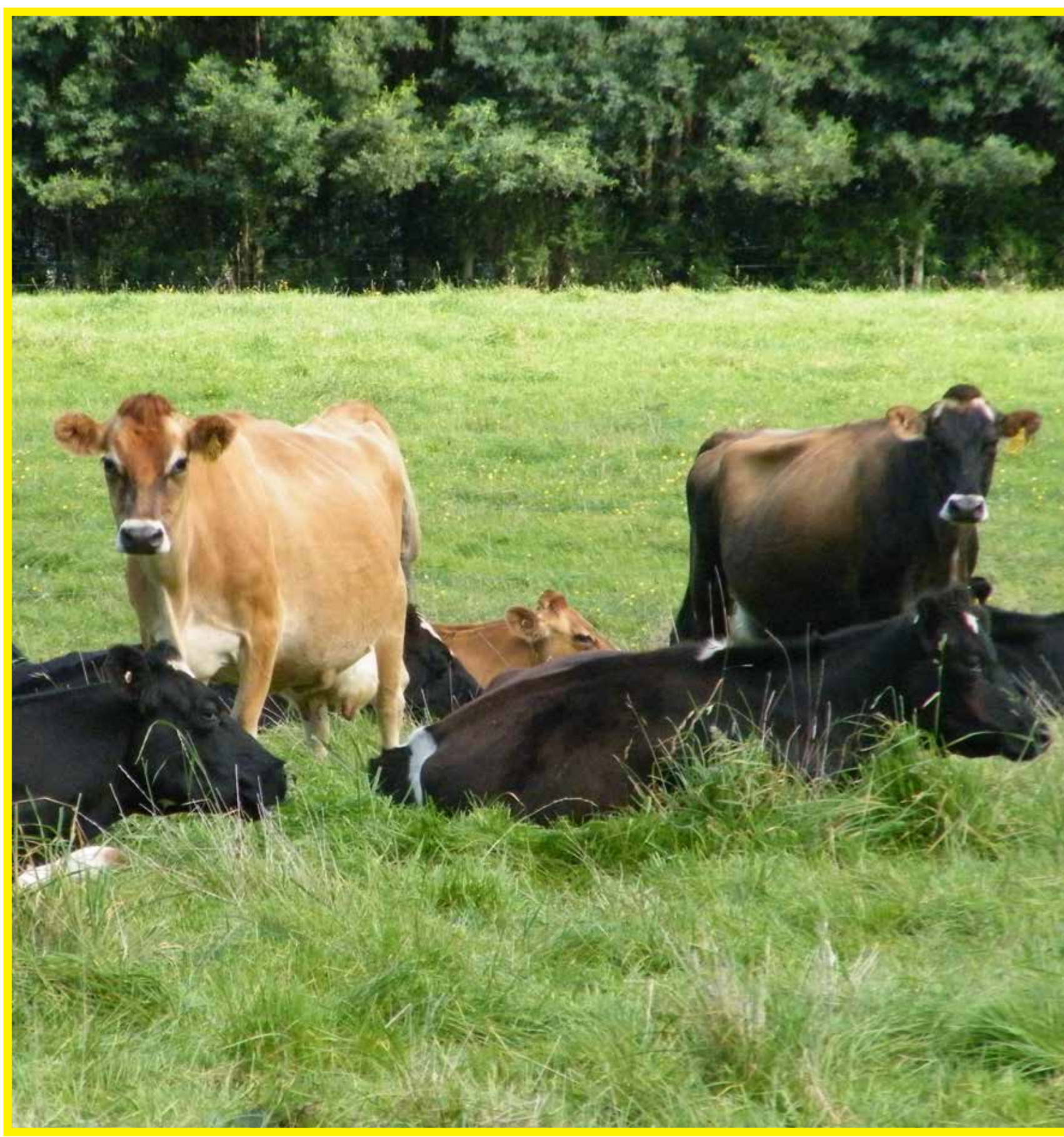


Southern Gippsland AGRICULTURAL CLIMATE RESILIENCE PROJECT

This is a two year project running until Nov 2016 helping Southern Gippsland food producers adapt to climate change. Through workshops, forums, mentoring and skill development we are aiming for healthy food production systems caring for people, animals, plants and the soil.



Project Events

Some of the topics we will explore are;

