

Permaculture Cairns Newsletter

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES WITH SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS



Care for the Earth, Care for people, Fair share the excess

Permaculture Cairns Incorporated

Web Site: www.permaculturecairns.org.au

AUGUST NEWSLETTER

PERMACULTURE CAIRNS MEETING

Tuesday 15TH AUGUST 6pm for a 6.30 start

ARC Disability Centre 92 Little Street Manunda

Members free, but bring some nibbles for the cuppa break
and a dollar for the raffle, which helps pay for the venue.

Non members \$5

AGENDA

Welcome to new members and visitors

Upcoming workshops and events

Permaculture Principle Number 8 a practical explanation.

Guest Speaker:

*This month we get to meet **Geoff Guest OAM**, he established the Geoff Guest Petford Youth Camp back in the late 70's. Geoff is always willing to try out new ideas in order to help young people improve the quality of their lives, his focus is now on nutrition and permaculture practices are being used.*

Plant of the Month, Book of the Month, and backyard pics from our Members

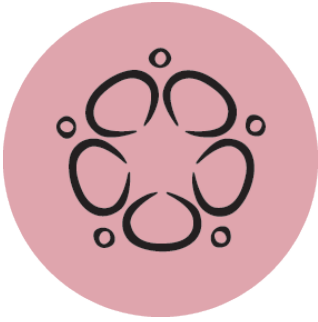
and if anyone has something to add please bring it up on the night.

Meeting close and now time for a chat, a cuppa and a snack with like-minded people

All finished by 8.30pm.

Principle 8: Integrate rather than segregate

"Many hands make light work"



By putting the right things in the right place, relationships develop between them and they support each other.

This icon represents a group of people from a bird's-eye view, holding hands in a circle together. The space in the centre could represent "the whole being greater than the sum of the parts". The proverb "many hands make light work" suggests that when we work together the job becomes easier.

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Growing Food in the Tropics in AUGUST

The garden is looking fantastic and there is lots to eat. The Red Russian and Tuscan kale are ready to be made into chips. The Celery is growing fast and loves water. Blue Lake beans are delicious, and I have a few snake beans growing as well. I have finished all the 16 plants of Wong Bok and they were delicious in salads, along with the capsicum, cucumber and lots of coriander and parsley.

There are four types of tomatoes producing or just finished, Beams yellow pear, Black Russian, Tropic and a Yellow egg tomato which came up on its own and I don't know what it is, but it tastes great. Finally, I am able to grow tomatoes again where I have had trouble with Bacterial Wilt for the past 4 years. Could it be the special compost I made with Pigeon pea and Crotalaria? the worm castings? or tomatoes resistant to Bacterial Wilt???? Now I will have to try more tomatoes in another suspect position.

What to plant NOW before it gets too hot, lettuce, rocket, bok choy, tomatoes, perennial capsicum, kale, cucumbers, beans Blue Lake and Snake Beans. Might be ok for coriander give it a try. Coriander plants can be kept producing by cutting off the flower stalks before the flowers form, they are good to eat.

Of course it is also time for the tough ones like, corn, pumpkin, squash and melons.

Try the famous GUILD of Corn, Beans and Pumpkin.

Grow some Sweet Corn

Sweet Corn is a gross feeder, requires lots of water, and a temperature of at least 20C.

Prepare the soil with compost, chook poo pellets; look for those with added sulphate of potash for better quality cobs.

Plain manures are low in potassium.

Direct Corn seed into groups for better pollination.

Water deeply to encourage roots to grow deeply.

Feed the corn plant with a foliar spray between the 3rd and 5th leaf stage and again in 2 weeks to ensure lots of kernels and large cobs.

A SIMPLE WAY TO REMEMBER PLANT ROTATION IN THE VEGGIE PATCH

LEAF - Greens, **FRUIT** - Tomatoes Beans, Capsicum, **ROOT** - Radish, Beetroot,

Breaking news!!!!

Commonwealth Bank is one of Australia's biggest funders of fossil fuels. They pour billions of dollars into dirty coal and gas companies and they refuse to declare the risks we all know climate change presents.

Now two of CommBank's shareholders are taking them to court.¹ Mum-and-dad shareholders Kim and Guy filed a case in the Federal Court of Australia yesterday. Kim and Guy will challenge CommBank to disclose the material risks climate change presents to their investments.

