



THE LUCERNE LEADER

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Lucerne Variety Trial



Lucerne Australia's three year variety trial commenced with the planting of 31 varieties on June 22nd at the trial site adjacent to the Riddoch Highway on Allen's Warrawee Park.



The seeding was carried out by Kalyx and to date, with good falls of rain, the seedlings are doing well.

LA thanks the following seed marketers for supplying varieties for trial:

Alforex Seeds, Heritage Seeds, Naracoorte Seeds, Pasture Genetics,

PGG Wrightson Seeds, Seed Force, S&W Seed Co, Upper Murray Seeds.



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Success with dryland lucerne on the Fleurieu Peninsula

by Greg Mitchell, Agronomist, FP-AG, Mount Compass

Lucerne has not traditionally featured as a dryland pasture on the Fleurieu Peninsula. However over a dozen local dairy and beef producers are now successfully maintaining and incorporating dryland Lucerne into their operations.

Although used successfully as an irrigated pasture or fodder crop for many years, most dryland sowings in this district failed and lucerne had fallen off the radar as a dryland pasture option for most landowners. Most of the soils in our district were considered unsuitable for lucerne, being strongly acidic throughout the soil profile and often with moderate-high levels of exchangeable aluminium. Heavier soils here are sometimes prone to winter waterlogging too.

Beyond this, most attempts at dryland establishment involved autumn-sowing and usually failed due to a combination of poor seedling growth, root rot damage, winter weeds and/or insect pest damage.

So What's Changed?

Local SARDI research demonstrated how newer lucerne varieties (and rhizobial strains) can perform well on our moderately acid soils. There has also been a greater recognition of the extent and impact of soil acidity in the region, with intending growers mandatorily applying ag lime twelve months prior to sowing lucerne on acidic soils.

However the most important development has probably been a new spring-sowing method to reliably and cost-effectively establish lucerne in this district. Compared to traditional autumn sowing, the spring-sowing method:

- allows for more effective control of prevalent winter weeds prior to sowing.
- avoids losses in winter feed by keeping paddocks in the winter grazing rotation up to August.
- allows for the young seedlings to establish vigorously with the warmer spring weather and with less impact from root diseases, insect pests and any remnant weeds.

Spring-Sowing Lucerne the 'Fleurieu Way'

Local research funded by DairySA identified the following elements for spring-sowing dryland lucerne in this district;

- Full control of any perennial weed problems in the year prior to spring sowing. In addition, spraytop to prevent seed set of annual grass weeds in the preceding spring.
- Where soil pH_(H2O) is less than 6.0, apply ag lime at 3 t/ha in the preceding summer.
- From there, ensure the existing (or short-term) pasture is properly grazed down at the end of July.
- As soon as the farmer can afford to 'lose' the paddock from the grazing rotation, fallow the paddock with knockdown herbicides, both for complete weed control and to preserve winter soil moisture (really important in the event of a 'dry spring').

- Wait for 16 days then direct drill lucerne seed. Aim to generate a bit of 'soil tilth' around/below the seed if possible.
- Ensure full protection from insect pests, slugs and snails and any germinating summer weeds in that 1st spring.

In the five years 2011-16, we were involved with eighty dryland paddocks on Fleurieu farms that were spring-sown with lucerne (alone or in a mix with phalaris). Those farmers achieved an 86% success rate using this spring-sowing method.

Benefits from Using Lucerne in Dryland Fleurieu Pastures

Warren Jacobs and Perrin Hicks run 400 milking cows on their Mt Compass dairy farm and have been growing lucerne on their dryland paddocks since 2011. Warren explained how most of their soils are deep, strongly acid sands. "In spite of our high rainfall, we previously had problems getting any improved perennial forages to persist on this land" he said.

They now grow lucerne on two thirds of their dryland grazing area. Warren reports lucerne stands are persisting well after up to six years. "Apart from reductions in reseeding expenses, we now avoid those downtime periods each autumn when paddocks would be otherwise sprayed out for annual pasture sowing. Our dryland lucerne doesn't grow any more feed in total each year than the intensively-managed annual pastures we used to grow. But the lucerne grows throughout the year, and we really appreciate the green feed it gives us between November-April" Warren explained.

