



In this issue:

Market Reports	2
Market Report From California	4
Golden Dodder Breakthrough	5
Cleaning Shed Report	6
GMO-Contamination	7
The King Of Fodder!	8
RFCSSA	9
Drought Assistance	9
Australian Seeds Authority	10
In-Field Lucerne Seed Fertiliser Trial	11
Centre Pivot Variety Yield Trial	12
Managing Carbon In Lucerne/ Livestock Systems	13
Grower Members 2011-2012	14

SEED WASP MANAGEMENT PLAN IS LAUNCHED

By Nicola Raymond, Executive Officer

THIS PLAN HAS ALSO BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO OVER 30 AGRONOMISTS BASED IN THE MID AND UPPER SOUTH-EAST SOUTH AUSTRALIA. PLEASE REVIEW THIS PLAN CLOSELY AND WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH YOUR AGRONOMIST OR CONSULTANT DURING CRITICAL TIMES. THIS SEED WASP MANAGEMENT PLAN IS AN EXAMPLE OF YOUR LEVY FUNDS AT WORK

Lucerne seed crops have been hit with an explosion of seed wasp during the 2012 harvest, resulting in harvest yields to be down between 30-80 per cent in some areas of the district. This has had dire consequences for growers who have also suffered low prices post-GFC (2009-10) and a cooler, moist summer reducing yields by as much as 80 per cent in 2011.

To tackle this industry issue, Lucerne Australia has worked closely with agronomists and service providers in the past few weeks to develop strategies to reduce risk of reinfestation.

As a result, we enclose a newly launched seed wasp management plan to help deal with the issue. This plan has also been distributed to over 30 agronomists based in the mid and upper south-east South Australia and western Victoria.

We recommend a whole-of-industry approach to tackling this pest. Please review this plan closely and work in partnership with your agronomist or consultant during critical times.

This seed wasp management plan is an example of your levy funds at work. Being a member of Lucerne Australia is to be part of a solution-based and proactive group which has a focus on industry issues.



Rabobank

THE WORLD'S LEADING
SPECIALIST IN FOOD
AND AGRIBUSINESS
BANKING



GOOD PEOPLE TO KNOW



SEED GENETICS INTERNATIONAL MARKET REPORT

By Mark Harvey

E: mharvey@sgiseeds.com, Ph: 08 8271 6000

138 Greenhill Road, Unley, Adelaide SA



With deliveries now complete, it has become obvious what a disappointing year this has been once again. As I write this report, across about 40 per cent of growers seed cleaned so far the average is 260kg cleaned dryland and irrigated fields. (This is weighted to dry fields because of earlier receivals and cleaning). Surprisingly, germinations and overall quality is good, although cleanouts have been high at around 18 per cent so far but could change as cleaning continues.

We do not believe the early sales will beat the best prices. So, in line with our orderly marketing policy, our strategy so far has been to hold pricing of seed other than for limited immediate

shipments to regular clients until the supply and market is better known. This should help raise prices for SGI growers and the overall market. We will then be setting pricing and shipping to match our buyer's needs throughout the year as this should give the best returns to the pools possible. We expect the final returns to be better than our budget estimate given earlier in the year.

Premiums will be paid again this year on seed meeting SGI 90 quality and seconds and low quality re-run proceeds will be distributed.

We also expect the shortages this year will have a positive effect on prices and demand for next year.

To meet the ongoing SGI market needs, we are offering extra production to growers. The SGI varieties once again topped the LA seed yield trial and SuperSonic, SuperStar and SuperNova have been 40-60 per cent higher than Siriver in the SGI trials at Bungalally farms over the last three years.

SGI certified fields about to expire the six harvest rule that meet the eligibility criteria can be extended to 10 years

Please feel free to contact Peter Gibbs or myself to discuss any points.

SEEDMARK MARKET REPORT

By Craig Myall, General Manager, Seed Technology & Marketing Pty Ltd

E: c.myall@seedmark.com.au, Ph: 08 8234 9333

Level 1, 145 South Terrace, Adelaide



better seeds, better choices

Currently we are seeing strong enquiry levels for lucerne seed in the Middle East and expect this to continue for the near future. The dairy industry is maintaining its strength in this region, driving more lucerne plantings. And off the back of the development work undertaken with our proprietary products, we are seeing excellent uptake and demand for our new varieties Alfamaster 9, Alfamaster 10 and Pegasis.

The current carry over levels of lucerne in Saudi Arabia appear to be well short for their planting requirements for upcoming season.

Prices in the market, which are historically strong, are still being depressed by some cheap sellers, which are causing some missed opportunities to raise pricing levels for all.

There are reports that seed from US based suppliers are currently attracting a 10-25 per cent premium rate above Siriver. However, this could start to change as supply starts to decrease. The supply of lucerne seed from California is much lower than previous years as their 2011 harvest was almost 25 per cent down on their previous year's tonnage and well down on their historical average.

On the flip side, the high pricing of the current marketplace is greatly reducing the desire for South America and Europe to purchase seed and we will all need to be mindful that these markets are very important to a sustainable industry.