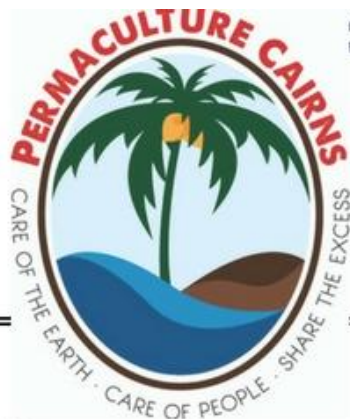
This could be a game changer. It's the first time any bank has been challenged in court for failing to take climate change seriously. If Kim and Guy win, they could change the way banks are forced to address climate change forever. CommBank is facing a historic legal challenge, and right now they have never been more vulnerable to public pressure.

Kim and Guy are being supported by the Grata Fund, an initiative kick-started by GetUp members that helps fund game-changing Australian litigation, and are being represented by lawyers at Environmental Justice Australia and leading barrister Ron Merkel QC.

Kim and Guy say they bought their shares as an investment in their children's future. But what will that future look like if companies like CommBank keep enabling fossil fuel giants to cook our planet? No parent wants their child to grow up in a hotter, harsher world without a Great Barrier Reef.

Last year CommBank committed to keep global warming to well below 2 degrees. But since then, CommBank has lent \$6 billion to dirty coal, oil and gas projects. That's 4 times as much as they've lent to renewable energy projects.²

Put simply, they're one of Australia's biggest funders of global warming. And they still refuse to rule out funding Adani's loser coal mine. As CommBank prepare to face court, let's make sure they know their customers — and the broader Australian community — is watching them too.



BACKYARD PERMACULTURE DESIGN

Saturday 9th September 2017

9.30am-12:30pm

\$20

Introduction to Backyard Design- Cairns

Learn some techniques you can use to design your own backyard to be a productive space.

For backyards from 2 square metres to 1/4 acre.



Register E: workshops@permaculturecairns.org.au Ph: 0435 120 944

PERMACULTURE CAIRNS

BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES WORKSHOPS

Sponsored by



Workshops and Events

FNQ COMMUNITY EXCHANGE

Relocalising Far North Queensland

FNQ Community Exchange aka LETS Local Energy Trading System

August calendar

PEERAMON – Tuesday 1st 10am Carrot Ferment Workshop – Sauerkraut HQ, venue, ingredients and equipment supplied by Patti, shared labour with contributions of \$ needed to share delicious ferments. Harvest: (pop the crock) same time - same place - August 15. Bookings Essential. Event Host: Patti 0439 561 266

JULATTEN – Saturday 5th Mount Molloy Markets Our LETS folk are having a combined community stall. Pop in & say hi and find out more about LETS Trading

KOAH – Saturday 5th 9am – 1pm Monthly Market and Trade at Koah Community Hall. You are invited to be part of the local Koah Monthly Market, an excellent family friendly venue. This is a traditional cash Market however LETS members are welcome to participate and trade \$5 or 5B per stall, set up from 8am.
Event Host: Tonielle – 0422 068 995

RAVENSHOE – Tuesday 8th 2pm Octopi Garden. Bring along something to trade, a friend and a positive vibe. Trading and sharing is key to the success of all events no matter the numbers. Most importantly have fun. Event Host: Hayley Buchanen - 0416 528 177

MALANDA – Saturday 12th 6 – 9pm Trade and Dinner Night. 33 Park Avenue, opposite the Malanda Caravan Park. Bring something to trade, and a dish to share for dinner. This is a child friendly event and kids can make use of the huge toy room. Event Host: Katrin - 40966755

TULLY – Tuesday 15th 6 – 8pm Toastado Tuesday Dinner and Chocolate Workshop 117 Tully Gorge Road. Try some of Michaels Tostadas and LETS smash some Avo's! Event Host: Michael - 4068 3669

ATHERTON – Saturday 19th 6pm – 8pm Dinner and Trade, Mediterranean Theme. Irene's House at Evens Street, Atherton. Bring along a plate to share and something to trade. For further info and RSVP contact Event Host: Irene - 0439 914 876

