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LUCERNE AUSTRALIA AND RABOBANK BUSINESS SKILLS DAY

BUSINESS SKILLS DAY ON WEDNESDAY, 22 JUNE FROM 1.30PM-4.30PM AT THE KEITH INSTITUTE

You are invited to attend a Business Skills Day on Wednesday, 22 June from 1.30pm-4.30pm at the Keith Institute. This event is being administered and run in partnership between Lucerne Australia and Rabobank.

The Business Skills Day will provide both Lucerne Australia members and Rabobank clients with a great opportunity to gain knowledge into business operations and financial management.

The afternoon will provide an opportunity to investigate:

1. 'Business structures for your farm business' by Martin Hill, Director, Business Advisory, William Buck Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors;
2. 'Planning for change' by Lachlan Sutherland, dairy and beef farmer from Larpent, Victoria;
3. 'Cost of production for lucerne' by Warrick Thorpe, Lucerne Australia Executive Committee Member;
4. 'A banker's perspective on rural finances' by Frank Young, Branch Manager, Rabobank Adelaide; and
5. 'O. H. & S. obligations on your farm' by Paul Lynch, from Hostsafeco

Speakers will provide up-to-date, relevant information based on their experience with practical take home messages. They will offer practical tools to assist with business improvement. A farm business case study will also be presented.

In the past few months, Lucerne Australia has been working diligently to develop a new lucerne seed industry cost of production template and this vital new tool for all lucerne seed growers will also be launched.

This event will be formal but relaxed, and is a good networking opportunity at both afternoon tea and a post-event BBQ.

Please RSVP by Wednesday 15 June to:
Nicola Raymond – Executive Officer
Ph: 0439 538 332 Email: info@lucerneaustralia.org.au



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LUCERNE AUSTRALIA WELCOMES A NEW EXECUTIVE OFFICER

By Shane Oster, Chairman

Profile

As notified recently, Lucerne Australia's new Executive Officer is Nicola Raymond, who has been employed in a secretariat role since the start of the year.

"THE LUCERNE AUSTRALIA EXECUTIVE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND OUR THANKS TO CHARLIE FOR THE TIME AND EFFORT WHICH HIS HAS PUT INTO MAKING LUCERNE AUSTRALIA THE SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATION THAT IT IS TODAY."

Nicola commenced the role on Monday 9 May, following on from Charlie Crozier who was the inaugural Executive Officer of Lucerne Australia for a five-year term. Charlie has stepped down to allow more time for other aspects of work and private life. The Lucerne Australia executive would like to extend our thanks to Charlie for the time and effort which his has put into making Lucerne Australia the successful organisation that it is today. He has been a fantastic employee and great advocate of the lucerne seed industry and we wish him well in the future.

We welcome Nicola to the position and have extreme confidence that she will excel in her new role. Nicola is looking forward to meeting all members so if you see her, please introduce yourself and welcome her to the position.

Nicola is a communications professional with 14 years' experience in the agricultural industry, in both the UK and Australia.

Nicola is a farmers' daughter from a 3,000 acre mixed farm in Wales. Following her Agricultural Marketing and Business qualification at university, she joined the Welsh Meat Company, the largest farmer-owned cooperative for the red meat sector in Wales with 700 farmer members. Financial management, business administration and daily contact with farmers all fitted within her role as General Manager.

Nicola travelled to Australia in 2007 as part of a Nuffield Farming Scholarship and was employed by the Smart Group. Nicola then moved to Currie Communications in Melbourne as a Senior Communications Consultant. Her rural clients included Dairy Australia and the Australian Fodder Industry Association. Nicola also qualified from RMIT University with a PR Certificate.

Nicola relocated back to Keith in November 2010 and lives with Ian Matheson, her partner of four years. In her spare time she enjoys AFL and is a member of St Kilda Football Club. She is looking forward to meeting members and associates of Lucerne Australia and working on behalf of the lucerne seed industry.