Seedmark also remain on the lookout for new production areas in 2012 for both its own PBR and FGI varieties and have industry leading payment terms on offer, please contact Craig Myall or Colin Grant with any interest you may have.



PGG WRIGHTSON SEEDS MARKET REPORT



*By Travis Munday, International Trading Manager - Australia
E: tmunday@pggwsa.com.au, Mob: 0408 838 687
Address: 4 Bunker Road, Keith, SA*

This season has again thrown the Industry some challenges; on the back of a lot of negatives it is always hard to find the positives.

To take a positive out of the harvest, we have seen relatively high prices in the market again for a consecutive year. The objective of the industry should be to make sure we keep a low carryover next year to give the industry a chance to start on firm forward prices leading into next season of which the customers are getting more accustomed to.

Taking into account the loss of yields this season, we still have more seed around than we seen last season. Historically high prices kept some traditional markets quiet, current prices will mean that some of these markets may purchase limited seed again this season.

Argentina has had a reasonable local harvest and currently the uncertified market is slow moving internationally at current market prices. Middle East has demand for Siriver and the US is just getting geared up with forward sales which may slow this market for us. The domestic market has been very strong on Aurora, Sequel and Trifecta but has also been hard to capitalise on as the market was starting to quite when the bulk of the seed test started coming through.

I have just spent an interesting week in California visiting the main production areas. In particular the Imperial Valley, where I found of great interest that the area is prone to Chalcid Fly – what they believe is similar to the lucerne wasp we experienced in the Keith district this season. There may be much to learn from some of the companies and seed growers in that district on the indicators, factors and crop management to control this pest.

Whilst the visit was too early to gauge their full crop potential, it is quite clear that the seed producing areas in California are coming under immense pressure from food/vegetable crops. Their certified area is still declining, hay prices remaining stable and grower pricing is rising due to the basis of better margins to be made out vegetables and almonds.

Think openly about your market options this year. Feel free to talk to PGG. Just because we have had another low harvest does not mean all seed will sell at record prices. Even last year on the back of the worst crop on record the market was left with limited options for seed sales come October.



WE'RE CONTRACTING GROWERS FOR LUCERNE SEED PRODUCTION

PGG Wrightson Seeds Australia is offering stable and lucrative contracts for Lucerne seed production. Six year contracts are on offer for both domestic and export varieties with agronomic support for the duration of the contract if required.

All our Lucerne contracts offer:

- Multi-year pricing agreements
- Guaranteed minimum price per kilogram
- No minimum tonnage limits
- Full range of dormancies to suit your needs
- Varieties suitable for high quality hay production or grazing types for lamb finishing

**To find out more call 08 8755 1777 or
Anthony Quilter - Lead Production Agronomist
on 0427 572 125**

GROW WITH US



MARKET REPORT FROM CALIFORNIA

By Glen Bornt, Imperial Valley Milling Company, California

California farmers have started to clip back their alfalfa fields for seed production. The first 100-degree day of the season arrived on schedule in the first few days of May. The warmer weather encourages the formation of the buds and a uniform flower burst and seed set. We hope to set seed in 45 days from bloom and harvest 14-21 days later. The warm weather with a fast set limits the ability of Chalcid Fly (lucerne wasp) to multiply and cause damage to the seed.

DEMAND FOR ALFALFA SEED FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION AND EXPORT REMAINS STRONG THE DRAW-DOWN OF INVENTORIES WAS MUCH DEEPER THAN EXPECTED AS A RESULT OF THE DISAPPOINTING CROP IN AUSTRALIA

Demand for alfalfa seed for domestic consumption and export remains strong. The movement of 2011 crop seed was strong and the draw-down of inventories was much deeper than expected as a result of the disappointing crop in Australia. Given slim inventories, work is underway to sell our growers on making an alfalfa seed crop in 2012.

Farmers still have two weeks to decide on turning hay fields to seed for the VNS (variety not stated) market.

THE BIGGEST INFLUENCE ON THE 2011 US SEED CROP WAS THE EXCEPTIONALLY HIGH HAY PRICE AT \$US250.00/ST

The biggest influence on the 2011 US seed crop was the exceptionally high hay price at \$US250.00/ST. This year hay prices have slipped to the \$US210.00/ST level for premium spring hay. This could push farmers away from hay and into seed production.

These factors suggest that an increase of VNS seed production is very likely in the 2012 crop year. There will be a small reduction in Cert Cuf 101 acres, but an increase of proprietary varieties, so certified acres will be static in California this year. If the weather continues to be favourable our yields should be above average.

Higher production should not be a burden on the seed price this year. The global shortfall of non-dormant alfalfa seed should keep prices elevated throughout the selling season. If the weather cooperates, we look forward to another good production and sales

cycle in 2012/2013 as the sales will almost surely be there if crop is made and yields are respectable.

Finally, I enjoyed visiting the Lucerne Australia variety trial site field day near Keith on Thursday, 1 March 2012 and meeting members, even though Shane put me in the spotlight!