PEERAMON – Friday 25th 10am Harvest Crock #1 Sauerkraut HQ Part 2 from July Session, for those who attended the July session it's time to pop the crock. Event Host: Patti - 0439 561 266

YUNGABURRA – Saturday 27th 12 - 2pm that retro cafe Market & Trade day. The RED SHEDS SHOPS 20 Eacham Road, Yungaburra. This event is directly after the Yungaburra Markets AGAIN! Bring along something to trade a rug to display your wares. That retro cafe is offering 100% Bartles for drinks from the menu, you will need cash for lunch and drinks from the display fridge. Come along combine your market shopping then pop up to the cafe for a cuppa and some trading.
Event Host: Melitta – 4095 2340

Cairns CITY Trade at 'Lafew Teahouse & Kombucha Bar'. LETS relies on member initiative and participation to make events happen. Lafew Teahouse & Kombucha bar is available any Sunday between 12-2pm for trade days. Lorna, however, will not be there to organise it. Lorna invites

anyone in Cairns to create, with the space a place to trade – the shaded garden area out the back is also great. Contact Lorna for more info – 0475 762 838

AUGUST 15th - DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

All details to Melitta - fnqces@gmail.com or 40952340 to be included in Calendar, Website, Facebook and other Promotions

What to bring to Trade Events where not specified above: food & drinks for yourself or to share, or money and/or Bartles at some venues, friends, Trading Record Sheet and pen, any goods you wish to trade, table/rug to display them upon is often useful, your own chair at some venues, promotional material of any services you are offering if applicable, \$20 to join LETS if you are not yet a member.

fnqces@gmail.com - 4096 6972 - www.fnqces.org - www.communityexchange.net.au

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fnqces@gmail.com - 4096 6972 - www.fnqces.org - www.communityexchange.net.au

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SEED SAVER GROUPS



Cairns Seed Savers Group

will be joining the Biodynamic FNQ Event as described below



Biodynamics FNQ Event

Biodynamic home gardening in the tropics

Sunday 13th August 10 am – 3.30 pm

Venue: Sabine Siefert – 5-7 Zanzoo Close, Redlynch

Topics – Building soil fertility naturally, making a compost for a home garden, Making Seaweed tea, Weeds and lawn care, Fruit tree maintenance, Crops for wet season, Poultry in the home garden

Cost: free to members, \$5 non members

Bring chair and food to share for lunch.
Teas and coffee provided.

Directions to 5-7 Zanzoo Close, Redlynch 4870:

follow Western Arterial Road (State Route 91) to the turn off into Redlynch connection Road, then Intake Road, 1st road left at major roundabout, follow Intake Road towards Crystal Cascades, after about 8 km turn left into Zanzoo Close. It is the first house on the left.

Plenty of parking in front and on a meadow on the left- hand side of the garden.

There will be BD FNQ signs up to follow from roundabout.

Enquiries Cheryl 4095 1119 or Yuki 0438 741 7893



**International
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Convergence**
ipcindia2017.org
Hyderabad, Telangana, India

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CONFERENCE
25 - 26 Nov 2017
CONVERGENCE
27 Nov - 2 Dec 2017

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For more info on the Convergence check out the website” -

ipcindia2017@permacultureindia.org

HUMUS SAVES YOUR WORLD

The blanket of greenhouse gases traps the heat that warms the world, and we would not have a livable environment without it. However, that blanket has thickened in recent decades, as human enterprise (and the energy required to fuel it) has exploded. We have quadrupled our numbers in just 70 years and carbon from coal, oil and humus has billowed into the blanket.

Carbon is stored in three places: the soil, living things, and the atmosphere (where it is stored as CO₂). It moves between these three storage vehicles as part of the **carbon cycle**. We have lost two thirds of the largest storehouse (the soil) to the atmosphere, through faulty farming and gardening practices. Organic matter (humus) has dropped globally, from an average of **5%** to just **1.5%**, and this carbon is the lion's share of the offending CO₂ that is changing our world and threatening our very existence. The good news is that it can be fixed!