LUCERNE SEED INDUSTRY CONTRACTS WORKING GROUP

By Nicola Raymond, Executive Officer

CALIFORNIA LUCERNE ALFALFA INDUSTRY UPDATE

By Shannon Mueller, Ph.D. University of California Cooperative Extension

There is some optimism in California (CA) as we approach the 2011 production season given that this winter has been unusually wet. In fact, as I write this article it is raining once again. Our average annual rainfall in Fresno is 11.23" and as of yesterday, we already had 14.94". That is good news for growers who anticipate receiving higher irrigation allowances than they've seen in years. Although winter rains and snowfall will help alleviate drought conditions in some water districts, in others, regulatory changes must be made before water once again becomes available to California growers.

In 2010, CA alfalfa seed producers harvested 37,000 acres producing 21.2 million pounds of seed. Contracts for this seed were around \$2.30 - \$2.50 per pound compared to the \$1.40-\$1.50 contract prices through the 1990s and more closely reflects current costs of production. For example, the price of leafcutter bees has gone up this year, corresponding to reduced availability from Canada. Our survey showed that the majority of seed producers are using honey bees in combination with leafcutter bees, but at the higher prices this year they are reducing stocking rates.

With the recent deregulation of Roundup Ready alfalfa, seed acreage is anticipated to decline in 2011 as companies work through their existing inventory. The reduction in acreage is expected to be short-lived however, with new fields planted in fall 2011 or spring 2012. Seed production will be down as a result of the decline in acreage, but in addition, strong alfalfa hay prices will influence seed production from the Imperial Valley.

This spring, hay prices were reported around \$280 to over \$300/ton for supreme or premium first cutting hay. Under those conditions, Imperial Valley growers are more inclined to cut fields for hay rather than letting them go to seed. Even if they decide to produce a seed crop, it is likely to be late so yields will be lower. Hay prices are coming down a little as more hay enters the marketplace, so this situation may change.

"CONTRACTS WERE AROUND
\$2.30 - \$2.50 PER POUND
COMPARED TO THE \$1.40-
\$1.50 CONTRACT PRICES
THROUGH THE 1990S."

In March, we held our Alfalfa Seed Production Symposia in the two major seed production regions in California, the Central San Joaquin Valley and the Imperial Valley.

The last time the industry came together was 2007 so there was a lot of new information to share. A major focus of the program was the deregulation of Roundup Ready alfalfa which took place in early February 2011. At each symposium, several years of data from gene flow studies conducted by Larry Teuber, James Hagler and myself were summarised and proposed stewardship guidelines and crop isolation mapping programs were presented. Research results from Seed Board-funded projects on drip irrigation and lygus bug management were also shared with the industry. Growers were particularly interested in the spray table demonstration showing the effects of various types of nozzles and pressures on pesticide application

efficiency. At the end of the meeting, we took advantage of new technology involving audience response survey "clickers" and conducted a needs assessment with growers and industry representatives to help prioritise future research and educational efforts.



LUCERNE SEED PROCESSING REPORT

By Brett Wegener, Kongal Seeds

The lucerne processing season this year provided plenty of challenges and numerous record-setting statistics, albeit not the records we would want to experience again.

We saw the smallest sized harvest deliveries with several lots having less seed harvested from the entire paddock than what was harvested per hectare last year.

Lucerne seed being delivered for processing or storage needs to have a maximum moisture content of 12 per cent. Anything above this should be dried or risks serious deterioration of seed.

Due to the harvesting conditions experienced, we dried the highest number of batches in a season (3.5 times more than last year). The average batch size was 3.4 tonnes while the smallest single batch dried was just 440kg. The average moisture of seed needing drying was 17 per cent and the highest moisture was well over 30 per cent.

Cleanout rates were also the highest experienced. The average cleaning loss this year was 38 per cent compared to a normal year of around 20-25 per cent. The highest loss was 86 per cent and the lowest loss was 15 per cent.

“THE AVERAGE CLEANING LOSS THIS YEAR WAS 38 PER CENT COMPARED TO A NORMAL YEAR OF AROUND 20-25 PER CENT.”

Every year, different growing conditions produce varied qualities of seed and also types of weed contamination. Wild Turnip and Dock seem to have thrived this year with many more lots having these seeds present. Fortunately, removal of these weeds is achieved by using Spiral separators and Velvet rollers. Despite this being slow, the extra process is necessary as these two weeds are classified as declared seeds, making marketing contaminated lines difficult.