THE GLOBAL SHORTFALL OF NON-DORMANT ALFALFA SEED SHOULD KEEP PRICES ELEVATED THROUGHOUT THE SELLING SEASON

Note: Glen Bornt currently owns and operates Imperial Valley Milling Company with an international marketing program directed by Fred Fabre. The company has a warehouse of 25,000 Sq. Ft. and mil which is 10,000 Sq. Ft, vertical tank storage for four million pounds of alfalfa seed, open covered storage, container loading ramps, operation yards and truck parking areas. Imperial Valley Milling Company is an associate member of Lucerne Australia.



GOLDEN DODDER BREAKTHROUGH

By Shane Oster, Chairman

As many of you are aware, Lucerne Australia has been working with Dr John Heap from SARDI on a project to assist in the early detection of Golden Dodder.

THIS RIRDC FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECT HAS SEEN THE SUCCESSFUL DEVELOPMENT OF A DNA-BASED TEST WHICH CAN SUCCESSFULLY DETECT DODDER IN SEED SAMPLES

This RIRDC funded research project has seen the successful development of a DNA-based test which can successfully detect dodder in seed samples.

The test is in fact so sensitive that it has been successful (under laboratory conditions) at detecting dodder in dust collected from headers that have harvested in dodder infested fields.

This research has the potential to aid in early detection of dodder and assist in developing superior sanitary practices for headers.

The test will now undergo further commercial evaluation to see where it best fits into the production chain to achieve ease of sampling and early detection. The Natural Resource Management Board (NRM) has been very supportive of this process and is keen to look into options to assist Lucerne Australia in further trialling of the test.

The research was also able to develop a test for perennial thistle. Along with current tests which currently exist, there is a possibility to test for golden dodder, perennial thistle, branched broomrape, stem nematode and bacterial wilt all in one test. If industry sees this as an advantage, many of our phytosanitary requirements could be ticked off in one simple test.

THIS RESEARCH HAS THE POTENTIAL TO AID IN EARLY DETECTION OF DODDER AND ASSIST IN DEVELOPING SUPERIOR SANITARY PRACTICES FOR HEADERS

Many possibilities occur from this fantastic research. It is now up to industry to determine the best commercial 'fit' going forward. Lucerne Australia will liaise with industry further and endeavour to conduct an initial pilot study to trial the commercial viability of the test before industry decides the best course of action.

LUCERNE AUSTRALIA WILL LIAISE WITH INDUSTRY FURTHER AND ENDEAVOUR TO CONDUCT AN INITIAL PILOT STUDY TO TRIAL THE COMMERCIAL VIABILITY OF THE TEST BEFORE INDUSTRY DECIDES THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION

If you are in a low risk category for dodder and would like to volunteer to be a part of the pilot study, which will simply involve collecting some dust from your header after harvesting each paddock and collecting some seed upon delivery, please contact Nicola as soon as possible on 0439 538 332.



Photos are courtesy of executive committee member Mark Kester following his 2011 trip to the USA.



CLEANING SHED REPORT

By **Brett Wegener**,
Executive Committee Member and Kongal Seeds Proprietor



As I write this article, the lucerne cleaning season is drawing to a close which is a little earlier than previous years (every season we seem to experience different challenges).

A PROMISING SEASON WAS UNFOLDING WITH LOW CLEANOUT FIGURES AND HIGH GERM FROM GOOD GOLDEN SEED

The lucerne season kicked-off with good yields and high-quality seed being delivered, with the first deliveries being received a few weeks earlier than usual. A promising season was unfolding with low cleanout figures and high germ from good golden seed.

About a third of the way into processing, we started seeing a lot

more brown seed with clean-out losses rising significantly. At that point, it was believed that rain was unlikely to have caused the problem.

REGULAR SHUTDOWNS WERE NEEDED TO CLEAN, SCRAPE AND PRESSURE CLEAN EQUIPMENT TO REMOVE THE BUILD-UP AND MAINTAIN CLEANING EFFICIENCY

Not long after the higher cleanout figures became evident, we realised we had an unexpected issue not previously seen to this extent. The lucerne seed wasp and larvae in deliveries created a sticky residue which built up inside of the processing machines.

Regular shutdowns were needed to clean, scrape and pressure clean equipment to remove the build-up and maintain cleaning efficiency.

Shutdowns were sometimes occurring on a daily basis. The build-up was affecting all parts of the cleaning process, including screens, chutes and indent cylinders.

The amount of drying required was similar to past seasons.

The later harvested crops were generally higher in moisture with average moisture content 15.1 per cent. Several lots were in excess of 20 per cent and the drying lot sizes averaged 5.45 tonnes.

THE LATER HARVESTED CROPS WERE GENERALLY HIGHER IN MOISTURE WITH AVERAGE MOISTURE CONTENT 15.1 PER CENT

Due to very little carryover of seed from last season, both domestic and export dispatches have started well.

