



## Info Sheet: Biochar

***“Biochar may represent the single most important initiative for humanity’s environmental and agricultural future.” - Dr Tim Flannery***

Biochar is a special form of charcoal made from burning waste organic matter in a low oxygen environment.

As a soil additive, biochar offers numerous benefits. It increases the capacity for soil to hold water, microbes and nutrients; greatly reduces emissions of greenhouse gases; enhances crop yields; and captures and stores carbon for the long term. Also the energy produced can be used for heating or cooking.



Biochar is based on *terra preta* of the Amazon, an amazingly rich black soil made over thousands of years.

Evidence of some form of biochar making has been found in most cultures and countries.



The small TLUD (top lit up draft) stove is suitable for household biochar production and is used in developing countries for cooking. It reduces fuel use by about 75% and produces less air pollution than traditional 3 stone wood fire stoves. Also it can use waste material and is carbon neutral, or carbon negative if the biochar is added to the soil.

There is a lot of work being done to develop farm and regional scale biochar burners to use waste products and sequester carbon. Some work has also been done by Landcare to manage willow and other weed waste closer to the removal site.

For your home garden, you can buy a biochar stove or burner, make your own, or purchase biochar to add to your soil. Generally biochar you buy has been pre-conditioned with nutrients and/or microbes to make it easier for people with little experience to use it effectively.

*If you want more information or would like to see a demonstration  
please contact Kyneton Transition Hub  
- [KynetonTH@gmail.com](mailto:KynetonTH@gmail.com) or [www.kynetontransitionhub.com](http://www.kynetontransitionhub.com) -  
or phone Julie on 5422 3023.*