When we change the way we farm and garden, we build, rather than lose, humus in our soils. This is direct **sequestration** of carbon that would otherwise have returned to the atmosphere as part of the carbon cycle. The **4 in 1000** initiative, announced by the French government at the recent Paris Climate Change conference, was a recognition of this potential. 22 countries have now agreed to incentivise the building of 0.4% (4 in 1000) organic matter each year. The science supports the fact that we can reverse climate change, if we return the carbon to the soil from where most of it came. If you can step up to the plate and nurture your backyard in the right way, your personal contribution is far more profound than putting in solar panels and

turning off lights. In fact, if you sit down with a calculator, you will realise that this is the greatest strategy you can possibly adopt to help save the day!

The Ultimate Win/Win

The other good news relates to the human health role of your garden. The home food garden is your ultimate wellness tool. If you can build humus and address mineral requirements in your own patch, then you can produce chemical-free, nutrient-dense food with forgotten flavours and enhanced medicinal qualities. The father of modern medicine, **Hippocrates**, famously said, "Let your food be your medicine and your medicine be your food". A flood of studies now confirm that fresh, whole foods are replete with a remarkable range of protective nutrients and come equipped with the co-factors that optimise the uptake of that nutrition. As Hippocrates so aptly noted, there is no comparison between nutrients in bottles and those found in well-grown, fresh food.

There is a problem with this recognition, however, because our demand for cheap food and the super-efficient food producing machine that delivers on demand is not necessarily producing this "medicine". It is a fact that many fruit and vegetable farmers will not eat their own produce. They have their patch out the back to produce clean food for their family. This **contaminant factor** is compounded by the **nutrient losses** associated with transporting and storing fresh food. A snow pea, for example, loses 50% of its vitamin C lode within 12 hours of harvest. The vitamins are the worst affected. Vitamin A, the B group and vitamin C are particularly fragile, but the **phytonutrients** that make food "medicinal", are also seriously impacted.

When you have your own healthy, chemical-free garden, the trick is to harvest your food in the evening, directly before it is eaten. If you can compound that benefit by growing **heirloom** fruit and vegetables, you will be consuming champagne food and your garden becomes a profound health tool.



Hybridisation invariably involves loss of nutrition because, when plant breeders rearrange the genes in the gene pool to profit from their creations, something always suffers. The capacity for mineral uptake is most often impacted. The original **heirloom varieties** are far more flavorsome, because taste correlates directly to nutrition and medicinal value.

Five Tips to Garden for Humus and Health

1) Compost, compost, compost!

Humus is the sweet-smelling, chocolate-coloured substance that is produced by microorganisms and serves as their home base and support system. Composting involves our intervention in the natural process of decomposition. Here we can improve and hasten the creation of **humus**. Compost provides stable humus and complexed minerals to our soil, along with and an invaluable army of new recruits to the soil workforce. However, there are other major benefits to embracing compost.

Compost is a major key to **sequestering carbon** and countering climate change. Compost effectively restores the capacity of your soil to build humus. It replaces or regenerates the key organisms responsible for humus building. For example, compost stimulates **earthworms** and **mycorrhizal fungi**, two of the most important carbon building players in the soil. It also reintroduces a group of organisms called **cellulose-digesting fungi**. These humus creators are missing in many soils due to chemicals, chlorinated water, overcultivation and lack of food.

Plants pump sugars out from their roots to feed the surrounding soil-life, as part of a "give and you will receive" relationship. Part of this glucose gift can be converted to humus. Compost restores the key creatures performing this role. In one recent US study, the application of compost created **nine times** more humus, according to soil tests, than what was physically applied to those soils. The compost was the triggering mechanism for **carbon sequestration**.

The creation of a compost pile simply involves making a layer cake. You start with a **carbon layer** involving straw, dead leaves, sawdust or council green waste. You apply the additives described below to that layer, wet it down thoroughly, and then apply your **nitrogen layer**. This involves, lawn clippings, animal manure or green weeds. You repeat the same additions on that layer and then add another carbon layer (alternating, until the pile is complete).