Perrin agrees and also mentioned they sometimes sow mixes of lucerne + phalaris but take care to sow these species in alternate rows to get a good balance. "The phalaris performs well in winter and compliments the lucerne which grows better into the summer months. The mix also gives me confidence about reducing the risk of bloat problems in the cattle."

Of course, lucerne will continue to be unsuitable for poorly-drained soils and not as productive in set-stocked, continuously grazed paddocks. However dryland lucerne has yielded between 5 and 8 tonnes of grazed DM per hectare in our district and, with the benefit of extended and out-of-season grazing, will be an important pasture option for Fleurieu graziers into the future.





Member profile: Martin and Kirsty Harvey

South Australian sheep producers Martin and Kirsty Harvey have weathered many challenges over the years but are now reaping the rewards of taking calculated risks.

They have diversified their enterprise and invested in improving soils on their farm at Western Flat, 40km from Bordertown in the state's upper south east.

It's a journey that began when Martin was just 23, when his parents Jill and Darryl presented him with the opportunity to buy the 850ha family farm, 'Broadview'.

Fresh from studying agriculture and a year of travelling, Martin returned home and took on the farm – an opportunity many young people can only dream of, but certainly not an easy one.

He credits his parents and siblings, as well as Kirsty's family after they married in 2005, with providing emotional support and a willing hand to keep them going.

This family involvement continues with their own children, Will, 11, Zoë, 9, and Lilly, 7, who all pitch in. When Kirsty isn't working off-farm as a paramedic, she's also very active in running the business alongside Martin.

Challenges

One of the biggest challenges Martin and Kirsty faced was improving their marginal soils. They invested in an extensive clay spreading program to target non-wetting sands and now only have about 10% of the farm left to improve.

"This has completely transformed our country, we now have better fertiliser retention and pasture germination," Martin says. "I don't think we would still be here if we hadn't been able to improve the soil structure."

With the support of Rabobank, they have also expanded their irrigation program from one centre pivot to five, and now have 125 hectares under irrigation for seed production.

"Land prices are high in the area so we've focused on improving our existing land and Rabobank has really encouraged us to take on things which benefit our business," Martin says. "That is why we've got things cranking the way we do, as we can handle a higher level of debt because it is generating income."

Recent export market volatility has created over-supply for lucerne seed, so the Harveys are looking at other opportunities such as producing lucerne hay. They also grow dryland lucerne for grazing on half the farm.

Backing sheep

The family has bred Poll Dorsets for 40 years and were early adopters of the White Suffolk breed around 30 years ago.

Martin and Kirsty put their own stamp on the sheep side of the enterprise when they purchased a Border Leicester flock from a stud dispersal in 2009.

They now lamb down 250 Poll Dorset ewes, 250 White Suffolk ewes and 400 Border Leicester ewes and sell 350 rams a year, all under the 'Paxton Stud' name.



Positive outlook

With things ticking along nicely at 'Broadview', Martin and Kirsty can take the time to reflect on their journey so far and what keeps them going.

"For me, I find it really rewarding when people come along and buy our livestock in what is a very competitive local market," Martin says. "We work bloody hard to produce our rams and we are lucky to be able to class many of our clients as friends, as they have been long-time supporters."

Kirsty agrees, adding: "It's also rewarding to see our children, as they get older, start to ask questions about our business and why we do what we do. It adds an extra element to give them the opportunity to have an education in agriculture, and the potential to take on the farm if they decide that is what they want to do."

Looking for pollination services?



Dan Thompson

Commercial Beekeeper

PH: 0424 534 828

d.thompson@live.com.au

Rod and Lisa Saunders

Fluerieu Honey

PH: 0408 839 124

fleurieuhoney@gmail.com

Willing to travel to all lucerne growing areas in the South East

The 2018/19 dairy season commenced only two months ago and there is already plenty to keep track of. As seasonal conditions continue to worsen in many regions dairy farmers are struggling to find feed for their herds. Feed costs surged over winter and it has become increasingly difficult to source fodder. While weather and feed issues are dominating current news, other parts of the dairy supply chain are creating a more stable picture. The Australian domestic market for dairy products is proving to be the least volatile, as evidenced by the numbers from the 2017/18 season currently rolling in.