It was pleasing that the first half of the processing season saw very clean seed being delivered with fewer weed seed contamination, yet high cleanouts were experienced due to weather damaged seed. As the season continued, the degree of weather damaged seed was less but cleanouts remained high with more weed seeds evident (mainly Fat Hen).

There has been a clear improvement in the reduction of harvest damaged seed this year which should please the growers and marketers. Germination results after processing were very good with only a few lots not making the minimum 85 per cent due to abnormal seeds.

Hopefully next season will see a return to more average or above yields in more favourable growing weather conditions.



IPM UPDATE

By Lisa Charlton, Lucerne Australia Executive Committee Member

The Intergrated Pest Management (IPM) group has been liaising with members of the lucerne seed industry to increase the awareness of insect resistance, chemical rates and the importance of beneficial insects within our system. A combination of information and knowledge from our industry has contributed to the IPM focus group developing two guides: 'Insect thresholds and rates guide for consultants/agronomists' and 'A predatory (beneficial) insect tolerance guide'.

These guides aim to standardise the insect pest control strategies using rates more accurate to our local environment, and precisely target insects within our environment while protecting beneficial insects.

Predatory insects (beneficials) consume pests and other insects in order to develop and/or produce offspring. They can considerably reduce pest numbers, possibly reducing the need to control pests using insecticides. For an IPM system to work, the conservation of beneficial insects is critical. A key benefit of predator preservation is avoiding secondary pest issues such as Two Spotted Mites.

"THE IPM FOCUS GROUP HAS DEVELOPED TWO GUIDES: INSECT THRESHOLDS AND RATES GUIDE FOR CONSULTANTS/AGRONOMISTS AND A PREDATORY (BENEFICIAL) INSECT TOLERANCE GUIDE."

The tolerance guide will demonstrate the impact of currently applied insecticides on beneficial insects, using local industry knowledge as the source of the information contained within this guide.

An IPM approach for growers will therefore sustain longevity of chemicals currently registered for lucerne seed, as well as protecting the natural system.

The IPM focus group is also continually investigating pest control options not yet available or implemented in the lucerne seed industry in accordance to permits available by the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).

AGRONOMY REPORT

By Lisa Charlton, Lucerne Australia Executive Committee Member

Wrapping up a season like this, where do I start? What can be said? As yields are analysed and seed tests have been completed, it is undoubtedly the most challenging year SA's lucerne seed growers have faced so far, achieving such poor production from potentially fair crops.

Yields subsequently resulted in only a quarter to a third of long-term averages and high summer rainfall and excess vegetative growth has seen the worst season for yields in history.

Production in 2010/2011 is significantly down to an estimated 2,500 tonne of seed compared to 8,500-9,000 tonne which is normally harvested. Consequently, this has increased the price of seed. However, significantly reduced yields have reduced the net benefit to growers. As is usually the case, yield is king. Irrigation yields ranged from 100-300kg per hectare,

with dryland yields reduced to 0 (Not harvested)-100kg per hectare also. What we can bring from this miserable season is to look forward to harvest next year.

Remember, there is always something to be learnt and benefits to be gained from the worst situations and results.

What has been learnt from the past season? Future reliance or consideration may be given to mid to long-term weather forecasts, spreading crop closure times and precise watering regimes. In addition, early identification and monitoring of pest numbers is critical. As can be seen in years such as this, multiple sprays are not always needed.

These are programs that growers can include in their farm management plans to guard against future seasonal declines in production. A crisis such as this is what

pushes an industry to adapt, change and become more efficient.

One unfortunate outcome of the last harvest was high "Panicum" seed counts being detected in seed test results. This is largely due to high levels of seed head "blow ins". The high summer rain saw panic grass proliferating in dryland areas around seed crops. Once in seed, the Panicum heads simply blew into the lucerne paddocks and have consequently contaminated many seed lines. This was disappointing after growers had been particularly vigilant against Setaria contamination.

Although the results from this season were far less than what were required to cover costs, growers and industry has learnt the value of spreading the enterprise risk in farming. For now we will have to take the pain and plan for a better harvest next year.

