

**Submission
No 42**

INQUIRY INTO ASPECTS OF AGRICULTURE IN NSW

Organisation: YLAD Living Soils
Name: Ms Rhonda Daly
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tabled by Ronda Dalg.
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YLAD

LIVING SOILS

Putting life back into the land



About YLAD Living Soils

YLAD Living Soils (YLS) was established by Bill and Rhonda Daly in October 2002. It's manufacturing base and head office is in Young NSW. YLAD Living Soils provides a large range of biological fertilisers and humus compost around Australia.

Why YLAD?

Bill and Rhonda began questioning the direction of conventional farming on their very successfully owned and operated mixed broadacre farm and seed growing business at Young NSW. They believed the ever-increasing amounts of artificial fertilisers, chemicals, pesticides together with current land management practices were leading to a decline in soil fertility and associated problems with animal and human health. Bill and Rhonda's vision was to increase the long term productivity and profitability of their farm through the use of sustainable biological fertilisers and practices. This was the catalyst for starting YLAD Living Soils.

Rhonda's life threatening illness, caused by environmental poisoning, confirmed that conventional farming practices are not sustainable long-term, adversely effecting soil, plant, animal, human and environmental health.

YLAD Living Soils

YLAD Living Soils was established in recognition of the rapidly increasing dis-ease amongst farmers towards problems associated with conventional agriculture. YLS supplies biological fertilisers and soil fertility programs to support the balance of the physical, chemical nutrition and biological aspects of the soil. This balance returns the mineral and microbial life to the soil providing a healthy and sustainable environment for all life forms.

YLS distributes the product range of Nutri-Tech Solutions, the largest biological fertiliser company in Australia, with all brewing of inoculums and blending of broadcast blends taking place at Young. All products are manufactured to suit conditions of crops grown throughout Australia and are supplied to broadacre, horticulture, viticulture and livestock and organic industries.

YLAD Living Compost

In 2005 Bill and Rhonda Daly attended an Advanced Composting System (ACS) Workshop in Ocala, Florida, USA with Midwest Bio-Systems, Illinois. From that day on it was our goal to begin producing humus compost from local waste residues for use back onto our agricultural soils. We saw the introduction of humus compost completing the comprehensive range of biological products that we already provided through YLAD Living Soils.



In September 2006 Edwin J Blosser and Roger Kropf from Midwest Bio-Systems facilitated four days of Workshops in Young, NSW teaching the use and benefits of humus compost in production as well as the 3 day Advanced Composting System Workshop. In March 2007 there was a return visit to enlighten producers of the benefits of humus compost and a healthy soil. Participants attended from all over Australia as well as from many local Councils.

The YLAD Living Compost facility now produces high quality humus compost using an Aeromaster Compost Turner and the ACS method.



Education:

YLAD Living Soils and YLAD Living Compost understands the complexity of biological agriculture and compost production and believes that providing knowledge and educational opportunities to farmers is vitally important. We provide two major seminars/Workshops per year, farm tours and field days. YLAD Living Soils and YLAD Living Compost provide on-going education and training for customers.

YLAD Living Soils' motto is:

'Putting Life Back into the Land'



Important factors which make YLS successful

- ▶ Experience and distinctive competencies in the agricultural industry with 35 years of farm management 'know how'.
- ▶ Ability to deliver credible environmental education to farmers empowering them to believe in their own abilities as custodians of the land.
- ▶ Client trust and business integrity.
- ▶ Ability to recognise and work within the constraints facing farmers ie drought, economic and market pressure.
- ▶ Value added customer service.
- ▶ Team dedication, motivation and passion to work with customers, in the pursuit of a healthier environment and community.
- ▶ Identifiable visual structure (branding) reflects a quality organisation, throughout any communication vehicle.

YLS achievements in pioneering a new approach and product

- ▶ YLAD Living Soils saw an exceptional opportunity to establish a biological fertiliser and humus compost business and turned this dream and vision into a reality.
- ▶ Entering a new market place took passion, drive and courage to go against standard industry practices.
- ▶ Biological fertilisers improve soil health by maximising the soils biological, physical and chemical properties in an environmentally friendly way.



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- ▶ Farmers were no longer achieving results using conventional fertilisation programs and YLS identified the need for a replacement product.
 - ▶ YLS now provides Humus Compost as a base for all soil improvements to meet this market.

Why were these results exceptional?

- ▶ Farmers are experiencing the 'toughest' economic times in history yet are willing to purchase humus compost and biological fertilisers to create a more productive enterprise.
- ▶ Commencing in October 2002 there was an unknown factor as to how this new approach would be accepted by mainstream farmers.
- ▶ Improvements in wool quality attracted industry attention – to be profiled by Australian Wool Network in an industry newsletter to 3000 clients.

How did the above exceptional results affect YLS staff?

- ▶ YLS staff members were proud to be associated with a business that nurtures environmental health and is committed to the well being of society.
- ▶ Source of great motivation for staff.
- ▶ Staff felt secure knowing that the business was producing exceptional outcomes, both financially and physically.

YLS performance within the competitive environment and obstacles to overcome to achieve results

- ▶ YLS performance has successfully established them in the market place in approximately five years.
- ▶ YLS has overcome stigmas and criticism attached to conventional pasture fertilisation by quantifiable improvements in soil fertility, yields and quality of production.
- ▶ Market share has grown positively to \$1,200,000 gross in five years
- ▶ Levels of interest and attendance at educational seminars and field days indicate that grazing systems are being 'put under the microscope' and new products are ready to be adopted.
- ▶ Number of enquires continues to grow with 'word of mouth' referrals and by strategic media campaigns.
- ▶ YLS takes into financial situations for the farming enterprise, to work within their budget.



Mission statement:

To foster the improved health, productivity and sustainability of soils and implement innovative and profitable soil management and remediation solutions

Vision:

To be a leading supplier of quality biological soil amendments, humified compost and ancillary services that promotes soil, plant, animal, and human health through a balanced living soil