DUE TO VERY LITTLE CARRYOVER OF SEED FROM LAST SEASON, BOTH DOMESTIC AND EXPORT DISPATCHES HAVE STARTED WELL

Our spiral separators are being used increasingly each year. Lucerne containing wild turnip seed is on the increase. In the separation of turnip from the lucerne seed, this is a very slow but effective process with minimal loss occurring.



GMO-CONTAMINATION – IMPORTED LUCERNE SEED RISK

By Nicola Raymond, Executive Officer

As the peak industry body for the Australian lucerne seed industry, Lucerne Australia believes it necessary to remind members about a small risk with imported lucerne seed into South Australia.

Australian lucerne seed, and in particular South Australian lucerne seed, is currently exported with a Genetically Modified Organism (GMO)-free status to our major markets across the world. South Australia currently has a moratorium on all genetically modified plant materials.

Almost all of our major markets require lucerne seed which is non-GMO.

There is a small risk that some planting seed supplied to growers in South Australia may not have been tested for the presence of GMO material.

Lucerne Australia has contacted and spoken to the three major US seed exporters Forage Genetics International, Dairyland and Cal/West. All have confirmed that they test seed exported to Australia for the presence of GMO material and will continue to do so.

However, the potential still may exist for GMO (Roundup Ready Lucerne) to contaminate non-GMO lines of basic and pre-basic lines of lucerne being sent to Australia.

Any grower members considering new seed areas this year should be aware of country of origin of the seed supplied.

A very sensitive test is available to test for contamination and costs approximately \$500.00. The procedure is relatively straightforward. For example, New Zealand currently conducts this test for all imported seed.

ALMOST ALL OF OUR MAJOR
MARKETS REQUIRE LUCERNE
SEED WHICH IS NON-GMO

Lucerne Australia recommends growers test (or seek written proof) that seed supplied, especially if it is coming from the USA, is GMO-free. This will protect you and the company from legal consequences should GMO-contaminated lucerne be detected in SA, particularly from export product.

We are currently working with the Australian Seeds Federation on risk management and testing regimes for use by industry in the future. However, in the meantime please consider taking sensible precautions such as testing and please encourage others to do likewise.

LUCERNE AUSTRALIA
RECOMMENDS GROWERS
TEST (OR SEEK WRITTEN
PROOF) THAT SEED SUPPLIED,
ESPECIALLY IF IT IS COMING
FROM THE USA, IS GMO-FREE

For more information about this issue or the particulars on testing lucerne supplied to you please contact our 'industry issues' portfolio executive committee members Guy Cunningham (0429 875 422) or Brett Wegener (0408 859 617).

“EVERYTHING WILL BE OK IN THE END.
IF IT'S NOT OK, IT'S NOT THE END.”
- JOHN LENNON -



THE KING OF FODDER!

**By Nick McClelland, Industry Development Manager
Australian Fodder Industry Association Ltd**

The production season for lucerne hay is now well and truly over. However, it has been a year that has been extremely rewarding for some lucerne hay producers and extremely difficult for others.

CHAFFING HAY PRICES RANGE
FROM \$280.00-\$320.00/
TONNE EX-FARM

Nationally, the demand for lucerne hay is quite high. However, there are particular hotspots around the country where supply and demand factors are increasing prices.

In the NSW central west, lucerne growers were optimistic of a good season in 2011/2012 with more moisture in the soil and access to irrigation water that was not available during the drought. NSW chaff processors are finding it challenging to source enough volume of the high quality hay they require for equine markets and are forced to look further afield to keep up with demand. Chaffing hay prices range from \$280.00-\$320.00/tonne ex-farm.

It has been estimated that flooding along the Lachlan River has taken two cuts out of the season which equates to approximately 40 per cent of the annual production. Although the amount of premium quality hay is limited, there appears to be good supplies of bleached hay with good test results for the dairy industry. Central west dairies

are buying at levels of around \$180.00-\$210.00/tonne ex-farm for good quality milking hay. Weather damaged lucerne is typically attracting a \$50.00/tonne discount.

Extremely strong demand is occurring from both south-west Victoria and south-east South Australia. These dairy regions experienced a tight spring, with August to January rainfall in the 1-3 decile range.

EXTREMELY STRONG DEMAND
IS OCCURRING FROM BOTH
SOUTH-WEST VICTORIA
AND SOUTH-EAST SOUTH
AUSTRALIA

As a consequence, lucerne is being sourced from northern Victoria and local South Australian growers and some are now considering purchasing from NSW as supplies diminish. Often, southern dairies have access to vetch from the Wimmera and Mallee as alternative protein hay. However, with reduced vetch sowings in 2011 the amount of vetch hay available is extremely limited. Most lucerne hay is being delivered into southern dairies in Victoria and South Australia at around \$240.00-290.00/tonne. Now, the conditions are colder on these regions and pasture growth is slow. It is anticipated that the demand for lucerne will be there for some time yet.

