

AUSTRALIAN SANDALWOOD CO-OPERATIVE LTD NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 5 /Winter 2021



Australian Sandalwood Co-operative Ltd

Registered Address:

P.O. Box 101,

Cunderdin.

WA 6407.

Email contacts:

chair@sandalwood.coop

sec@sandalwood.coop

Flora Dealing (Sandalwood)

Licence Number: SD69000012

FROM THE CHAIR – DEAN BUTLER

Greetings Australian Sandalwood Co-operative Ltd (ASC) members. This year marks an exciting milestone for the ASC as we commence our commercial operations. The ASC has also been busy with the ongoing consultation with government regulators, sponsoring field days and talking with sandalwood buyers.

The ASC board is pleased to announce that it has committed to commencing regular sandalwood auctions from October this year. The inaugural auction will be held on October 20, 2021, at the Royal Agricultural Society Showgrounds Claremont at the Ellie Eaton Pavilion. The next scheduled auction will be held at Arthur River in April 2022.

The board will be busy in marketing the auction to local, interstate and international buyers leading up to the auction. We will also endeavour to inform as many non-member growers as possible via multiple media platforms.

In preparation for the commencement of sandalwood auctions the board have engaged Bailiwick Lawyers to assist with drafting commercial agreements, reviewing insurance arrangements and providing advice on legal aspects of sales and marketing.

The board has also engaged Webtron, an online auction platform developer to build and manage our auction website. Webtron provide services to several auction houses including Smith Broughton and Carlins.

The ASC board along with the Australian Sandalwood Network and other industry participants have continued with lobbying the DBCA and the minister for Environment. While there has been some minor changes and small gains the pace of change can best be described as glacial. Bruce Store provides an update as to the current state of play.

The ASC provided sponsorship for a field day run by the North Stirling's Pallinup Natural Resources group and presented by ASC board member Geoff Woodall covering topics such as thinning, harvesting, processing, and

licensing. Geoff provided insights into harvesting fire damaged plantations and harvesting with a focus on harvesting their own plantations and has provided a report below. Bruce Storer attended and has provided his report below with some interesting insights into local buyer interest.

The board is currently in discussions with a processor to provide a once off plantation thinning trial, in which the processor will provide the harvesting and freight costs for the trial then buy the sandalwood from the members based on a processed oil content. We will be calling for expressions of interest as soon as we finalise details.

It has become noticeably clear in talking with sandalwood buyers that they are all very keen to know how much sandalwood we will have available in the coming years and of course quality. The buyers are quite interested to buy our timber, but they are also keen to have supply in the years ahead as many have long standing supply agreements. To ascertain what supply we will be able to offer in the future the ASC will be establishing an inventory to provide a guide for ourselves and our buyers. Members will be sent a plantation inventory form to fill in and return. Your best estimate will be helpful but following a formal site assessment procedure will provide the most accurate information for members and the co-operative.

Sample testing and analysis consistently been raised as an issue important to buyers especially as the plantation industry establishes the quality of its produce. The ASC has established a testing protocol including test procedures and preferred laboratory services. The ASC also has appointed a sample testing and analysis contact to assist with enquiries.

All in all, it promises to be an interesting year for our industry with many developments and opportunities opening up for our members.

Dean Butler
ASC Chair – 0429 811 513

AUCTION DETAILS

The Australian Sandalwood Co-Operative Ltd (ASC) is planning its inaugural auction of members sandalwood at the Ellie Eaton Pavilion at the Royal Agricultural Society Showgrounds in Claremont to be held on the 20th of October 2021. The principal reason the ASC was formed was to obtain the maximum return possible for members. We believe the auction system will generate competition for our timber and is the best way to obtain that maximum price. The ASC is calling for expressions of interest from growers who would like to participate.

The ASC estimates 10 metric tonnes of timber will be required to conduct a successful auction. Our research to date suggests the wood should be at least 15 years old, preferably 18 years or more. The ASC will apply the Standard Specification The 'Harvesting' and 'Sale' of Plantation-grown Australian Sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*) in Western Australia for the purpose of preparing the timber into grades for auction. A copy of the Standard Specification can be found on the website at <https://www.sandalwood.coop/publications>. To achieve the best results, it is strongly recommended members supply a laboratory sample test report with their timber going to auction.