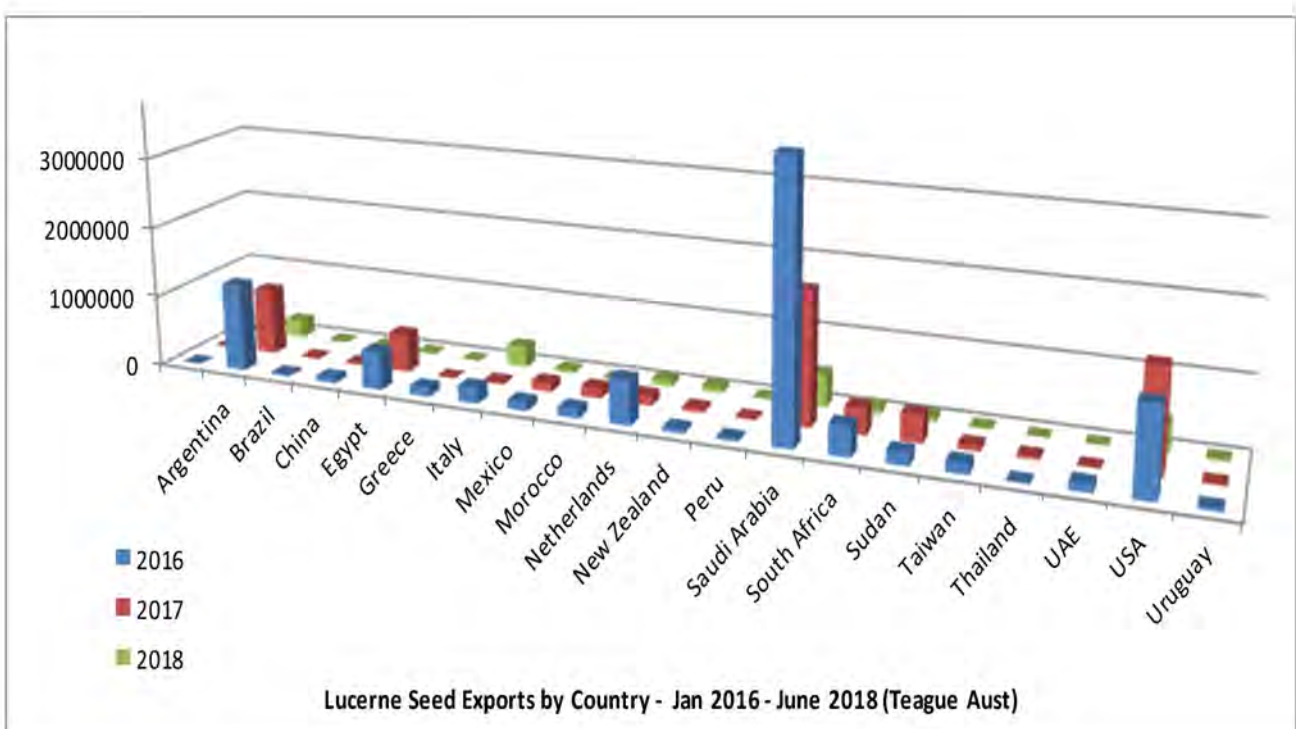
Over the past ten years demand for dairy products has steadily grown across Australia. Australians consume more milk per capita than most other comparable developed countries; this can partly be attributed to our love of coffees. As Australians buy more and more milk, sales from supermarkets have increased close to 24%, or 216,000 litres, since 2008. This is driven both by population growth and our large per-capita appetite for milk.

Australia’s largest and most mature dairy segment is fresh white milk. Fresh white milk represents 78% of total liquid milk sales. In 2017/18 milk sales increased 1.1% in volume, in line with a conservative long-term growth rate. Six years ago almost half of all milk sold in supermarkets was modified skim or low-fat, however this has since changed. Consumer preferences have shifted significantly in favour of full cream milk, as consumers

want ‘natural products’ and have a greater appreciation of the benefits of dairy fats. Today 66% of all milk sold in supermarkets is full cream milk. In 2017/18 full cream milk sales increased 4.4% by volume and 3.7% by value, largely at the expense of modified skim or low-fat varieties. Over the same period modified milk varieties contracted 4.8% in volume and 6.4% in value, indicating a drop in average price in addition to total volume.