MOST LUCERNE HAY IS BEING
DELIVERED INTO SOUTHERN
DAIRIES IN VICTORIA AND
SOUTH AUSTRALIA AT
AROUND \$240.00-290.00/
TONNEWELL

Also, exciting for lucerne growers is the opening up of export markets for lucerne hay. With a severe drought in the US combined with an extremely strong domestic market, tonnages of US alfalfa for Japanese importers are low and prices are too expensive. As a result, Japan is now importing Australian lucerne hay for the first time. Typically, there is not the continuity of supply of Australian lucerne and our prices are not competitive against US exporters. The big challenge in producing lucerne for export is maintaining the quality. In particular, leaf content when the hay has to be dried to 12-14 per cent moisture to prevent sweating in containers while in transit.

Across the board, most lucerne growers appear happy with the production season and maintain their commitment to the King of Fodder. Long live the King!

JAPAN IS NOW IMPORTING
AUSTRALIAN LUCERNE HAY
FOR THE FIRST TIME



RURAL FINANCIAL COUNSELLING SERVICE SA

By Andrew Wilson, Operations Manager

Rural Financial Counselling Service SA (a division of Rural Business Support Service Inc.) is a free, confidential and independent service working to support primary producers and small rural businesses who are suffering financial hardship.

FOLLOWING THE INVASION OF LUCERNE SEED WASP ON TOP OF A FEW CHALLENGING SEASONS IN THE MAJOR LUCERNE GROWING REGIONS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA, RFCSSA HAS MADE TWO EXPERIENCED RURAL FINANCIAL COUNSELLORS AVAILABLE

Following the invasion of lucerne seed wasp on top of a few challenging seasons in the major lucerne growing regions of South Australia, RFCSSA has made two experienced rural financial counsellors available to work with growers. A rural financial counsellor can

meet with you on farm or at one of our regional offices.

Rural financial counsellors work with you to analyse your current business position and then help you assess a variety of options for the future. Throughout the process, you remain in control and make the decisions – with support and information from the rural financial counsellor.

Rural financial counsellors use the farm planning program “Plan to Profit”, a five year business planning tool which assists farmers to better understand the health of their farm business and to make informed decisions. The program enables businesses to maximise their financial success and to develop strategies to improve the performance of the business. Important business decisions, such as responding to a low production year, purchasing more land or equipment, or changing enterprise mixes can be made with more confidence with “Plan to Profit”.

Rural financial counsellors can also assist in identifying areas of risk in your farm business, preparing cash flow budgets and business plans, identifying government assistance for which you may be eligible or preparing you for a visit to a succession planner.

RURAL FINANCIAL COUNSELLORS WORK WITH YOU TO ANALYSE YOUR CURRENT BUSINESS POSITION

If reduced production of your lucerne crop has affected your business – please contact:

Charlie Goode - Naracoorte
Mobile: 0417 816 826
Email: charlie.goode@rfcssa.org.au

Grant Crettenden - Murray Bridge
Mobile: 0417 849 705
Email: grant.crettenden@rfcssa.org.au

Or Freecall: 1800 836 211



DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Transitional Farm Family Payment — extension

RECENTLY ANNOUNCED IN THE FEDERAL BUDGET IS THE EXTENSION OF THE TRANSITIONAL FAMILY FARM PAYMENT.

This program provides eligible farm families experiencing hardship with up to 12 months of income support payments equivalent to the Newstart Allowance. Eligibility criteria for assistance includes a similar income test to the Newstart Allowance and a limit on the net value of assets of \$1.5 million. Information on the Transitional Farm Family Payment program is available from the Department of Human Services website or by phoning the Farmers Assistance Line on 1800 050 585.



L-R: Grant Crettenden and Charlie Goode from RFCSSA.

AUSTRALIAN SEEDS AUTHORITY

Areas Registered In Australia for Certification Under Oecd, Aosca And Australian Seed Certification Schemes – 2007-2012



AUSTRALIAN SEEDS AUTHORITY LTD.

Areas from 2007 to 2009 were compiled by Australian Seeds Authority Ltd from data provided by Seed Services Australia, AsureQuality Australia Ltd, AGWEST Plant Laboratories and QSEED Pty Ltd.

Areas from 2010 were compiled from data provided by Seed Services Australia, AsureQuality Australia Ltd, and AGWEST Plant Laboratories. Registered areas of *Gossypium* spp (Cotton) are not included in the data. Please note that not all areas registered proceed to harvest and final certification due to seasonal conditions.

Medicago sativa

Lucerne

Aurora
CUF 101
Hunterfield
Hunter River
Sequel
Siriver
Trifecta
Proprietary Varieties

Final Area 31 Jan 2008 (ha)	Final Area 16 Feb 2009 (ha)	Final Area 12 Feb 2010 (ha)	Final Area 15 Feb 2011 (ha)	Final Area 15 Feb 2012 (ha)
1377	736	732	602	409
61	54	80	45	27
177	168	77	66	75
641	625	334	295	170
517	331	251	492	287
2897	3112	2215	2688	2411
162	95	95	53	24
14876	20660	19194	21400	16746
(20,705)	(25,781)	(22,978)	(25,641)	(20,149)

(Total Lucerne)



Meet Daniel. He's a good person to know for insurance.