Members will be able to set a reserve price on their timber and this may be prudent. However, if members pass in their wood, they will need to arrange return freight at their cost. The auction is only open to members of the ASC but we welcome new members at any time. Members are welcome to conduct all activities involved in participating in the auction and there is no obligation to seek services from the ASC.

The auction will be hosted by our online auction platform provided by Webtron, this platform allows the auction to be conducted online with or without an auctioneer. The auction site will be accessible from the ASC website www.sandalwood.coop once the site building is complete.

Lots are to be delivered on Monday the 18th between 10:00am and 5:00pm at the Ellie Eaton pavilion at the RAS Show grounds. Entry is via gate 1 off Graylands Road Claremont. The auction will be conducted on Wednesday the 20th of October at 11:00am with inspection available from 9:00am.

AUCTION LOTS

The ASC will be accepting lots for auction in the following format:

- Lots of no less than 200 kg delivered will be accepted.
- Lots of butts and logs will be presented in a Shutz IBC MX 1000 cage/frame with steel pallet bottom, without bladder as per the Specification Standard but with a clear film wrap or cardboard inserts. See below for more detail.
- Lots of butts and logs to be neatly stacked to show end grain from one side (long side of IBC)
- Lots of feature specimens will be accepted ie whole trees or feature carving pieces and can be presented on alternative formats by prior arrangement.

Lot information to be provided by members:

- Member Number
- Members DBCA Supply Licence number
- Year of planting
- Locality area/Shire grown in
- Laboratory test report (this is optional but strongly recommended)
- Sandalwood Tracking Form

SAMPLE TESTING AND ANALYSIS

The ASC has developed guidelines and recommendations for sample testing including sampling procedure, test laboratories and onsite non-destructive testing advice. The ASC sample and testing protocol can be found on the website at <https://www.sandalwood.coop/publications> .

Non-destructive testing by core sampling can be conducted before the tree has been cut or removed from the ground. We urge members to consider this step in order to ascertain the potential value of their timber and its suitability for the market before considering harvesting.

Once harvested trees can be sampled for testing by core sampling, shaving using a planer or cutting a 10mm biscuit from the stem of the tree. Although there are several testing laboratories providing laboratory analysis,

for consistency the ASC is recommending the Wescorp facility which is conveniently located in Canning Vale and have good turnaround times. ASC board member Grant Pronk has been nominated our contact for all member sandalwood testing enquiries and can be contacted on 0409 882 280.

HARVESTING AND SALE PREPARATION

The ASC Standard Specification The 'Harvesting' and 'Sale' of Plantation-grown Australian Sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*) in Western Australia provides the guidelines for members preparation of their timber for sale at the auction. The ASC is aware that some members are not planning on harvesting their plantations themselves, so we are compiling a list of harvesting and other service providers. This list of harvesting and other services providers can be found on the website at <https://www.sandalwood.coop/publications> .

The ASC are also negotiating the use of "Tumblers" for debarking. We are quite confident this can be achieved. Freight is available to transport timber both to the tumblers for debarking and to Claremont for the auction.

LICENSING AND SANDALWOOD TRACKING FORMS

Please be aware of the licensing and compliance requirements for selling sandalwood, as the penalties are severe and the system is complicated, unfortunately. If you have any questions, the Co-Op will attempt to answer them to the best of our ability. The Co-Op now has a Sandalwood Dealing Licence in preparation for the auction. Members will require a Flora supplying (sandalwood) licence to supply sandalwood to the auction. It is strongly recommended that you apply for this licence as soon as possible if you are contemplating participating in the auction. A sandalwood tracking form will also be required to transport sandalwood to the auction site and must be sent in at least 24 hours before transport commences, available at <https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/plants-and-animals/licences-and-authorities?showall=&start=2> .

IBC CAGES/FRAMES



For consistency in weighing lots the ASC will only be accepting auction lots delivered in Schuetz IBC MX1000 cages/frames with steel pallet bottom and the bladder removed. For more information see <https://www.schuetz-packaging.net/downloads/datenblaetter-ibc/datenblatt-ecobulk-mx-1000/datasheet-schuetz-ecobulk-mx-en.pdf?cid=8sh> . There are several resellers of IBC cages in the Perth Metro area, a quick search on Facebook marketplace has turned up:

Alex of Wattleup selling 1000litre cages/frames for \$45 each - 0421 887 442.