During the past year global butter prices rallied and after a prolonged period of high global prices, Australian prices followed. In supermarkets the average per-kilo price of butter reached \$12.08 in 2017/18, up 35% compared to last year. Despite this large spike, customers still wanted to buy butter and sale volumes only fell 6.3% while overall value increased 26.9%. The largest drop in volume came from large pack sizes, while sales of smaller pack sizes increased. Supermarkets tended to increase the price on larger pack sizes while keeping the price constant on smaller ones and consumers proved willing to opt for a smaller pack in response. Some customers chose to substitute the expensive butter for blends, and total blends sale volumes grew 3.8%.

While many farmers in drought-affected regions continue to battle with the ongoing challenges of this season, it’s heartening that domestic demand for dairy remains strong. Australia may be a land of volatility in weather, feed prices, politics and Prime Ministers, but Australians continue to love dairy products.



Heritage Seeds Report

by Craig Myall, International Business Manager, Ph: 0407 620 580

Export sales in South America continue to be sluggish with low demand because of good local production and cheap European imports. The positive is the livestock market is performing well and this is now starting to clear some inventory at a warehouse level.

The Saudi market has started to move but overall export volume remains low compared to previous years as buyers have been more focused on buying Rhodes grass for short term farming systems as businesses are still waiting to hear from the ministry regarding water access.

What we have observed is that the export hay market is firming and more growers in the USA have switched back to hay production which has reduced the new crop area harvested. This will hopefully start to balance the oversupply issues.

Locally pricing for public varieties of certified and uncertified lucerne seed at a grower level have bottomed out and are now starting to firm slightly on the back of supply starting to dry up. Domestic seed sales are expected to be low for the spring plant due to the dry conditions in central and northern NSW.

Before the International Seed Federation congress that was held in Brisbane during June we hosted international customers from 10 different countries. During this time, we put a focus on showcasing the SE seed production zone with on farm visits, a tour of a cleaning shed and a visit to the Carousel lucerne management site. Following on from the South East we also toured Dandenong Head Office, Howlong Research Farm and our Northern Locations (Richlands, Gatton, Blanchview and Toowoomba).

Should you wish to discuss anything in relation to the current market, upcoming planting opportunities or crop management, please contact your Heritage representatives on the numbers listed below.

Daryl Turner National Production & Procurement Manager

0418 191 060

Tom Botterill Production Agronomist

0439 384 375

Richard Prusa Production Agronomist

0408 851 411

Craig Myall International Business Manager

0407 620 580





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Naracoorte Seeds- Market Report

by Joshua Rasheed, Public Lucerne Seed Trader Ph : 0427 790 655

The past 3 months has not been all that dissimilar to the previous 3 months and probably the whole year, with enquiries coming and going quite spasmodically. For 6 to 8 weeks it was a struggle to drum up any enquiry and then all of a sudden, enquiries came with a rush over a 2 week period before again dropping off. This wasn't all that unexpected as many buyers are carrying stock from last year and were only looking to purchase new stocks once they were comfortable with their own levels.

This being said, the good news is that there were still some good volumes of public lucerne seed sold over the last quarter, both certified and uncertified, and in even better news we saw the grower price kick from where it was last quarter! Let's hope that we have seen the bottom of the market!

Going into next season I think that it is fair to say that public carryover stocks of lucerne seed will be very low as I don't think there is an abundance out there on the market and we still have 5-6 months before our next harvest.

Coupled with potentially very low carryover stocks of public lucerne seed, there is a lot of talk this year of growers not taking

their lucerne through to seed this coming season due to the high demand and prices of hay, lambs and wool. This will be very interesting because there could be a substantial chunk of production area taken out so that growers can take advantage of this high demand and pricing. Time will tell, but potentially we could be going into a new season with 1/3 of our production area taken out of production, coupled with very low public seed carryover.

When writing my last quarter report I mentioned that Jamie and I were about to attend the ISF World Seed Congress in Brisbane. The congress brought over 1,250 seed delegates from most nations and it gave us a great opportunity to sit down with many to discuss what was going on in the world of small seeds, not just with lucerne, but annual clovers, sub clovers, grasses and more.

If you would like to know more about any of the above public small seed markets please feel free to give myself or Jamie a call to discuss and as always Naracoorte Seeds are active purchasers of public lucerne seed, so please feel free to give me a call to discuss on 0427 790 655.

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Wendy Day

Increase Your Efficiency With Cloud Accounting

by Francis English, Senior Accountant, Murray Nankivell

Rapid advances in technology are now allowing businesses to enhance the speed and accuracy of record keeping and financial analysis – not only the cash in and cash out but payroll, superannuation, invoicing, contacts and more.