GOLDEN DODDER TARGETED IN NEW RESEARCH

The South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI), with support from Lucerne Australia, is undertaking a Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) funded project to fight the battle against golden dodder, a serious emerging threat to the pasture seeds industry.

The noxious weed has been found in isolated cases in lucerne in the south-east of SA and halting its spread is vital as Australia's lucerne seed export markets have a zero tolerance for golden dodder.

Over the next 12 months, Dr John Heap and the SARDI Diagnostics Laboratory at the Plant Research Centre at Waite will investigate new ways to detect golden dodder to give the industry tools to prevent its spread.

"Golden dodder contamination has serious consequences for export seed markets. It is vital that it is detected early because seed can survive in the soil for many decades," Dr Heap said.

"GOLDEN DODDER CONTAMINATION HAS SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES FOR EXPORT SEED MARKETS. IT IS VITAL THAT IT IS DETECTED EARLY BECAUSE SEED CAN SURVIVE IN THE SOIL FOR MANY DECADES," DR HEAP.

"If a harvester inadvertently works through a dodder patch there is a real chance of seed moving to other areas within the paddock and beyond. It is important that growers are vigilant and act in a united way against dodder."

Research will mostly concentrate on developing DNA tests to detect golden dodder in seed cleaning offal, along

with two other serious weeds - perennial thistle and branched broomrape.

If successful, the tests might be used for detecting contamination in both local and imported seed lines.

Remote sensing will also be evaluated for detecting dodder patches from the air using airborne or satellite imagery. The project will run until May 2012 and Lucerne Australia is delighted to be supporting this project.

Dr John Heap
Senior Research Scientist, SARDI

Further details:
08 8303 9444
John.Heap@sa.gov.au



A dodder patch near the Murray River used for aerial detection research in March 2011.

DROP TUBE CENTRE PIVOT TRIAL

VARIETY TRIALS UPDATE: THE FIRST HARVEST

By Simon Allen, Trial Site Committee

The first harvest from the new drop tube centre pivot trial has returned results that are quite reflective of the season and experienced by most producers in the region. The accompanying tables reflect this with very low yields and a significant degree of variation within the trial that is often evident in seedling stands.

Comments from Trent Potter (SARDI)

"From the analysis, a mean yield for all treatments is determined. The tables for individual experiments show mean yields and often as a percent of either the site mean yield or as a percent of a check variety or treatment. The coefficient of variation (CV%) gives an indication of the precision of the experiment. Experiments with high CV% are less reliable. The National Variety Testing considers anything over fifteen per cent as being less reliable. The five per cent least significant difference (LSD) gives an indication of the yield difference that could occur by chance. Variety mean yields must differ by more than this value for the difference to be statistically significant."

Dormancy 8, 9 and 10 lucerne varieties

Variety	kg/ha	% site mea
AR 9	68.1	169
AR 245	65.2	162
PGWC009	56.9	141
SGA 110	48.4	120
SGA 112	44.8	111
Hallmark	42.7	106
PGWC004	42.2	105
PGWC002	40.0	99
Siriver	39.4	98
Siriver Mkl	37.1	92
UQL 1	34.2	85
AR 8	33.7	84
PGWC001	32.2	80
PGWC005	30.6	76
PGWC003	30.5	76
AR 244	27.5	68
FG 106T701	13.1	32
Site mean	40.4	
CV%	29.6	
LSD(0.05)	20.25	

Dormancy 5, 6 and 7 lucerne varieties

Variety	kg/ha	% site mea
SGA61	66.6	168
Aurora	50.9	128
PGWC008	46.7	117
PGWC007	36.0	91
SM0007	28.9	73
FG61T711	28.7	72
PGWC006	20.5	52
Site mean	39.8	
CV%	19.4	
LSD(0.05)	12.45	

As Trent has explained above, after studying the harvest data, very little credence can be put on the results due to the low yields and high degree of variance of the trial.

That said, the trial has established very well and the trial site committee is keenly looking forward to collaborating the results in the coming seasons.

ASIAN HONEY BEE

THREAT TO THE AUSTRALIAN LUCERNE SEED INDUSTRY

By Nicola Raymond, Executive Officer



The Asian Honey Bee (AHB) has destroyed parts of the agricultural and horticultural industries in each country they've invaded, and there is a current fight to prevent major outbreaks of this pest in Queensland and across Australia.