AUCTION SCHEDULE

Current ASC auction schedule, subject to change.

| Auction Date | Location | Delivery date |
|--------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 20/10/2021 | Ellie Eaton Pavilion RAS Claremont | 18/10/2021 |
| 13/4/2021 | Arthur River | 11/4/2021 |
| | | |

LATEST ON DBCA LICENSING

The ASC Board, as well as several other organisations, have been very busy lobbying DBCA and the Minister for the Environment over the last 18 months. ASC Board members have also attended several meetings with the Minister's policy advisors and DBCA's staff including the Director General. As a result, we secured two Workshops with DBCA. These Workshops were aimed at addressing and effecting changes to the Biodiversity and Conservation Regulations 2018. Progress has been slow, but we have been able to achieve some significant gains. Growers are also continuing to experience delays in obtaining licenses. We have now upped the ante and are having meetings with Mia Davies and the Nationals, as working with the Minister and DBCA has proven to be a long drawn-out process.

FLORA TAKING (SANDALWOOD) LICENCE

We have been successful in challenging the Regulations as they stood and it has come to light that a 'Take licence' for plantation sandalwood is no longer applicable, or according to the State Solicitor. The DBCA advised that the:

'DBCA now understands that a Flora taking (sandalwood) licence is not required to harvest (take), prune or thin cultivated sandalwood. As discussed, BC Regulations licensing will apply from a subsequent point, e.g. where the sandalwood is to be supplied, dealt in, or processed.' Fran Stanley Executive Director Conservation and Ecosystem Management email 2/11/2020.

Therefore, DBCA are no longer issuing 'Take licenses' to plantation growers. Any grower who has purchased a 'Take licence' should be entitled to a refund. I have asked DBCA if they intend making this refund. I would be grateful to anyone who has purchased a 'Take licence' for plantation wood to let me know.

FLORA SUPPLY (SANDALWOOD) LICENCE

Members who are planning on selling sandalwood once harvested will be required to apply for a Flora supply (sandalwood) licence. Unfortunately, the licence application form does not cater for plantation growers as it asks for a licence number or permit number:

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Flora taken under previous DBCA licence/s | Licence No./s | GREEN sandalwood weight (tonnes) | DEAD sandalwood weight (tonnes) |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| AND / OR | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sandalwood taken lawfully from crown land / private property (eg. clearing permit, exemption) | Permit No./s | GREEN sandalwood weight (tonnes) | DEAD sandalwood weight (tonnes) |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Plantation growers do not need either a licence number or a permit number. I am enquiring as to the correct way to complete this section because this was the reason given as to why one member waited 8 months for a 'Supply licence' to be issued. Also, it may well be the grower has not yet "taken" the wood out of the ground. The ASC is encouraging members to apply for a 'Supply licence' prior to removing the trees, given DBCA are taking up to 8 months to issue licenses.

SAMPLING

With the impending auction and other avenues opening for selling sandalwood, members are encouraged to take samples of their trees to send to a laboratory for analysis. Sampling of trees has presented three issues affecting licencing.

Pre harvest sampling - If a core sample of less than 25mm diameter is taken before a tree is harvested and then sent to a laboratory no STF or processing licence is required.

'If you plan to take core samples directly from the live tree or log, and removing only pre-grind material, no STF is required. Malcom Plant DBCA Senior Wildlife Officer' (sandalwood compliance) email 16/6/2021

Post-Harvest Sampling - A grower is free to take a sample from their plantation but in order to transport it for testing, a grower must complete an STF.

'The current regulations still require any transport of Specifically Controlled sandalwood (>25mm diameter) from one place to another to be accompanied by a completed Sandalwood Tracking Form (STF). The proposed amendment to the Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2018, negating the

requirements for a STF for small samples has not been made yet.’ Malcom Plant DBCA Senior Wildlife Officer’ (sandalwood compliance) email 16/6/2021

One of our members has received an Official Caution from DBCA’s Compliance Officer in regard to transporting samples, so be careful on this. Again, the STF asks for a ‘Take licence’ number. It will also be the case that no licence is held if we simply take a sample and complete the STF prior to transporting. Similarly, if a grower takes some of their sandalwood and wishes to transport it to a place of storage, other than on the same location as it was taken, there will be no accompanying licence. I am sure they have not thought this through.

