

FARM GATE ROUNDUP Saturday 21st October 2006

Alan Eagle: 45 728493 (Talai Estate), 0415244477 (M)

Alan Good Morning,

Welcome back Simon,

What's happening on the Farm Gate Trail this weekend;

Well Simon as you know Hawkesbury Harvest is interested in not only Food and Flora but Wine and on the Farm Gate Trail we have two fabulous wineries that your listeners can visit so I thought I would introduce one of these.

Where are we off too?

I am down at Talai Estate at South Maroota over looking some beautiful vines and majestic scenery.

David Moss is a first generation vigneron and I have visited David and Elanors vineyard many times and its atmosphere is friendly, relaxed and very very enjoyable.

Would you like to Chat with David?

Yes, put him on, Good Morning David

Good Morning Simon

David, tell me about Talai Estate ?

I have been in the Hawkesbury since 1969 and the property is around 25 acres and we have 4 acres under vines of the following varieties Chardonnay, Semillon, Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir and Merlot.

How did you choose those varieties?

It was pretty simple Simon, those are the one we like to drink

How did you get interested in growing grapes

Well about 30 years ago I thought I could build a small vineyard , but I was advised that the soil was no good for making wine so I put my vigneron career on hold and then in 1997 a friend of mine purchased a

book called 'Wine from 100 Vines' and he put down 100 vines and I don't like to do things in half measures and I put down 3000 vines. I took my self of to the University at Western Sydney, Hawkesbury to study winemaking and produced good wine in 2000 – 2003 whilst studying.

I believe you have had a varied career?

That right Simon, I was a Plantation manager from 1963 – 1969 in various location in New Guinea. We grew Coco and Copra The plantation sizes varied from 500 to 1000 acres. We worked in very primitive areas.

I have been a Bread Vendor, Van Salesman and a manager of a company who specialised in construction fasteners. (Nuts , bolts etc). All these skills have allowed me to build the vineyard and the cellar door.

You found a something special whilst digging out your cellar door David, tell our listeners about this?

A large rock fell off the front end loader and split in two and I noticed some small indentations in the rock. After I examined it a bit more closely I noticed the indentations were foot prints. I sent to rock of the Australian Museum and they have dated the rock and the foot prints to the Jurassic period, some 200 – 220 million years old.

The indentations are the rare fossil foot prints of a Para Cyclotosaurus amphibian. It is like a salamander, a lizard. I was pretty shocked. It is the first find of this kind in the Sydney basin. I have it on the wall in the cellar door.

David when are you open?

Friday to Sunday 10am – 6pm.

Thanks David very interesting, can you please pass me back to Alan?

(David), Thanks Simon

Did David Mason finally get off on his research project,

Yes Simon,

So where in the world is David ?

David has just left Singapore on his way to the Netherlands. This is the first week of Churchill Scholarship studying Urban Agriculture. He had a fabulous week in Singapore.

Hows big is Agricultural land in Singapore ?

Singapore is 700 sq kilometres in which 4.5 million people live, that's 6222 people per square kilometres. In the last 20 years the land used for Agricultural production has reduced from 25,000 hectares to 1500 hectares.

Wow that's amazing ?

Yes, David has met with Professors and Dr (the Phd Types) who discussed the latest area of research into rooftop agriculture, school plots and high tech solution to Agriculture which is what is required in Singapore . One of those high tech areas is 'Aeroponics'

What is Aeroponics?

It is a system where roots are continuously in an environment saturated with fine drops (a mist or aerosol) of a nutrient solution." The method requires no substrate and entails growing plants with their roots suspended in a deep air or growth chamber, with the roots periodically atomised with a fine mist of nutrients. Excellent aeration is the main advantage of aeroponics. One 5.7 hectares farm produces 1.3 tonnes of Lettuce daily using this method.

What Else has he been up to?

He met with the Agri – Food and Veterinary Authority of Singapore who aims to promote Singapore as a regional agri-technology hub for the region. This group manage 233 farms on the perimeter of the urban area, using 701 hectares within 6 Agri- Technology parks. They use varied intensive farming systems and will produce \$221million of produce in 2006.

Listeners can follow Davids Trip on his blog, which is ?

www.urbanagricultureworldwide.com

Hows the Fruit and Vegies,

As usual Spring has bought on the most juiciest Valencia Oranges, you can pick your own and the Strawberries a re fabulous just now.

At our market last weekend Simon we had 224 punnets of fresh local strawberries from Strawberries at Galston 359. They went in 65 minutes. Consumers are re educating them selves with seasonal produce and know good quality fruit when it is put in from of them.

What's happening on the Vege Front.

There is plenty of Spring Onions, Silverbeet, Cabbage, Lettuce, Celery, Endive, Chicory, Leeks, Fresh Garlic, Beetroot, Rhubarb, Baby Carrots, Broccoli and Broccolini, Potatoes, Parsley, Broad Beans, Dycon Radish and Free Ranges Eggs

Anything else is happening in the area

The RAAF are having one of their famous Air shows at the RAAF base at Richmond. If your listeners are coming up their best bet is to travel in by train. The two main roads between Windsor and Richmond and are Bligh Park and Richmond are closed from 6am to 7pm

The following weekend is the Scarecrow Festival at Kurrajong as well as the Dural Country Fair, at Dural Public School where Hawkesbury Harvest will have a stall..

Listeners can get all this information on the website by going to

www.hawkesburyharvest.com.au

Thanks Simon, Good to hear you back on the radio.

Catch you next week,