The AHB was first detected in Cairns in 2007 and although it is currently confined to north Queensland, it could become a huge threat to the lucerne seed industry, as well as production of fruits, vegetables and nuts we require for our European diet, which are dependent wholly, or in part, on pollination.

The Javanese strain of *Apis cerana*, the Asian Honey Bee is a known carrier of the deadly varroa mite, which is devastating the European Honey Bee (EHB) worldwide. The AHB also competes with the EHB for pollen and nectar, effectively starving the colony causing it to eventually collapse and die.

Many rural researchers estimate production losses of up to \$5 billion should the Varroa Mite become established across Australia. Currently Australia is the only country in the world using EHB which is free from the varroa mite. Due to the swarming nature of Asian bees though, Varroa could easily and quickly be spread interstate.

Efforts to eradicate the AHB in Queensland intensified in early 2010 with a taskforce of 40 field workers employed to lay baits and destroy affected hives. However, in November, officials cut the field team back to six and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry stated that it would wind down its program as it was not "technically feasible to eradicate them".

However, following protests from the beekeeping industry, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Joe Ludwig announced a \$2 million pledge of support for a new program on 20 May 2011.

On behalf of the lucerne seed industry, executive committee member Charlie Hilton has been attending regular Asian Honeybee Coordination Group meetings with other representatives from industries reliant on pollination and he is pleased with the progress.

"This new program is a containment program but is also being called a 'transitional' program as it may one day lead to eradication. The program is a partnership between Biosecurity Queensland, NAQS (North Aust Quarantine Service) and AHBIC (Australian Honey Bee Industry Council)," he said.

"This new program is working towards using AHBIC members as a labour resource contributing \$1 million of in-kind labour with the use of sniffer dogs to detect infected hives and using micro transponders attached to bees to detect where the hives are".

The AHB NMG (Asian Honey Bee National Management Group) is still clarifying the cost model, but at this stage it looks likely to cost \$5million for a containment program. Once clarified, the group will call for industries such as Lucerne Australia to assist with funding this program.

There is no action required at this stage. However, industries are being advised that some contributions from associated industries may be needed at some stage of the program.

Photos from Denis Anderson.



MARKET REPORTS




PGG Wrightson Seeds

By Travis Munday
Ph: 0408 838 687

The 2011/12 lucerne marketing season is upon us and this is set to be yet another interesting year. Since April, we have seen lucerne prices firming as the true extent of the weather impact on crop and also a below average cleaning yield.

The positive to take from this is that we should end another year with minimal carryover worldwide, giving the 2012/13 (and beyond) a firm outlook.

Many current questions are focused on what the seed price will do. With a high dollar and Italian companies selling cheap alfalfa seed into our main markets, the answer is not clear.

We are all aware that our main markets are carrying low stock levels, but they will have a limit on their expectations of the buy price. There is also an American harvest getting close and some customers will wait until they see where new American crop prices will be set.

The view on the American crop is that it will be below average and with China amending its quota of 200,000/mt to 400,000/mt of hay from America this year, it will be unlikely that much opportunistic crop is taken through to seed.

PGG Wrightson Seeds is keen to talk to any grower looking for help in marketing/forward planning and production options for lucerne.



seedmark
better seeds, better choices

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

It would be a gross understatement to say the Lucerne market has gone full circle over the last 24 months. The current harvest has been a major disappointment for producers and seed companies alike.

From the modest carryover position prior to harvest, we now find ourselves facing a total cleanout of stock in both the domestic and export markets in the coming 12 months. But rather than concentrate on the negatives, let's put the positives into perspective. 1) Prices have firmed considerably from the lows of 2010. 2) Given there will be very minimal seed in sheds in early 2012, you would expect prices to remain strong. 3) In times of a shortage of seed, even lines with low purity, low germ, or weeds have a better chance of finding a home.

There is strong interest from both markets (export and domestic) at present. The news of our poor harvest has flowed through to most countries, although buyers are remaining cautious due to the large price increase. There is strong enquiry from many parts of the world, what they are prepared to pay is currently being tested.