Here are some **composting tips** for the home gardener:

- **Add a clay stabiliser** – if you can include some friable clay-based soil to each layer of your compost pile or bin, there is a remarkable benefit. The fungal component of your compost will bind that clay to humus, to create a clay/humus crumb. The **stable humus** you have now produced will remain in the soil for a minimum of 35 years. This contrasts with **active humus** produced by bacteria (lawn clipping compost), which will only remain in your soil (and out of the atmosphere) for 12 months. The best super-fine and highly available form of clay for this purpose is **NTS Soft Rock™**. This natural source of phosphate, calcium, silica and trace minerals is actually a colloidal clay, so you get all of these minerals and the long-term humus, all-in-one.
- **Include a paramagnetic boost** – the addition of 6% basalt crusher dust to your compost can seriously improve the composting process. The paramagnetic effect from basalt involves the measurable release of light particles called **biophotons** into the compost. This light stimulation multiplies the activity of the microbe workforce. There is also a broad spectrum mineral release associated with the finer particles of the crusher dust.
- **Don't discard your ash** – the ash from your fire contains very high levels of the mineral, potassium (potash). Potassium is responsible for stem strength, photosynthesis and sizing up fruit and vegetables. It is in a highly leachable form, as fire ash, but it is completely stabilised by humus when used to enhance the fertilising value of your compost.

- **Add lime to each layer** – a heavy sprinkle of lime is added to each layer, in all popular commercial composting processes. This practice serves three purposes. It ensures that the pH is optimal for decomposition, it ensures that calcium is present for the microbes and it eventually provides some plant-available calcium, the most important of all minerals, to your garden.
- **Include previous compost and manure** – manure contains good levels of nitrogen and many other minerals to ensure a nutrient-rich compost. The nitrogen component is essential to achieve a good carbon to nitrogen ratio in your compost. A couple of shovelfuls of your previous compost, added to each layer of your emerging heap, serves as an inoculum to speed the decomposition of the new pile.

2) Mulch like your life depended upon it

Mulching is a critically important, core strategy for every square centimetre of bare ground in your garden. There should always be plant cover, or mulch cover, or a combination of both, because there is no food for soil-life on bare ground. Gardening is about looking after soil-life, so that they will look after you. This is how you make for stress-free pleasure during your communion with nature. A mulch cover warms and protects the soil, while nourishing its legions of inhabitants. Most importantly, mulch is converted to **stable humus**, which will keep carbon from returning to the atmosphere for most of your lifetime.

Here are some mulching tips:

- **Claim your free council mulch** – in most areas of Australia, you can fill a trailer with ground-up green waste, free-of-charge, at your local recycling depot. This rich, brown mulch is perfect to feed the fungal component of your soil to sponsor the production of **stable humus**. You can pile this mulch 100 cm thick to discourage weeds, and the life beneath will delight. The earthworms arrive to party shortly thereafter and you should rejoice at their arrival. Earthworms decompose raw organic matter four times faster than any other humus-builders. Their castings are a remarkable fertiliser and they aerate your soil better than a spiked roller. Earthworms incubate a unique range of beneficial organisms in their gut and they inject this protective and productive inoculum throughout your soil. 12 months after applying this mulch, you can dig down and observe the thick layer of rich brown humus you have created.

- **Consider a fertilising mulch** – lucerne hay is the best performing of all mulches because it fertilises your soil while protecting and feeding. A perfect compost has a carbon to nitrogen ratio of 30:1. Lucerne mulch has that perfect ratio. It is well known as a protein-rich, nutrient dense animal feed, but it offers similar benefits to the invisible livestock beneath your feet. Lucerne mulch has a secondary benefit. It is teeming with organisms called **protozoa**. These creatures are the favourite food of **earthworms**. These wonderful workers arrive in force when the word goes out that it is feeding time at the lucerne lunch-house.
- **Plant a chop-and-drop living mulch** – ideally, your garden should feature plantings of fast-growing leguminous plants and shrubs that can be cut and dropped on a regular basis to cover and feed the soil. These plants offer several other benefits. For example, it is a great idea to plant lucerne plants throughout your garden. The leaves are a wonderful, nutrient-dense, alkalising additive to green smoothies, the flowers are amongst the most delicious of taste treats, but it is below ground that the magic happens. Lucerne and other chop-and-drop plants, like pigeon pea, house nitrogen-fixing organisms called *Rhizobia* in their root nodules. In this manner, they can help supplement surrounding plants with nitrogen, the mineral found most abundantly in plants. However, legumes offer more than free nitrogen. Their roots exude acids into the soil that serve to break the bond between locked-up **phosphorus** and **calcium** in your soil. In this manner, the two most important minerals for **photosynthesis** are made constantly available to surrounding plants. Finally, the exudates from the roots of legumes tend to feed the beneficial fungal component in your soil. It is these creatures who bind together the soil particles to create **crumb structure**, the most desirable of all soil conditions.