New requirements from the Tax Office for payroll and superannuation reporting for employees mean cloud accounting is also an efficient and hassle free way to meet these requirements and increase the efficiency of your bookkeeping at the same time.

First, what is cloud accounting?

Essentially cloud accounting is storing your accounting records electronically and accessing your 'books' by logging into the program, much like you would log into internet banking. You can access your data and services you want almost anytime you like from any device from almost anywhere in world providing you have an Internet connection.

What makes cloud accounting so powerful?

- Access anywhere – Roam free and stay connected to your data wherever you are. No longer be tied to one desk and one computer in your office.
- Save time and manage accounting effectively – very little manual data entry required, reconciliation of accounts on the go – no more double checking of entries at the end of the month.
- Easier to work with your accountant – no longer have to save a backup and email in or post in a USB – live access to your accounting data at any time.
- Real time data – Cloud accounting delivers gives you real time and up to date live data as opposed to the old fashioned methods of traditional accounting and business management.
- You control file and data sharing access – You also control who has access to what data you want to share with people using login details to set access levels for each user.

Any concerns?

- Security – The cloud is one of the most secure methods to protecting your data in the event of fire, theft of a computer, tablet or laptop or even your phone. The security level is similar to your internet banking security and data is stored offsite, not

locked into one computer as is the case with traditional desktop software.

- Internet connection – You need a good internet connection for cloud accounting to work efficiently.
- Subscription – Most cloud software is paid on a subscription basis – you pay monthly and can upgrade or downgrade the level of services required according to your business requirements.

Integration with other business applications

In addition to the accounting side of running a business, cloud software opens up new range of options for business to streamline other aspects of their operations. Cloud accounting software can integrate with numerous business applications that, for example, might run your point of sale, job sheets, time sheets for employees and many more. If you're thinking of integrating a cloud based application into your business it pays to review the options available and talk to the software provider about security and how the business application integrates with your cloud accounting software. This is very important to do before you make any transition as poor integration can eliminate any benefits moving to cloud accounting can provide.

Conclusion

One thing that most accountants and businesses can agree on is that while the transition to using cloud based accounting and applications in business is new and takes time and education, the benefits far outweigh the traditional methods. A complete change in software brand is not always required. Several companies have improved their desktop software to offer a cloud based version while other companies have created new and innovative software specifically built for the cloud environment. Each business will have different needs so there is not a one size fits all approach. **Contact your local Murray Nankivell office** to discuss your needs and to help you find the right direction to take in your move to the cloud.

Lucerne Australia thanks Murray Nankivell - Silver Sponsor for providing audit services.



HIGH PERFORMANCE CUSTOM BLEND WITH REDUCED BLOAT POTENTIAL

Looking for an option to produce high-quality feed, that was safe for cattle to graze, Robert Ball of Singleton, New South Wales, discussed some options with his local agronomist. A Pasture Genetics custom blend of L71 Lucerne, Balance Chicory, and Ranger Plantain was selected for year-round performance under irrigation.

This blend was fast to establish and delivered extremely high-value feed from the time it was first ready to graze, eight weeks post sowing.

The blend was sown at 15 kilograms per hectare with 150 kilograms of starter fertiliser.

L71 Lucerne was at the core of the blend due to its ability to be grazed hard and recover quickly. It also has excellent quality and persistence characteristics, meaning it is an ideal mixed-grazing option.

The Balance Chicory and Ranger Plantain provide mineral replacement and reduce the bloat risk of the lucerne by adding highly digestible fibre to the feed mix.

This blend produced not only plentiful feed but also fast regrowth. “The stock ate everything that was in front of them, and it showed in their weight gain and overall health condition,” Robert said.

Robert grazes his herd of commercial beef cattle on a rotational basis, keeping the livestock in feed, but also allowing the plants time to recover and grow to their full potential without overgrazing the blend.

“I have had approximately eight grazes off the paddock this year, which is a good result. “As a year-round option, you just can’t go past this blend as it has so many advantages in a grazing system like mine,” Robert concluded .



WINTER SEMI-DORMANT PRODUCES QUALITY HAY IN THE HUNTER VALLEY

As a farming contractor, Geoff Ball of Whittingham in the Hunter Valley, New South Wales, looked to grow Pasture Genetics L56 Lucerne to target the hay market.