Daniel is your local WFI Area Manager. He's a local just like you, so he finds it easier to understand your farm, business and strata issues. Daniel is able to assist you from your first enquiry right through to making a claim. That's just one of the reasons why WFI, part of Wesfarmers Insurance, is a leading Australian farm, business and strata insurance company.

So for friendly, personal service, call Daniel today.

Daniel Menzel | WFI Bordertown | 35 Dukes Highway
Phone 8752 0822 | Mobile 0427 097 587
wfi.com.au

Good people to know.



WFI (ABN 24 000 036 279 AFSL 241461) is the issuer of our policies. Contact WFI for a PDS to help decide if our products are right for you.

IN-FIELD LUCERNE SEED FERTILISER TRIAL UPDATE

By Nicola Raymond, Executive Officer

The RIRDC-funded fertiliser trial is progressing well. As a reminder, this project will provide a clear picture on which type of fertilisers will deliver the maximum seed yield benefits for lucerne seed growers.

Soil and plant tissue analysis were conducted in December 2011 for all plots to assess the uniformity of the trial sites and to determine a benchmark for the monitoring of nutrient shifts during the duration of the trial.

their products. These companies have since supplied the products required for the duration of the trial with the exception of biological and degradable products which will be supplied prior to each application.

TO ACCOMMODATE THE ARRAY OF TREATMENTS IN THE TRIAL, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT AN ADDITIONAL APPLICATION TIMING WILL BE REQUIRED

Application timings will be in autumn, early spring and late spring.

The sites have had permanent ground level markers installed to allow plots to be accurately identified without interfering with operations. The first autumn application was applied on 27 April following good opening rains so the trial is well underway!

We thank Scott Campbell, Brecon Proprietors for use of the trial sites, Peracto SA as the Project Manager and RIRDC for their valuable, ongoing support.

FROM THE RECOMMENDATIONS PROVIDED BY THE COLLABORATING COMPANIES, TREATMENT LISTS WERE FORMULATED

From the recommendations provided by the collaborating companies, treatment lists were formulated. Different treatment lists have been compiled for the irrigated and dryland sites to compensate for differences in soil nutrient status, and different potential yields. To accommodate the array of treatments in the trial, it has been determined that an additional application timing will be required.

THE FIRST AUTUMN APPLICATION WAS APPLIED ON 27 APRIL FOLLOWING GOOD OPENING RAINS SO THE TRIAL IS WELL UNDERWAY

Fertiliser supply companies participating in the trial were provided with these analyses to determine formulations and application rates of



Trailer with chicken compost, manure and pig manure



Plot identification tags



All images are courtesy of Peracto SA.

Project Manager Neil Wittwer applying one of the liquid biological products

CENTRE PIVOT VARIETY YIELD TRIAL UPDATE

By Adam Desmazures, Executive Committee Member

In this, the second production year of the Centre Pivot Yield Trial, the results are much more encouraging. As stated in the March edition of the Lucerne Leader, the favourable weather conditions throughout the summer period ensured a good pod set and this provided good yield data.

Within a trial each plot is harvested individually and the yield data is recorded. Then the yield data from each individual variety is added together and averaged. The coefficient of variation (CV%) is the difference between the three different plots of the one variety.

Now that we all understand how a trial site works, we hope you'll be eager to attend our field days!

The trial committee is very pleased with the way the trial has continued to progress since last season's poor seed results and we look forward to working with Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC), growers, marketers and industry over the life of the trial.

ALL MEMBERS HAVE RECEIVED THESE RESULTS, BUT "DO WE UNDERSTAND WHAT THE RESULTS MEAN?"

All members have received these results, but "do we understand what the results mean?"

The purpose of this report is to assist members in developing a greater understanding of a trial site and its results.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT IS TO ASSIST MEMBERS IN DEVELOPING A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF A TRIAL SITE AND ITS RESULTS

Firstly, a trial site is configured (as pictured below) through the use of a computer program that randomly allocates each trial plot:

Each letter above represents a different variety of lucerne. So, in the above 'trial' there are six different varieties of lucerne being grown with each variety being replicated (grown) three times. This replication is a significant aspect of a trial as it allows for the impact of different soil types to be diminished.

On behalf of Lucerne Australia I would like to thank the trial site committee, Cox Rural and Kinyerrie's manager Joe Sandford for their ongoing support and cooperation throughout this project. We would especially like to thank RIRDC, marketers and industry for their support over the past year and for their continued support into the future.

A	F	D	B	C	E
D	B	C	A	E	F
F	E	B	D	A	C



MANAGING CARBON IN LUCERNE/LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS

Implications for lucerne growers, By Nick Edwards, SARDI Livestock and Farming Systems

A recent computer modelling study by SARDI researcher Dr Nick Edwards has shown that there are options for livestock producers to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) while maintaining or increasing productivity.