Supply Licence – Does a grower need a supply licence to conduct testing? We made suggestions at the workshops that a small amount of sandalwood should be exempt from the regulations. For example, 20 kg, as this was not a commercially viable amount to deal in, in order for testing to be conducted. To date, no development.

The removal (cutting) of the logs from plantation sandalwood is not regulated, however as you have already acknowledged, the forwarding for supply requires a Flora Supply (sandalwood) Licence. Malcom Plant DBCA Senior Wildlife Officer’ (sandalwood compliance) email 16/6/2021

Processing Licence – Whilst growers may cut their sandalwood without a ‘Take licence’, they are not allowed to “process” without a ‘Processing Licence’. I have asked what is the difference between cut, no licence, and chip, requiring a ‘Processors Licence’? What are the specifications for cutting? I also asked DBCA if they have had advice from the State Solicitor in regard to processing. If we do not need a licence to take or cut, that is, kill the tree, then why would we need a licence to chip it? In any event, we will see what definition they give of cut. The DBCA advise:

After harvesting ‘If you wish to cut the wood into biscuits, a size other than for convenience of transport or reduced to be no longer specifically controlled ie. Less than 25MM diameter, this would be deemed processing. Core sampling is also classified as processing’. Malcom Plant DBCA Senior Wildlife Officer’ (sandalwood compliance) email 16/6/2021

The DBCA has indicated that the processing may be added to the licence of another party. If this is the case the ASC will apply for a licence and then add members locations to that licence to allow processing and avoid the need for members to individually apply for this licence, currently \$290 for a new one-year licence.

This is not the end of the totally unworkable set of Regulations DBCA’s Director General has developed and your Co-op is working hard to have the situation rectified. If you have any questions, I will do my best to answer them, or if you have experienced any difficulties or problems, I would be pleased to hear from you.

Bruce Storer
ASC Secretary 0459 549 109

Western Australian sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*) plantation growers are starting to become aware that their plantations are getting older and reaching an age that harvesting may not be too far away. Thoughts of “how much is my plantation worth...” is usually the grower’s next thought.

There are a number of factors that will determine the value of the standing resource, the key element being the amount of oil-bearing heartwood within the tree and the quantity and quality of this oil. The lighter coloured sapwood does not contain the precious oil and is therefore disregarded when determining the tree value in terms of aromatic wood.

Typically, a Western Australian sandalwood tree will commence producing heartwood from around age 7 years. The heartwood will start forming at the base of the tree around the centre of the stem. Over time this heartwood will slowly extend up the trunk towards the branches and also below ground into the roots. The circumference of the heartwood also expands towards the outer edge of the stem, towards and bark, this narrows the sapwood band. The longer the tree grows the more heartwood is produced within the tree, growing time also improves the quality of oil.

It is the quality of the oil that defines its value. The quality is mostly ascertained by the existence of two key constituents of the oil being the hydrocarbons alpha and beta santalol. Other constituents such as farnesol will influence the oil quality, however it is the santalol levels that are most important.

In 2003 Standards Australia published the Australian Standard AS2112:2003 specifically created for Western Australian sandalwood oil. The Standard is used to assist with controlling the oil quality standard produced and sold into the market. For oil to meet AS2112:2003 the alpha santalol content of the oil needs to be within 15 to 25 % of the composition and beta santalol content of between 5 to 20%.

To reveal the oil quality within a sandalwood tree a small wood core sample can be taken and analysed in a specialist laboratory using gas chromatography capabilities. The chromatography will calculate the percentage of each compound with the oil.

This procedure is available in Australia and is starting to become a common practice for Western Australian sandalwood plantation growers. In most cases, samples taken at the base of a 15 year old tree are producing oil qualities that are within percentages set in AS2112:2003. Samples taken a metre or so further up the trees are commonly producing oil results that are just below the set percentages.