Geoff has been sowing L56 Lucerne on his family owned and operated property for the past four years.

Geoff has come to rely upon L56 Lucerne to produce high-quality, soft, hay which is always well received by customers feeding to stock or horses.

L56 Lucerne is well suited to the Hunter Valley climate as it is a semi-winter dormant type.

“With heavy dews and cold morning temperatures in the winter, it is tough to produce hay. L56 Lucerne is dormant during this period so that suits, but on either side of winter we can make silage,” Geoff said.

During this dormant winter period, Geoff practices his weed control programme with a winter clean or may sow ryegrass or oats into the stand for added winter production.

Geoff expects up to six cuts off of L56 Lucerne per year dependent on the season, yielding between 12-20 tonnes per hectare, per year.

“Lucerne is a big user of potassium, calcium, and other micronutrients, so we go out of our way to keep the nutrition up to the lucerne year-round.

“Our management programme includes three or four applications of a custom NPKS blend to keep the lucerne at its optimum health.

“My customers are really pleased with the consistency and quality of my L56 Lucerne hay,” Geoff concluded.



The overall export business is still relatively slow although we have seen more interest in the past month than in the first half of the year which is hopefully a positive sign for the coming months. We have been shipping a number of containers of Rhodes grass from our tropical business to the Middle East which is a short term rotation crop with lucerne so when these pivots are cut for grass hay later in the year, it is likely they will be replaced with lucerne for their protein hay requirements.

The middle of the year is traditionally a quieter time for enquiry from the Middle East due to a lot of the key decision makers taking holidays to escape the heat and also a number of holidays and subsequent celebrations following these events. We have a number of containers going to Saudi Arabia this month but the volumes are well down on previous volumes.

South America has been a strong market in the past years however the Argentinean economy is continuing to have troubles with inflation really starting to bite. With the rapidly increasing peso, the imported seed from Australia (and other origins) is costing more to purchase on a local basis. In addition to this, there are large inventories of carryover seed due to lower sales than anticipated. Combined with a large area of uncertified area harvested this year it means the demand for the coming year may be down.

There is a large temptation for contracted lucerne seed crops to be cut for hay this year to take advantage of the high hay prices, however it's a timely reminder that proprietary seed companies have invested a great deal of time and money into developing ongoing markets for these contracted varieties. A number of the export customers have built their businesses around proprietary varieties as a point of difference and if Australian companies cannot provide consistent supply, these export markets may look to other parts of the world who can provide greater certainty and push us out of their markets.

Key Contacts for PGG Wrightson Seeds

Contracting and Agronomic Support:

Jess Nottle – Seed Production Agronomist – 0438 302 148

Wayne Heading – Seed Production Agronomist – 0447 551 458

Commons Purchasing:

Anthony Quilter – Commons Procurement Coordinator – 0427 572 125

Seed Cleaning:

Greg Excell – Keith Site Manager – 0408 838 684



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Greetings to all the Lucerne Leader readers.

The overall demand for lucerne seed continues to be murky. Saudi customers have been buying comparable volumes during 2018 when compared with same six-month period in 2017. Nevertheless, it's a feeble amount when compared to the previous years, as illustrated in Chart 1.

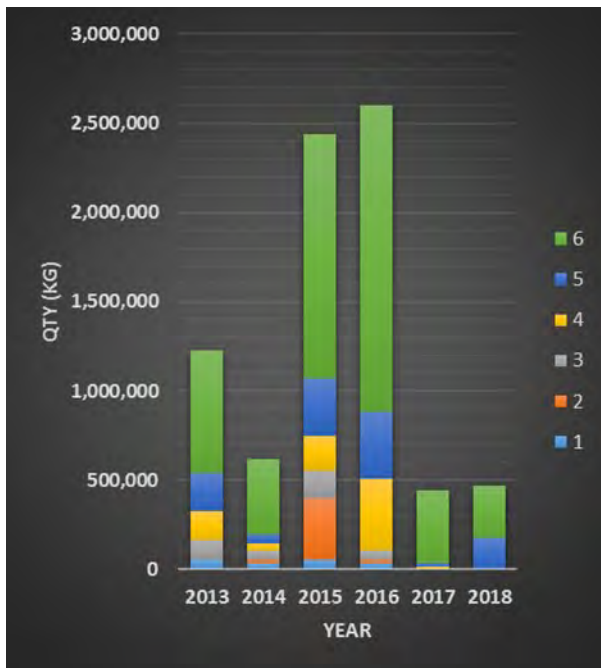


Chart 1: Total quantity (KG) of Lucerne seed exported from Australia to Saudi Arabia 2013-2018 (for 1 Jan- 30 Jun each year)

During the first six months in 2018, the ABS exports for lucerne was reported to be nearly 2,000MT. Looking at the historical numbers this represents between 25-30% of the total yearly historical export figures as shown in Chart 2. So, the question is, have we reached the bottom of demand cycle?

