

5<sup>th</sup> June, 2008

## RECYCLED ORGANICS PROJECT LAUNCH

Member for South Barwon, Michael Crutchfield, launched a recycled organics project at the Geelong Winegrowers Association seminar held at Deakin University Waurin Ponds Estate Winery.

This project, managed by the Barwon Regional Waste Management Group and funded by Sustainability Victoria, is trialing the use of recycled organic mulch on Landcare plantings on degraded and unstable soils.

Geelong is one of the states leading municipalities in terms of kerbside waste diversion. But equally important to placing recyclables and greenwaste in the correct bins is the need to close the loop and ensure these materials are recycled into quality products. The reprocessing of greenwaste into recycled organic mulches and composts is a growing industry that now has new standards for certification that ensure quality products are entering the marketplace.

With this quality assurance, farmers can source and utilize quality recycled organic mulches and composts, resulting in many benefits including weed minimisation, water conservation, soil conditioning, and increased survival and growth rates.

This project is coordinating five Landcare plantings across the region, applying recycled organic mulch to portions of the plantings. The purpose of the project is to stimulate a market for recycled organic products within the farming community through providing opportunities for direct experience in the benefits these products provide.

Three trial plots have been mulched and planted over the past year, and two more plots are planned for this year's Autumn Landcare plantings. Following the completion of the project a series of field trips will be run showcasing the plots and providing farmers with an opportunity to see benefits of the mulch.



Regional Education Officer Amy O'Brien, Member for South Barwon Michael Crutchfield and Grape Industry Development Officer Kieran Murphy (photo courtesy of the Geelong Advertiser)