In all sampling cases taken and studied by GP Forestry to date, plantation sandalwood trees may attain the Standard Grade specification for oil quality in sections of a tree, however the quantity of the oil within the heartwood is markedly lower than wild trees with a greater age. Lower oil yielding Western Australian plantation grown trees have been recognised and accounted for by buyers in the sandalwood market and is placed in its own specific product category.

The key message here is your trees will have value, however, the longer you leave them in the ground the more oil is produced, and the quality improves therefore the more valuable they become.

Grant Pronk, GP Forestry.

NORTH STIRLINGS PALINGUP NATURAL RESOURCES FIELD DAY- BORDEN

The ASC recently co-sponsored a field day with North Stirling Palingup Natural Resources, the ASN and others. The field day was delivered by Geoff Woodall, although many growers and industry people attended, including Quintis (formerly Tropical Forestry Services), WA Sandalwood Plantations and Sandalwood International Partners. We had about 20 people in all which was great. We have had 1 enquiry to join the Co-Operative.

The day started in the Borden Rec Centre with a short group discussion on the history of some of the plantation sandalwood in the North Stirling's and some industry and licensing updates.

We then went into the field to look at a few of these plantations. The first was what I would call an opportunity planting, in some land that was not practical for grazing or cropping due to its proximity to a salt lake, but it had produced some outstanding sandalwood of about 18 years of age. Density of the plantation was good, and the visual quality was so impressive a price offer of \$7.00 kg for the logs and \$11.00 kg for the butts was made on the spot. I am not even sure if some business was not instigated on the day. It was a great demonstration of the set and forget ability of spicatum.

We then travelled to a site of which a large portion (some 2 to 300 Ha) had suffered a hot fire last Boxing Day, in an escaped DBCA burn (dare I say it). Soon after the fire it appeared as though all was lost, however in recent months and with the wetter season, regeneration was amazing. So much so that thinning will be necessary almost immediately. Many sandalwoods suckered up, very surprisingly, and there was an explosion of host tree species from both suckers and seed.

A few things became apparent. Firstly, don't be too quick to right off a plantation after a fire, although I am sure in some cases it will prove fatal. That said, it was very encouraging to see the resurgence of the plantation. It may have been advantageous that the plantation was in a 500 mm odd rainfall zone. Some valuable information will be gained as time goes on and the plantation can be assessed in years to come.

Secondly, fire is a real threat, and it is difficult to implement a strategy to totally avoid the threat. On the right day in the right conditions, it would seem a fire is impossible to stop. The insurance debate continues but to date I am only aware of "cost of replacement" policies and "loss of income" policies may be harder to secure.

Lastly, salvage of the wood is possible, and it appears saleable, so not all is lost. I cannot remember the age of the plantation, but I estimate about 7 years old. The butt is the most valuable part of the tree, and this of course is mostly protected underground. I am not privy to the price achieved for this burnt wood, but I believe it was well worth the effort to salvage.

Bruce Storer Secretary ASC

SUMMARY OF THE SANDALWOOD FIELD DAY AT BORDEN 25TH MAY 2021

Key Points:

- Approximately 30 landholders attended all or parts of the field day. Three buyers also attended the field day.
- Most attendees were broad acre farmers who have cultivated sandalwood on their properties. As such sandalwood is a minor component of their farms (by area), typically 5-50ha.
- The key outcome from the day was that farmers are now aware that their 20+ year old cultivated sandalwood now has a value. One buyer offered \$7000-11,000/t for the wood at the first field site. Farmers now have at least some understanding about what factors determine wood value (eg oil content and oil composition).
- It was pleasing to see the excitement in the field when wood values were discussed after sandalwood cut at the first field site was on display. You could sense farmers doing sums in their head about how much they might have, and its value. One of my key reasons for wanting to hold the field day was to prevent farmers from being ripped off when selling sandalwood or land with sandalwood on it. (as per a recent sale in the central wheatbelt region). By the end of the day were well aware of what the options were and how to approach sandalwood harvest and sale.
- At the second field site the process of harvesting sandalwood was discussed and again you could see farmers working out what machinery they had that could be used to harvest and process their own sandalwood
- Farmers continue to bring wood samples to show technical experts, like myself, to obtain guidance on issues (pest and diseases, value assessment, etc). This also occurred at this field day (also occurred at the previous ASN field day held at Bindoon). In both cases the people who brought along samples were broad acre farmers who were unaware of new rules and regulations. This again highlights the appalling behaviour of DBCA in communicating with the farming community. Indeed, this issue was raised with the head of DBCA licencing over 18 months ago.
- Since the field day I've received two enquiries about growing sandalwood in the region. I view this as a real positive as landholders are finally realising that they get multiple tangible benefits from growing sandalwood on parts of their farms (sale of sandalwood, good grazing and carbon credits). Furthermore, the second field site clearly demonstrated that sandalwood cultivation can complement agricultural production (not displace it). Unfortunately enthusiasm for growing more sandalwood takes a terminal hit after farmers/and other landholders were aware that an individual's right to process/value add and sell (to anyone in a free market) no longer exists unless they hold four DBCA licences.
- The only negative feedback from the day was the atrocious licencing system DBCA has imposed on private growers. Growers, need not one licence, not two licences, not three licences, but four licences and related paperwork to be able to harvest, process and sell their product (s) in an open and free market. This relates to sandalwood cultivated on freehold land, some of which was planted over 20 years ago. The licencing system is anti-competitive, retrospective, and likely to kill off farmer and small landholder investment into the industry. A demonstration of in-field chipping (low grade wood) was planned as part of the field day, but this was cancelled