In the next installment we will look at several other key strategies to make your garden your ultimate wellness tool.

Until then, enjoy your soil!. Written by Graeme Sait CEO of Nutri-tech Solutions.

There is a lot of good information on the Nutri-Tech Solutions website, so give it a go.

Website for Permaculture videos info and blogs

Permaculturenews.org/category/how to

AND

Geofflawtononline.com

Check out the Friday Fives, join up for insights and benefits

News from Home and around the World

I have put these two short extracts of the original articles in again as the content is so important.
Editor

Zika Distraction from Glyphosate – The Elephant in the Room



Certainly, maternal viral illness with Rubella, (CMV) cytomegalovirus and Zika are all risk factors for fetal demise, and fetal malformations, and are best avoided.(93-95) However, the Zika Virus is a distraction from the real cause of the problem, massive glyphosate exposure to pregnant agricultural workers in Brazil. Glyphosate is a patented anti-folate drug, Anti-folate drugs are known to cause microcephaly and neural tube defects in animals and humans. Above Left image: *Elephant in the Room is Glyphosate, courtesy of Stephanie Seneff PhD slide presentation.*

Professor Don Huber, GMO Food and Glyphosate

Increased incidence of birth defects in the population caused by exposure to the anti-folate agent, glyphosate is only the “tip of the iceberg”. The adverse health consequences of GMO food and glyphosate contamination of our food and water supply are much more extensive as outlined in a series of articles posted on the [Stephanie Seneff home page](#). Here is a quote from Professor Don M. Huber:(88) from his document [GMO Failed Promises Flawed Science Serious Health Safety Issue](#)

*"Future historians may well look back upon our time and write, not about how many pounds of pesticides we did or did not apply, but about **how willing we are to sacrifice our children and jeopardize future generations** for this massive experiment we call genetic engineering that is based on failed promises and flawed science, just to benefit the bottom line of a commercial enterprise."* Dr. Don M. Huber

Link to this article: <http://wp.me/p3gFbV-3En>

CSIRO News release

CRACKING THE CODE OF MEGAPESTS

For the first time, CSIRO researchers have mapped the complete genome of two closely related megapests potentially saving the international agricultural community billions of dollars a year.

Led by CSIRO, in collaboration with a team of renowned experts, the researchers identified more than 17,000 protein coding genes in the genomes of the *Helicoverpa armigera* and *Helicoverpa zea* (commonly known as the Cotton Bollworm and Corn Earworm, respectively).

They also documented how these genetics have changed overtime.

RIGHT: *Helicoverpa armigera*.

This level of detail makes it easier for scientists to predict both the caterpillars weak spots, how they will mutate and even breed plants they will not want to eat.

The bollworm and earworm are the world's greatest caterpillar pests of broad-acre crops, causing in excess of US \$5 billion in control costs and damage each year across Asia, Europe, Africa, America and Australia.

The bollworm, which is dominant in Australia, attacks more crops and develops much more resistance to pesticides than its earworm counterpart.

"It is the single most important pest of agriculture in the world, making it humanity's greatest competitor for food and fibre," CSIRO Scientist Dr John Oakeshott said.

"Its genomic arsenal has allowed it to outgun all our known insecticides through the development of resistance, reflecting its name - *armigera* which means armed and warlike."

In Brazil the bollworm has been spreading rapidly and there have been cases of it hybridising with the earworm, posing a real threat that the new and improved "superbug" could spread into the United States.



In the mid-90s CSIRO assisted Australian cotton breeders to incorporate Bt insect resistance genes in their varieties to try and tackle the bollworm.

"Bt cotton" plants dispatch an insecticide from a bacteria – *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) – that is toxic to the caterpillar.

In the following 10 years, there was an 80 per cent reduction in the use of chemical pesticides previously required to control bollworms.

However the bollworm soon fought back with a small percentage of them building resistance to BT cotton and scientists introducing further strains of insecticides to manage the problem.

CSIRO Health and Biosecurity Honorary Fellow Dr Karl Gordon said while a combination of BT and some insecticides was working well in Australia, it can be costly and it was important to comprehensively study the pest themselves to manage the problem world-wide.