From the January to March period of 2011, 1,300mt have departed our shores, numbers similar to the corresponding period in 2010 and well above 2008 and 2009.

Seedmark are looking for further PBR production of its own and FGI varieties, and are also currently purchasing public varieties. Please contact Shane Ebert on 0411 181 166 or our office on (08) 8234 9333 to discuss your options.

By Jamie Tidy,
Naracoorte Seeds & SA Seed Marketers
Email: jamie@rbm.com.au
Mobile: 0427 621 944

Lucerne prices continue to firm as the realizations of a very poor harvest comes to fruition. Marketers are jockeying for position trying to secure stock to ensure supply to their various markets.

Exporting continues to be a battle as the Aussie dollar remains firm between \$1.05 and \$1.10 and compounding the export issues are the smaller lines this season. To export a container, we usually use 21,500kg of seed which under normal circumstances requires three or four different lines of seed. This season, to make a container we may have to use up to eight lines to make up the consignment which means more testing and freight consolidation issues.

Seteria species continues to be a trade barrier eliminating some export destinations so lines clean and weed free will be hot property. We are actively in the market so call for competitive pricing and 30 day terms!

Contract Production

We are still chasing some irrigated area for seed multiplication so if you have some are keen to spread the risk and a source a four-year minimum contract we may be able to help. Call Jamie or Josh to discuss options. Jamie – 0427 621 944 or Josh – 0427 598 287

By Dennis Jury

Since February / March when it was clear that the harvest was going to be down, SGA has been holding out of the market and not sold any 2011 crop. We are waiting until we have a good idea of the final crop size, cleanout rates and quality parameters before offering any significant amount of product onto the market. We are also waiting for the international market to accept that prices will have to rise significantly from last year's levels to account for the shortage of seed and lack of carryover stocks. At this stage there is still some reluctance by the market to accept the rises we are indicating however we believe it will get to our target level and will not be selling until it does.

We expect that the Middle East market will require good quantities of seed this year as they only purchased on an as-needs basis in 2010 so would have minimal carryover stocks on hand. As long as the political unrest in the region is contained and does not spread to Saudi Arabia then uptake should be strong and early.

Argentina, the other key market, is going to have considerable difficulty managing the higher price levels that are being signalled. They will source seed at lower values from wherever possible but it is questionable whether this will be sufficient to cover their needs. This will, in part,

depend on the internal consumption there this autumn and spring planting periods and what domestic harvest they have this year.

The ongoing strength of the Australian dollar will also have an influence on the actual returns achievable from export sales this year and into 2012. There are many financial commentators talking the AUD up, not only above recent levels and remaining high for an extended period but some seeing it on an ongoing rising trend for the foreseeable future. On balance it seems that it will likely peak during this year, before trending lower into next year and settling at a new floor well above what we have traditionally considered as typical.

Whatever else happens, one thing is for sure – there will be minimal stocks carried over into next harvest. So, while returns are more than likely to move back to more “normal” levels next year, they should still be attractive compared to the recent past.

On the back of expected increase in demand for Super varieties from established and new clients we are looking to increase the areas sown, so if you are interested in growing a high yielding SGA variety please contact Peter Gibbs on 0427 574 027

VIVUS SHOWS PROMISE IN TRIAL

By James De Barro, Alpha Group Consulting



In this most recent season, Vivus Max was evaluated for the control of Heliothis grubs in lucerne seed crops.

Vivus Max is a biological insecticide registered specifically for control of native budworm in crops such as cotton and lucerne. It is a nucleopolyhedral virus (NPV) in a specifically concentrated formulation and is manufactured and marketed by Ag Biotech Australia.

2011 was a challenging year to evaluate the product due to low grub presence throughout the season. Vivus Max was applied on a drop tube pivot irrigated lucerne seed crop. At time of application there was moderate grub presence and the crop was at the 20 per cent flower stage. Varying rates were applied – 50ml, 100ml, 150ml and 200ml per hectare and some applications included Optimol - an additional molasses type product aimed at enhancing effectiveness of NPV. The Vivus Max treatments were compared to the standard synthetic pyrethroid (SP) Heliothis control as well as an unsprayed section. All treatments were assessed every three days after spraying for a period of two weeks.