as DBCA said that this normal forestry activity would require a third licence to be held by Geoff Woodall, hence this aspect of the field day was cancelled, regrettably.

Notes by Geoff Woodall. Please find an attached field day flyer and an article in the Farm Weekly



Harvesting Plantation Sandalwood Field Day

When: Thursday 25th March, 9am

Where: Borden Pavilion, then on-farm (self-drive)

RSVP for catering 22nd March

Laura on 0401 553 285 email laura@nspnr.com.au

The Great Southern region and the North Stirlings from Tambellup to Borden and beyond have a long history of sandalwood production.

On Thursday 25th March Dr Geoff Woodall (BSc Hort, PhD) will present his third and final field day for the plantation sandalwood project as he harvests the sandalwood plantations in Gnowangerup and Borden. It follows on from the first and second field days in 1999 and 2008, which focused on planting and growing sandalwood.

The field day will cover thinning, harvesting, processing, and licensing. Go on-farm to see the harvesting of plantation sandalwood and discuss harvesting, wood quality and what happens post-harvest. Learn about fuel management, insurance for sandalwood, and how to salvage burnt sandalwood.

The sandalwood growers' group, Australian Sandalwood Network, and potential buyers of the sustainably produced sandalwood are also invited to attend this event.

Australian sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*) is a Western Australian native plant. The wood is used for incense and processed to extract oils for use in perfume, cosmetics and pharmaceutical products.

This field day is possible thanks to our sponsors Great Southern Development Commission, Australian Sandalwood Network, South Coast NRM, Australian Sandalwood Cooperative Ltd and The Sandalwood Shop.



Sandalwood investment starting to pay

By BREE SWIFT

A GROUP of farmers who started a sandalwood plantation in the North Stirlings in 1999, finally received their due reward late last month when a field day was held to harvest the sandalwood they planted 22 years ago.

Sandalwood farmer and researcher Geoff Woodall, who is in the process of harvesting the sandalwood plantations in Gnowangerup and Borden and has more than 20 years of experience in the field, presented at the field day covering topics including thinning, processing and licensing in the sandalwood industry.

While taking the group on farm to see the harvesting of the sandalwood, he also discussed wood quality, fuel management, insuring the product and how to salvage burnt sandalwood.

The event was organised by the North Stirlings Pallinup Natural Resources (NSPNR).

"In an industry where you have to wait 20-25 years for your payday you have to be extremely patient, but it's amazing how quickly that time goes by," Mr Woodall said.

"The timber we planted 20 years ago in fairly marginal agricultural land has good oil in it and should be worth \$7-\$11 per kilogram.

"There were some of the original participants there, mostly broadacre farming families from the North Stirlings who have small sandalwood portions on their farms, which were originally about trying to make the original landcare movement profitable rather than based on government handouts."

About 30 people attended the field day with the sandalwood growers group, Australian Sandalwood Network and potential buyers of the sustainably produced sandalwood were invited to attend.



North Stirling farmers made up a large component of the attendees at the Sandalwood Field Day late last month.