"We need the full range of agricultural science," Dr Gordon said.

"Our recent analyses of the complete genome, its adaptations and spread over the years are a huge step forward in combating these megapests."

Identifying pest origins will enable resistance profiling that reflects countries of origin to be included when developing a resistance management strategy, while identifying incursion pathways will improve biosecurity protocols and risk analysis at biosecurity hotspots including national ports.

As part of the research, CSIRO and the team updated a previously developed potential distribution model to highlight the global invasion threat, with emphasis on the risks to the United States.

The findings further provide the first solid foundation for comparative evolutionary and functional genomic studies on related and other lepidopteran pests, many of considerable impact and scientific interest.

The genome project was undertaken by the CSIRO in conjunction with the University of Melbourne, the Baylor College of Medicine in Texas, the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA), the Max Planck Institute of Chemical Ecology in Germany and the United States Department of Agriculture - Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS).

Scientists call for stricter limits on antimicrobial chemicals in household products



Katherine Martinko (@feistyredhair)

Living / Health

June 21, 2017



Public Domain **Max Pixel**

Triclosan may have been banned in soap, but antimicrobials are still allowed in more than 2,000 other products, which is a big problem.

The label “antibacterial” appears on everything from personal care products to cutting boards to clothing. It appeals to many people’s sense of hygiene, wanting to believe that ‘bad’ bacteria will be inhibited, but the truth is that the antibacterial chemicals added to consumer products are harmful to health, disruptive to the human reproductive system, and persistent in the environment.

In September 2016, the Food and Drug Administration **issued a ban** on triclosan, triclocarban, and 16 other antimicrobial chemicals in hand soaps, but this didn’t go far enough for many scientists. Now, more than 200 researchers have joined together to call for tighter limits on the uses of antimicrobial chemicals, outlined in a **formal statement** published in the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*.

The Florence Statement makes the following recommendations:

- 1. Avoid the use of triclosan, triclocarban, and other antimicrobial chemicals except where they provide an evidence-based health benefit (e.g., physician-prescribed toothpaste for treating gum disease) and there is adequate evidence demonstrating they are safe.*
- 2. Where antimicrobials are necessary, use safer alternatives that are not persistent and pose no risk to humans or ecosystems.*
- 3. Label all products containing triclosan, triclocarban, and other antimicrobials, even in cases where no health claims are made.*
- 4. Evaluate the safety of antimicrobials and their transformation products throughout the entire product life cycle, including manufacture, long-term use, disposal, and environmental release.*

You might be surprised where antimicrobial chemicals appear. The Environmental Working Group, a supporter of the statement, has a **detailed Guide to Triclosan** on its website that includes odd places such as credit cards, cell phones, tablecloths, household fabrics, playground equipment, socks, building materials, and many more. Its Skin Deep database identifies personal care products that contain triclosan.

While some manufacturers have introduced alternative chemicals in the wake of the FDA ban, there are concerns about the safety of these, too. From a **press release**:

The best approach is to steer clear of anything with antimicrobial properties, unless absolutely necessary. Plain soap and water does just as good a job at killing bacteria, and is much safer, so it's best to stick with that.

Please PRINT – SIGN – SCAN and RETURN by email to
treasurer@permaculturecairns.org.au.

Permaculture Cairns

Membership Form 2017

One year's membership fee - 1 Jan – 31 Dec:

☐ Household membership \$30 ☐ Renewing Member ☐

Individual membership \$20 ☐ New Member ☐



Name(s) of all applicant(s) & DOB if under 18yrs):

.....
.....
.....

Postal Address:

..... Postcode:

Phone(s):

Email:

Signature:

Payment may be made at Meetings, at Cairns Penny or Online Direct Deposit to Permaculture Cairns A/c at Cairns Penny in Grafton Street. BSB704-966 A/c No. 100009440 please include your Surname as reference.

If you have a Permaculture Design Certificate could you please complete the following survey.

YOUR NAME:

Who was the Course Presenter:

When did you do the Course:

Where did you do the Course:

Permaculture Cairns Public Meetings - All Welcome Every month on the Third Tuesday of month Jan to Nov (Second Tuesday in Dec). Doors open 6pm, meeting starts at 6.30pm at: ARC Disability Centre, 92 Little Street, Manunda

Enquiries

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