the Organic Industry in Australia.

NASAA Operations Manager, Pete Hastie is on the road throughout the Eastern states in 2015, running a program leading into the 2015 NASAA Industry Seminar and AGM in ACT in November.



### WORKSHOP CALENDAR 2015

May 3	Inverell, NSW	Young Agribusiness Professional Conference: "Talking about Organic Certification"
May 19	Stanhope, VIC	"Healthy Soils, Healthy Systems - Steps to Organic Certification"
June 20-21	Nana Glen, NSW	Weekend Workshop: "Principles of Organic Farming"
Late July	Coffs Harbour, NSW	Agri-Food Innovations Series: "Organic Certification and Exporting"

Pete has also setup the **NASAA Young Operators Group** on facebook to provide a forum to ask questions and talk about issues online with our staff. See [www.facebook.com/groups/NASAAyoungoperators](http://www.facebook.com/groups/NASAAyoungoperators).

If you have events running in your part of the country, or if you have ideas/venues in mind for educational workshops near you, please contact NASAA Operations Manager, Pete Hastie at [peter.hastie@nasaa.com.au](mailto:peter.hastie@nasaa.com.au).

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# White Clover Park

(NASAA 3701) Organically Certified Rare Bred Pigs

***We have seen some small family farms really take off through social media recently, so we thought we would find out more from Robert and Aristi Furmanczyk at White Clover Park...***

Robert and Aristi Furmanczyk, along with their children Lauren, Andrew, Olivia and Heath run a NASAA Certified Organic farm in Central Victoria. Whilst they run mixed livestock, pigs are their main passion and their primary business. The original herd was made up of pedigree Wessex Saddlebacks sourced from around Australia. Over time, Hampshire and Berkshire genetics have been incorporated into the herd. It is now predominantly a closed herd.

All pigs have access to permanent pasture, comprising of ryegrass, lucerne, clover and a range of self sown grains. Supplementary feed is milled and prepared on farm. The ingredients are largely dependent on market availability and success of previous harvests. Typical ingredients may include organic oilseed meals, organic oats, organic barley, organic triticale, limestone, bentonite, salt.

Being a former dairy farm and situated in an irrigation district, the established pasture and soil quality are good. Water security is also good which is a necessity in any farming enterprise. There is plenty of water to fill troughs and wallows and keep the pigs cool through summer.

Although the farm is located in an irrigation district, the choice to run the paddocks as dry-land was made. "When we purchased the farm, the area was amidst heavy drought. Water prices were high and allocations were down. We quickly learnt how precious, yet scarce water availability can be. If we can grow crops and permanent pasture with minimal watering, we can become less vulnerable to drought and less reliant on this precious resource".

Hay is rarely cut, instead it is grazed down. Straw is never bailed, but left to decompose on the ground. Lucerne has been kind over the years. It has remained hardy,

provided great feed and kept spirits high when things looked bleak. Weeds are either grazed down, or if needed, turned back into the ground. Composted manure and organic matter is used to top dress paddocks.

## ***Pros of running an Organic Pig Herd...***

1. "Watching pigs grow from birth to maturity and knowing they have had a better life than so many others"
2. "Knowing where our food comes from, how it was raised and what it was fed"
3. "The pleasure our farm brings to the life of our children"

## ***Cons of running an Organic Pig Herd...***

1. "Availability of Organic By-products for supplementary feeding fluctuates tremendously posing diet formulation challenges and shortages"
2. "Allowing pigs their freedom to forage, root and travel the farm whilst preventing excessive environmental damage"
3. "Trying to free up time from the daily animal husbandry and farm maintenance to market our product to the general public. Pigs are notorious for getting themselves and others into strife. They require a watchful eye throughout the day... and sometimes the night"

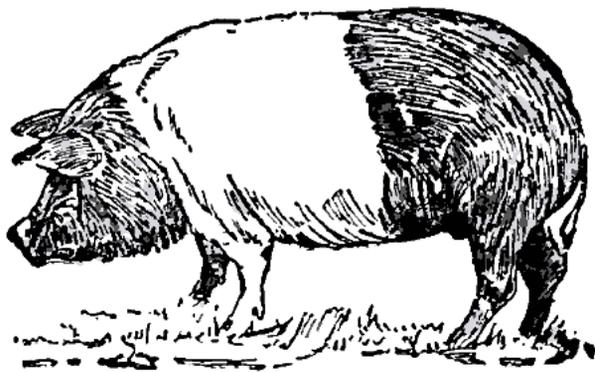
## ***Thoughts on Social Media...***

"Businesses today have been gifted the ability to network using social media. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter all provide platforms to share your product or service 24/7. And it's free! We use it, more now than ever. When it's late and the days activities have slowed down, the convenience of the internet is truly appreciated. On that note, if you would like to know more about what we do, check us out on Facebook..