Geoff Woodall discussing sandalwood quality and value at a site that was burnt during the 2019 Stirling Ranges fire.

The Great Southern region and the North Stirlings from Tambellup to Borden and beyond have a long history of sandalwood production.

The region is home to two of the oldest areas of cultivated sandalwood aged more than 35 years old.

Australian sandalwood (*Santalum spicatum*) is a WA native plant and its oil-rich edible nuts can be harvested once the trees are about five years old, but the main product is the high value aromatic heartwood harvested after 20-25 years of growth.

The wood is commonly used for incense and



The first batch of cultivated sandalwood to be produced from the North Stirlings, sold and ready for transport.

processed to extract oils for use in perfume, cosmetics and pharmaceutical products.

Sandalwood plantations are also used to improve natural landscapes by using excess water, preventing salinity and waterlogging, improving biodiversity and native animal habitat and reducing soil

erosion caused by wind and water.

The field day was sponsored by Great Southern Development Commission, Australian Sandalwood Network, South Coast NRM, Australian Sandalwood Co-operative Ltd and The Sandalwood Shop.

THINNING TRIAL

The Board is currently in discussion with a local sandalwood processor to provide a once off plantation thinning trial, in which the processor will provide the harvesting and freight costs for the trial then buy the sandalwood from the members based on a processed oil content. The purpose of this trial is for the processor to establish an understanding of the oil quality and quantity expected from plantation spicatum and to establish contractor cost for ongoing harvest activities. It is hoped that this may be another opportunity available to members for marketing their sandalwood in the future.

BUG WATCH WITH THE MYPESTGUIDE APP

Over the last four weeks sandalwood trees on our property at Toodyay have been attacked by a caterpillar, well lots of them actually. The appetite of these critters is voracious with some trees losing most of their leaves. I reported the caterpillar to DPIRD via the MyPestGuide App. This is their response:

Thanks for your sawfly report. Your larva is spitfire or sawfly larva, Perga species (Hymenoptera: Pergidae) or something similar. Sawflies are members of the greater wasp group. Many sawfly larvae are yet to be confirmed as belonging to various adults. The larvae received their common name because of the odourous liquid they squirt when disturbed. The Australian Pergidae fauna is very rich in species. They have a diverse biology but the most frequently observed species are foliage feeders, usually feeding in groups on various Eucalyptus/Corymbia species. Larvae of spitfires feed on the foliage of young trees and regrowth stems, and can strip the branches of foliage particularly at the tops. This is usually replaced during the spring-summer flush of leaf growth. Serious retardation of high growth may result from repeated attack but death is unusual. Kind regards, MyPestGuide Team



ASC FEE SCHEDULE

The ASC will continue to provide information and shared assistance free of charge as we continue to grow. As the ASC will be commencing commercial activities there will be providing services to members that will require cost recovery. According to co-operative principles the ASC has established fees based on cost recovery without a profit imperative and will be adjusted in future as required. The following is our current fee schedule for sales commission and services provided to or arranged for members at their request through the ASC:

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| General sales commission | 5% + GST |
| Auction sales commission | 7.5% + GST |
| Freight | Cost + 5% + GST |
| Sample testing | Cost + 5% + GST |
| Harvesting | Cost + 5% + GST |
| Other plantation services | Cost + 5% + GST |
| Administrative work on behalf of member | \$50 per hour + GST |

The current fee schedule is always available at <https://www.sandalwood.coop/publications> .



AUSTRALIAN SANDALWOOD NETWORK HAS 5 'NUT WIZARDS' FOR HIRE BY ASN AND ASC MEMBERS. THE NUT WIZARD TAKES OUT MUCH OF THE BACK-BREAKING WORK INVOLVED IN COLLECTING SANDALWOOD NUTS OFF THE GROUND. A REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT OF \$100 IS REQUIRED WITH NO CHARGE FOR THE ACTUAL HIRE.

To Hire please contact Bethan Lloyd on 9574 5882 or email exec@sandalwood.org.au

Disclaimer: The contents and information contained in this newsletter should not be relied upon and each individual should seek specific advice or assistance where necessary and therefore the ASC board and newsletter editor disclaim all liability from any error loss or other consequence which may arise from any information in this publication