Vivus Max appeared soft on predators such as spiders, lady beetles and nabid bugs and did not appear to harm or repel honey bees. It did not control green mirids or aphids – a specific control measure was required for these pests.

It appeared to control Heliothis adequately. In comparison to the SP treatment, the product never totally decimated the grub population which left a food supply for the predators. The Heliothis population never peaked again to need spraying in either the Vivus Max or SP treatments.

The trial was reviewed through the season by a number of lucerne seed agronomists. Vivus Max exhibited good potential for Heliothis grub control and there is a need for further trial work to assess its fit in pest management in lucerne seed crops. Ag Biotech has indicated a desire to further trial the product in the coming seed production season and on the basis of this year's results it is clearly a product worth further evaluation.



James De Barro, Alpha Group Consulting
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AG-EX FORUM AND AWARDS DINNER

By Warrick Thorpe, Lucerne Australia Executive Committee Member



Lucerne Australia was among those represented at the Ag Excellence Alliance annual forum in Adelaide on 1, April 2011. Guest speakers included San Jolly who spoke on the pros and cons of entrepreneurial farming enterprises and their successes and risks and Annabel Homer from ABC Radio, who shared her experiences of contrasting agricultural regions in India, following a recent visit.

In total, 15 grower groups and State Government bodies were represented and there was an in-depth discussion about how agriculture and rural communities are

progressing in their respective areas. In a room of industry leaders, it was beneficial to share current challenges and future opportunities in agriculture. There was particular focus on promoting young farmers as leaders of tomorrow's agriculture and technology.

If you would like to know more about the Ag Excellence Alliance, please visit their website at www.agex.org.au. The site includes a full calendar of events which are hosted by different agricultural groups in SA.



There once was a prick of a season
Which occurred for no apparent, fair reason
The yields went away
We couldn't sell hay
Now it's come in cold and I'm bloody freezing!!



PINKERTON PALM HAMLYN & STEEN ALONG WITH SPENCE DIX & CO JOIN LUCERNE AUSTRALIA



Pinkerton Palm Hamlyn & Steen (PPHS) in conjunction with Spence Dix & Co and Richard Harvie (PPHS Agent) are proud to be new silver sponsors Lucerne Australia.

For progressive producers who need progressive agents contact:

Our Companies have had a long relationship with the livestock industry with the marketing and procurement of all livestock for all needs, including stock that has been grazing on lucerne.

**Pinkerton, Palm, Hamlyn & Steen
08 8762 3055**

We have representatives in all areas of South Australia including Penola, Naracoorte, Lucindale, Bordertown, Keith, Tintinara, Meningie, the Mid North and the West Coast.

**Spence Dix & Co
0429 818490**

We pride ourselves on a professional approach to market livestock with the use of either the auction system which include markets at Naracoorte, Dublin or Auctions Plus or private treaty such as hooks, forward contracts or on farm.

**Richard Harvie (PPHS Agent)
0428 838570**

We believe in building long lasting relationships. As a combined group, we handle large volumes of livestock which has placed us in a strong marketable position with processors and feeders alike.



Associate Members/ Bronze Sponsors:

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Alpha Group Consulting	Kongal Seeds	Seed Services Australia
ANZ	Landmark Keith	Seedmark
Asure Quality	Langseeds Rural	Seed Genetics Australia
Clovercrest Consulting	Lawrie & Co	South East Seed Exports
Cox Rural Keith	Naracoorte Seeds	Tatiara Harvesting
Crop Monitoring Services	National Australia Bank	Tatiara Seeds
Elders Keith	Nufarm Australia	Tintinara Seeds
Farmers Centre	PGG Wrightson	Vermeeren Bros Manufacturing
Feedworks	Pinkerton, Palm, Hamlyn & Steen	Wickham Flower
Gibbs Agricultural Consulting	Rabobank Australia	Wally Cole & Co
Heritage Seeds	Riddoch Insurance Services SA	Zadow Apiaries
Incitec Pivot	SA Apiarists Association	

New Members:

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Murray Nankivell
Providing financial advice

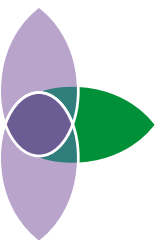


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