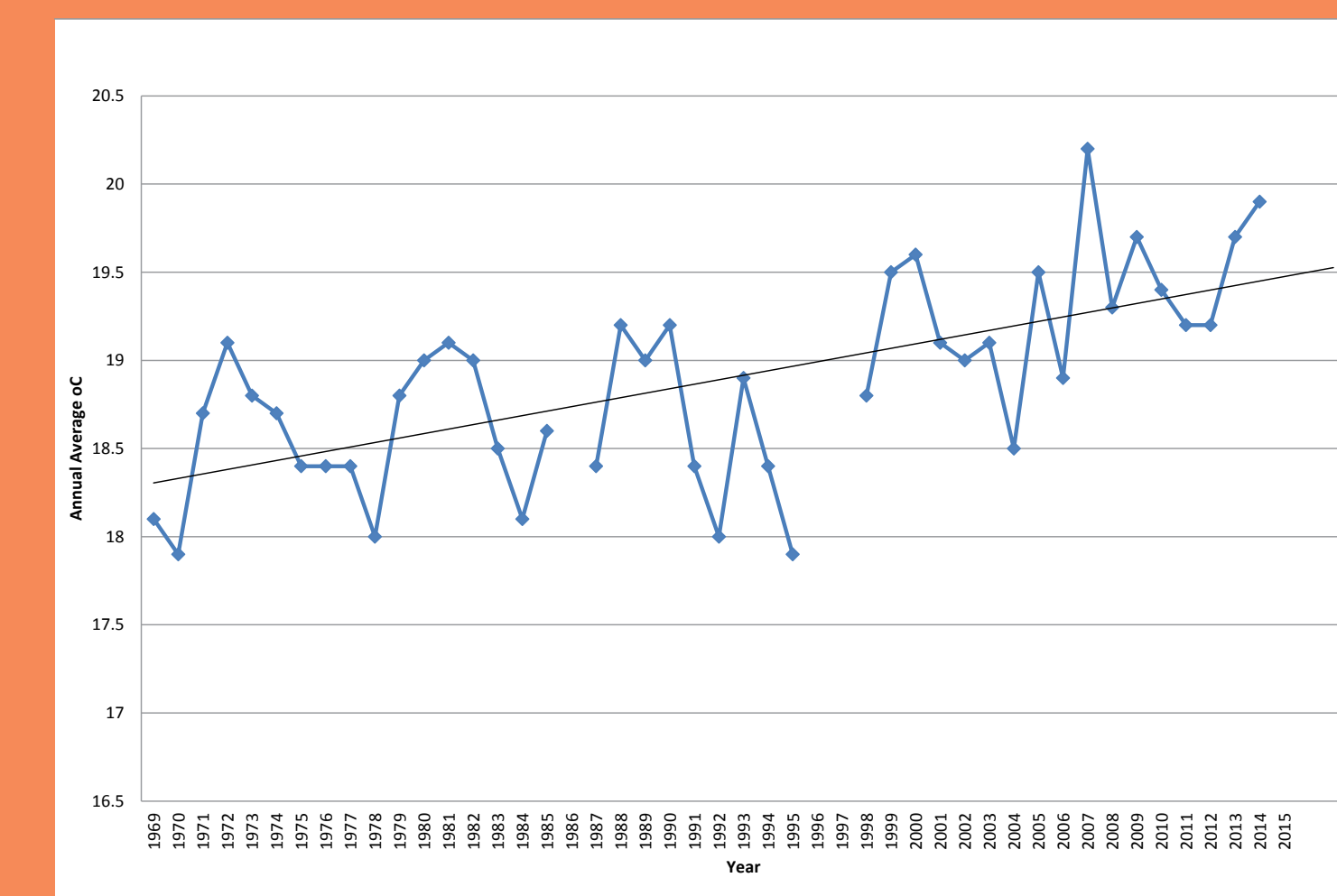
- Understanding the weather and climate
- A summer series of workshops and farm visits exploring horticulture in a changing climate
- Resilient soils for climate adaptation
- Resilient and productive pastures
- Energy efficiency and alternate energy sources, including biogas
- Visiting farms and learning from innovative food producers
- Animal and farmer health
- Risk management skills
- Effective product marketing—valuing adding can lead to a resilient business

We aim to provide workshops and farm visits to support the needs of our food producers. The best way to find out what's happening is to register on the Sustainability Gippsland web site. By adding our group to your profile you will be notified by email whenever a new workshop or event is happening. We also post all our activities on our twitter account and on the Shire of both South Gippsland and Bass Coast web pages. The project also maintains a mailing list so contact us to be added to the list.