GHG emissions from agriculture comprise up to 16 per cent of Australia's total GHG emissions. Of these emissions, 72 per cent come directly from methane burped by ruminant livestock – your sheep and cattle – with the remainder coming from nitrous oxide released from underutilised fertiliser, methane from feedlot and other animal wastes, methane and nitrous oxide from stubble and savanna burning, and methane from rice cultivation.

Although the emerging area of carbon farming, Carbon Farming Initiative, Carbon Offsets, etc look complex (and they are!), the important factor is that there are currently no plans by the Federal Government to put a carbon price on the agricultural GHGs you produce. There may, however be opportunities for you to obtain carbon credits by reducing emissions and/or sequestering carbon on your farms.

GHG EMISSIONS FROM
AGRICULTURE COMPRISE
UP TO 16 PER CENT OF
AUSTRALIA'S TOTAL GHG
EMISSIONS

As part of a project funded by SARDI and the Australian Government's Climate Change Research Program, we investigated GHG emissions and emissions intensity of pasture-fed beef production systems in the South East of South Australia by computer simulation modelling.

Using the SGS Pasture Model, the GHG emissions intensity of self-replacing

beef breeder operations were estimated at 16.3 to 18.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents (CO₂e) per tonne of calf carcase weight produced, mostly from methane. Through adoption of rotational rather than continuous grazing and making full use of the production potential of the animals it was possible to reduce total GHG emissions from breeder operations by about 12 per cent while also increasing total calf carcase weight produced. Simulated trader/finisher cattle systems produced GHG emissions intensities of 10.8-12.8 t CO₂e/t steer carcase weight. Reductions in GHG emissions from these operations were achieved when either growth efficiency of animals was increased (up to 5 per cent reduction) or maintenance efficiency was decreased (up to 4 per cent reduction). When both effects were applied concurrently there was up to a 9 per cent reduction in total GHG emissions intensity.

Thus this modelling data indicates that grazing management and genetic selection for more efficient animals both appear to be viable means for livestock producers to reduce GHG emissions from their enterprises.

So, what are the implications for lucerne?

Although it is a perennial with an extensive root system, it is unlikely that you will be able to use lucerne to sequester carbon and obtain carbon offsets. Firstly, there would need to be strong scientific evidence that this occurs and secondly, you would need to keep this carbon tied up for 100 years to qualify for the offset; a bit difficult if you want to graze your lucerne a bit more often than that!

Rotationally grazing lucerne already produces good livestock production

from your animals and achieves good pasture utilisation, but you could go further by better matching the total nutrition of the diet to that needed by the animal. For example, add more roughage or more energy to better balance the high protein present in lucerne. This should result in better animal growth and your animals should reach target market weights sooner. Your contribution to GHG emissions will also most likely reduce because the animals will be on your farm producing methane for a shorter time period.

I CAN SEE NO EASY WAY AT THE MOMENT THAT THE USE OF LUCERNE ON ITS OWN WILL ALLOW YOU TO OBTAIN CARBON CREDITS. BUT EQUALLY THERE IS NO DOWNSIDE

Again, it is currently unlikely that this would qualify as a carbon offset methodology which is required to earn carbon credits. This is because to earn carbon credits, an activity has to go beyond 'common practice' in an industry or region. However, these management practices are likely to make you more money through the improved productivity.

The bottom line – I can see no easy way at the moment that the use of lucerne on its own will allow you to obtain carbon credits. But equally there is no downside. What you need to do is use lucerne well to match the nutritional requirements of your animals and optimise their growth. This may have side benefits of reduced methane production but at the moment you are unlikely to be able to capture those benefits.



LUCERNE AUSTRALIA GROWER MEMBERS (2011-2012)