**[www.facebook.com/whitecloverpark](http://www.facebook.com/whitecloverpark)**

**Robert Furmanczyk**  
**White Clover Park**

# FOR SALE



**Three Certified Organic Wessex  
Saddleback Sows & One Boar**

**Price Negotiable - Myrning, VIC**

*For more information please contact:*

**TINA DUFTY**

0400 893 387

tinadufty99@gmail.com

## Advertise with NASAA

NASAA is always looking for ways to help its operators and members grow their businesses and brands, and to grow the NASAA brand with them through co-promotion and the prominence of the NASAA label.

The new NASAA Sponsors and Advertisers Kit outlines the advertising opportunities and rates for our publications, and events for 2015.



As well as providing affordable advertising options for our quarterly and annual publications, we can offer packages which include both online promotion and a presence at NASAA events throughout the year. Our rates start at just **\$250**. If you are a NASAA member, you also get 10% off these rates, and your first small ad is FREE!

For more information, or to book your advertising package, contact Stuart Baulk - [Stuart.Baulk@nasaa.com.au](mailto:Stuart.Baulk@nasaa.com.au)

## NASAA Promotional Materials

We revamped a lot of promotional materials in 2014 with new designs and updated information. You can now buy our posters and merchandise for your business, to let your clients and customers know about NASAA and the certification process. Contact Stuart for a pricelist at:

[Stuart.Baulk@nasaa.com.au](mailto:Stuart.Baulk@nasaa.com.au)

### Pull-up Poster Banners

We have 3 new poster banner designs, aimed at consumers, operators and the organic wine sector.

### Vinyl Banners (1000x1500mm)

These are the centre of our *Truth in Labelling* campaign - designed to help your customers understand "What is Certified Organic?" Similar to the back page of this newsletter.

### Gate Signs (600x600mm)

Available for Input Manufacturers, Domestic and Certified Organic Programs.



### Also Available

NASAA Caps, "Go Organic with NASAA" T-Shirts, Shopping Bags and Posters (1000x1000mm).

Consumers and Operators brochures are also now being printed, and we are working on the new NASAA website for launch in 2015...



## WINESTATE

Australia's oldest wine publication est 1978

**Proudly supporting the  
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Organic Wine of the Year  
Australia 2015**

Sponsored by Australia's premier  
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Peter Jackson  
[sales@winestate.com.au](mailto:sales@winestate.com.au)  
08 8357 9277

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## Fuelling the Value Chain From Farm to Fork

NASAA General Manager, Ben Copeman will be speaking at the AgriWorld Australia Conference 2015 in Sydney in July. The conference aims to bring the agri-food industry together from farm to fork and provide business opportunities and networking and education to support the growth in Australian agriculture.

Ben will be speaking on day one as part of a panel discussion on Agritrade, titled "Selling the Clean and Green Australian Brand - Growing market opportunities for organics, sustainable and ethical produce.

The conference and exhibition are being held at the Sydney Showground, Olympic Park from 16-17 July.

For more information, visit the conference website at: [www.agriworldaustralia.com.au](http://www.agriworldaustralia.com.au)



## MOUNT VITE ORGANIC EST 1990



### Certified Organic Stud Live Seed Stock FOR SALE

No chemical drenches used, bred and raised for easy care and longevity...

#### Proven Merino Stud Rams

Please Contact David Brain:  
Derrinallum, VIC

#### Proven Charolais Stud Bulls

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# What is **CERTIFIED ORGANIC**

*Many products claim to be natural, organic or additive and pesticide free. What does it all really mean?*

**The only way to be 100% sure that products are organic, is to look for *Certified Organic* by an approved certifier like NASAA.**

- **Certified Organic** products are independently audited and verified by a third party certifier, and comply with relevant organic standards
- **Certified Organic** producers undergo a conversion process to ensure that non-organic, industrialised farming methods and inputs are phased out
- **Certified Organic** operations are managed in compliance with the standards on an ongoing basis
- **Certified Organic** products do not contain GMOs, hormonal growth promotants, synthetic additives, chemical herbicides, fungicides or insecticides or synthetic fertilisers
- **Certified Organic** production considers social justice, animal welfare, biodiversity and the revegetation of land for long-term sustainability
- **Certified Organic** products carry a certification logo and number to demonstrate organic integrity
- Products carrying a label implying that they are an Australian certified organic product may only be packaged in Australia - the ingredients may not necessarily be certified to an Australian Standard
- Products carrying the NASAA label are confusion free
- Know where your food comes from - ALWAYS READ THE LABEL CAREFULLY



**1234P**

***Brought to you by NASAA in the interest of transparency, integrity and truth in labelling***

**Australia's FIRST Organic Certifier**

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