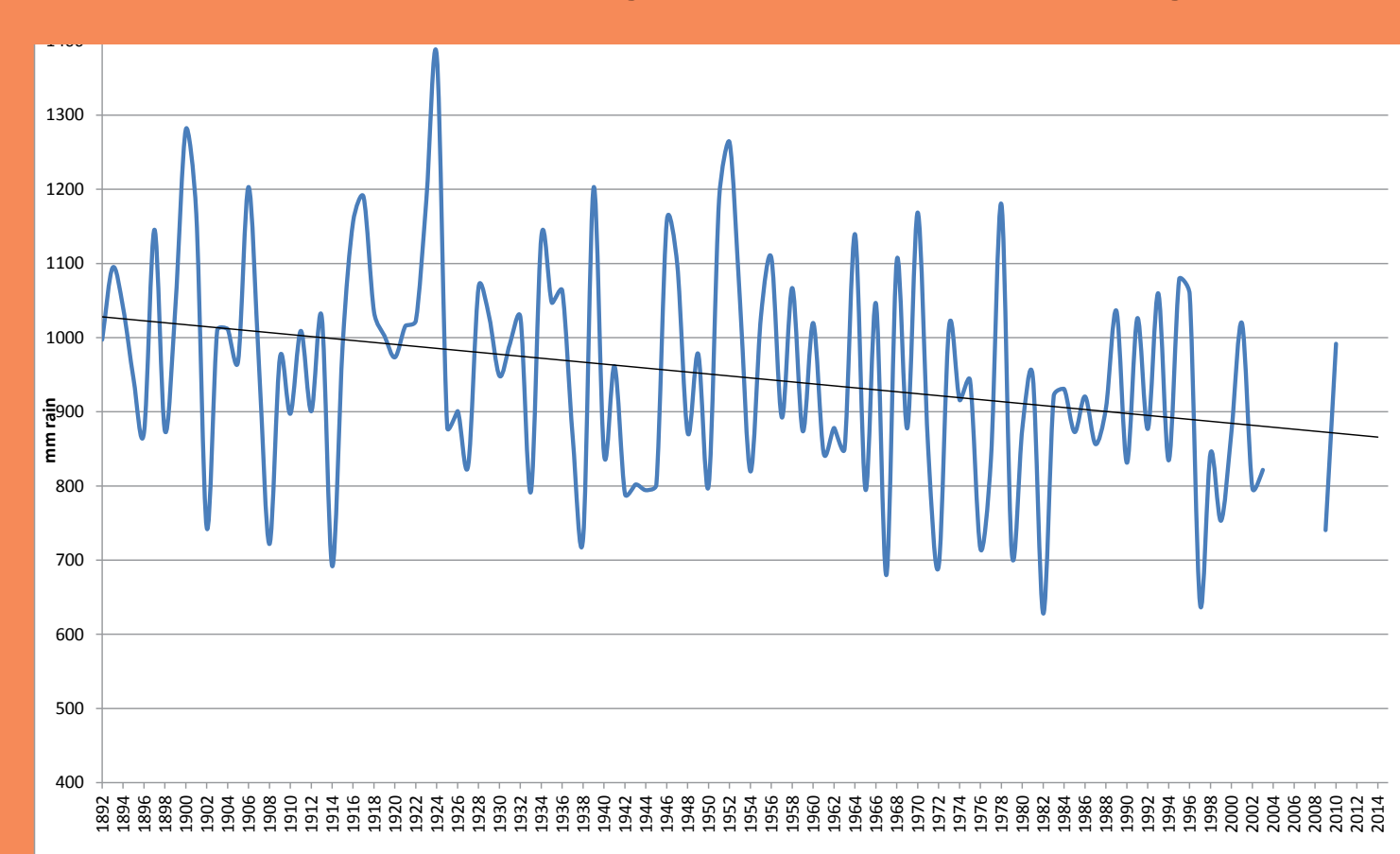


Climate Change? Resilience?

The graph of average temperatures measured at Wonthaggi by the Bureau of Meteorology shows that on average, we have warmed approx 1 degree celcius.



Why does this matter? Afterall there are plenty of warmer places in Australia that grow food. We have developed farming systems that are highly intensive and that rely on high rainfall. As you can see this from this graph of total rainfall in Leongatha since 1892 this is falling. So we are looking at a



hotter drier climate, with greater extremes of daily temperatures and rainfall events. Anecdotal evidence is for a less reliable 'Autumn break' which can see us face winter grazing with little grass. As we saw from our workshop on fruit growing in a changing climate this can have some real impact on how plants perform. Mark Brammer explained how apple flowering dates were getting earlier, and that winter chill days were getting less.

Farmers are resilient people, they have been coping with variations in climate for ever. However now, with climate change making weather so unreliable and other parts of Australia facing even greater challenges (which affects our markets - cattle can be hard to sell when there is no grass in Queensland) they need all the help they can get.

We aim to explore the possibilities and help with knowledge and skills to inform decision making. Our workshops and forums will educate but more; will introduce local producers to others who have navigated change and inovated practice to provide mentoring and inspiration. Our aim is that on this journey you are not alone.

Project Goals

At the end of the project South Gippsland & Bass Coast Shire food producers will be better prepared, confident and sufficiently diverse so that they can cooperatively prosper through climatic changes both financially and socially.

- This means that they have a business plan that may include planning for:
- physically reducing impacts of climate change, such as wind breaks, shelter belts, healthier water retaining soil, improved land/water design and management.
 - creating diverse markets for products, such as value adding processes, more direct markets for greater profit margins.
 - sharing resources and knowledge, such as local food cooperatives for value adding or slaughter or packing as well as local suppliers with climate adaptation knowledge.
 - Diversification of products and or business partners, such as new horticultural enterprises, land sharing/ community supported agriculture and/or agri/eco-tourism opportunities.



Follow us on Twitter @agclimateadapt

Southern Gippsland Climate Resilience Project

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Council web page: www.tinyurl.com/agclimateadapt

Sustainability Gippsland page:

<http://www.sustainabilitygippsland.com> and find our group