Allen	Allens Warrawee Park	Keith	Kuchel	Kuchel, DJ & CE	Bordertown
Altus	Altus, DK & CM 'Moonmera'	Keith	Leach	Leach, PJ & Co	Mundulla
Ashby	Ashby, AD & DC	Tintinara	Lehmann	Lehmann, GE & HJ	Keith
Ashby	Ashby, J & H & Sons	Tintinara	Llewellyn	Llewellyn, DJ & JD	Keith
Croser	Beckersfield Pastoral Company	Keith	Loller	Loller, B & L	Keith
Harvey	Beeamma Pty Ltd & Harvey, MJ	Bordertown	Jones	Lucerne Valley	Keith
Mock	Bellsands	Bordertown	Dawes	Lyntunga Props	Keith
Clark	Bergan Park	Keith	Makin	Makin Nominees	Keith
Seears	Boonderoo Past Co	Lucindale	Manser	Manser, PP & MD	Keith
Campbell	Breon Proprietors	Keith	Thompson	Mardango Props	Keith
Brookman	Brookman, PR & MJ	Keith	Cutten	Maroona Proprietors	Keith
Brown	Brown, DC & DG	Naracoorte	McMurray	McMurray, BJ & CB	Keith
Lutt	Cacia Downs Farming Company	Bordertown	McMurray	McMurray, JA & KA	Keith
Cozens	Charlies Well Trust	Keith	Thomas	McWimay Ptd Ltd	Keith
Connor	Connor Pastoral Company Pty Ltd	Tintinara	Hawkins	MM Hawkins Bippick	Neuarpuurr
Pridham	Corlinga Partners	Bordertown	Munro	Munrose Nominees	Tintinara
Crawford	Crawford, CJ Pty Ltd	Normanville	Hunt	Nalang Pastoral Co	Bordertown
Manser	Creston Partners	Keith	Groth	Narkoona Partners	Keith
Densley	Densley, NB & MR	Keith	Lambert	Newfair Investments	Keith
Barrett	Emu Bay Partners	Keith	Desmazures	Newton Pastoral Pty Ltd	Tintinara
Frith	Frith, NJ	Frances	Obst	Obst, MB & SC	Mundulla
Fry	Fry, AL & JE & Son	Bordertown	Lines	Parraweena Partners	Keith
Johnson	Glendoon Pastoral Co	Binnun	Pearce	Pearce, GJ & AJ	Keith
Gommers	Gommers, DA & JA & Son	Murray Bridge / Keith	Peck	Peck, JR	Keith
Graetz	Graetz S & H	Keith	Pridham	Pridham, RJ, P & A	Frances
Hawkins	Hawkins Boorooopki Farms	Minimay	Richardson	Richardson, AJ & MJ & Son	Keith
Hedges	Hedges, ANM & VJ	Keith	Thorpe	Rillamead Pty Ltd	Meadows
Hilton	Hilton, CJ & KA	Bordertown	Sanders	Sanders, DE & FM	Keith
Hunt	Hunt, DB & JS	Mundulla	Sanders	Sanders, GE & LM	Tintinara
Hunt	Hunt, IK & SA	Keith	Sanders	Sanders, RJ, ED & SN	Tintinara
Lush	Hyfield Pastoral Pty Ltd	Keith	Cook	Scottswell Partners	Keith
Jaeschke	Jaeschke Partners	Keith	Shepherd	Shepherd, JE & Co	Kybybolite
Jesse	Jesse, Cameron	Bordertown	Simpson	Simpson, GE & TM	Keith
Johnson	Johnson, KH & JH	Keith	Koch	Tallageira Pastoral Co P/L	Frances
Crouch	Karwin Nominees	Meningie	Cunningham	Twynem Partners	Keith
Keller	Keller Partners	Tintinara	Vowles	Vowles, B, K & M	Tintinara
Jensen	Kentish Downs	Yankalilla	Wilsdon	Wilsdon, RE & TK	Keith
Kester	Kester, R.J & J	Kybybolite	Zacker	Zacker, AJ & JM	Tintinara
Sandford	Kinyerrie Partners	Keith			

Associate Members/ Bronze Sponsors:

Agri Services SA	Gibbs Agricultural Consulting	Riddoch Insurance Services SA
AJ Cotton & MA McDonald	Heritage Seeds	SA Apiarists Association
Alpha Group Consulting	Imperial Valley Milling Company	Seed Distributors
ANZ	Incitec Pivot	Seed Services Australia
Asure Quality	Jolpac Rural Supplies	Seedmark
Border Ag	Kongal Seeds	Seed Genetics International
Bordertown Pumps and Refrigeration	Landmark Keith	South East Seed Exports
Clovercrest Consulting	Langseeds Rural	Tatiara Seeds
Cox Rural Keith	Lawrie & Co	Teague Australia
Crop Monitoring Services	Naracoorte Ag Services	Vermeeren Bros Manufacturing
Croser Tyre Service	Naracoorte Seeds	Viterra Limited
Elders Keith	National Australia Bank	WFI
Farmers Centre	PGG Wrightson Seeds	Wickham Flower
Forage Genetics International	Pinkerton, Palm, Hamlyn & Steen	Wise Farm Equipment
Frank Fatchen Pty Ltd	Rabobank Australia	Zadow Apiaries

New Members:

Croser Tyre Service

Sponsors:

Rabobank

Gold sponsor of Lucerne Australia



WFI

Gold sponsor of Lucerne Australia



Seed Services

Silver sponsor of Lucerne Australia



LawrieCo

Silver sponsor of Lucerne Australia



Pinkerton, Palm, Hamlyn & Steen

Silver sponsor of Lucerne Australia



Wise Farm Equipment

Silver sponsor of Lucerne Australia



Murray Nankivell

Providing financial advice



PO Box 505,
KEITH SA 5267

Phone: 0439 538 332

Fax: 08 8756 4203

email: info@lucerneaustralia.org.au
www.lucerneaustralia.org.au

ABN: 38 226 068 425



Postage
Paid
Australia

ARE YOUR DETAILS CORRECT?

Name:

Company:

Postal Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email:

Please update any new details and fax to 08 87564203.



LUCERNE
AUSTRALIA

PO Box 505,

KEITH SA 5267

Phone: 0439 538 332

Fax: 08 8756 4203

email: info@lucerneaustralia.org.au

www.lucerneaustralia.org.au

ABN: 38 226 068 425