With the month of August ringing in the end of Eid Al Adha festivities in the MENA region, we have experienced a restrained appetite for additional orders, so the status quo continues to be fluid.

I have fielded numerous enquiries for fall dormancy 5-10 lucerne varieties from several non-traditional regions over the last few months. This is a consequence of the anticipated exodus of forage production from Saudi to support in the supply of fodder for the livestock industry in Saudi Arabia. The exponential growth that was anticipated in certain adjacent territories, with abundant land and water resources is yet to materialise.

I question how ready the supply chain is to deal with the full-blown demand for livestock feeds in Saudi Arabia, once the

full extent of the water saving measures in Saudi starts to take effect.

By and large it's now an accepted reality that the Saudi Arabian water saving measures are an essential element. However, the phase-out timeline of forage production in Saudi appears to be exceptionally hasty. Particularly as the other regions have yet to demonstrate the ability to deliver alternative sources of feed. Similarly, we have yet to see a considerable reduction in domestic livestock (sheep, camels & goats) numbers in Saudi Arabia, which we estimate consumes approximately 70% of domestic produced forages.

A good number of regular South American buyers report they have carry over and with a reasonable home-grown seed crop, thus enquires have been exceptionally passive. My plan is to visit this region during November 2018, attending the local yearly seed industry convention in Buenos Aires, Argentina as the main sowing season is during the upcoming autumn.

Please feel free to contact me on 0419 983 984 should you wish to talk to me directly. Best Regards, Walter.

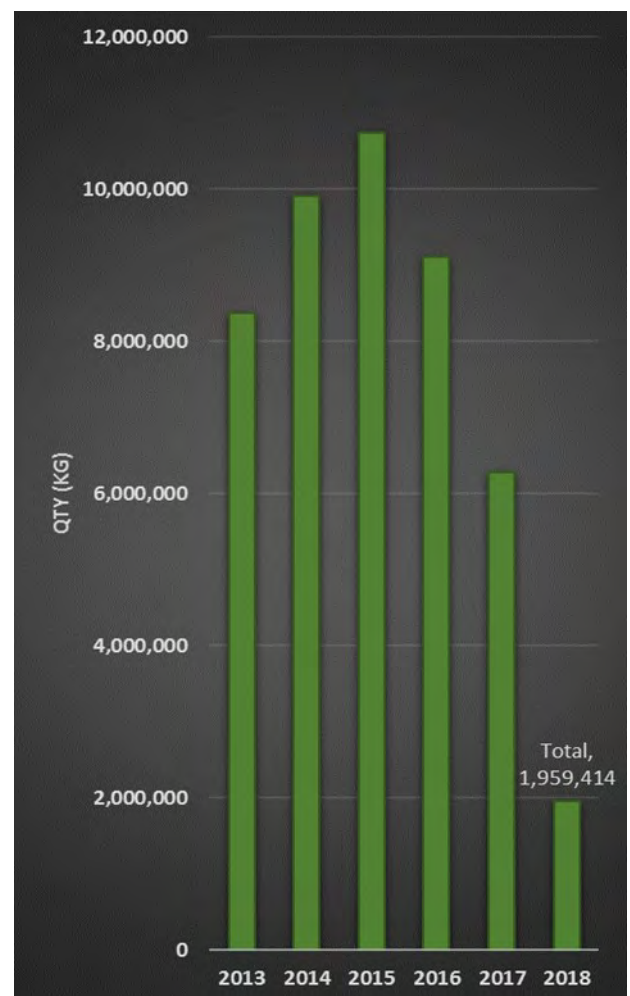


Chart 2: Total quantity (KG) of Lucerne seed exported from Australia 2013-18 (to 30 June for 2018)

LUCERNE EXPORT STATISTICS from AUSTRALIA -January 2012 to April 2018

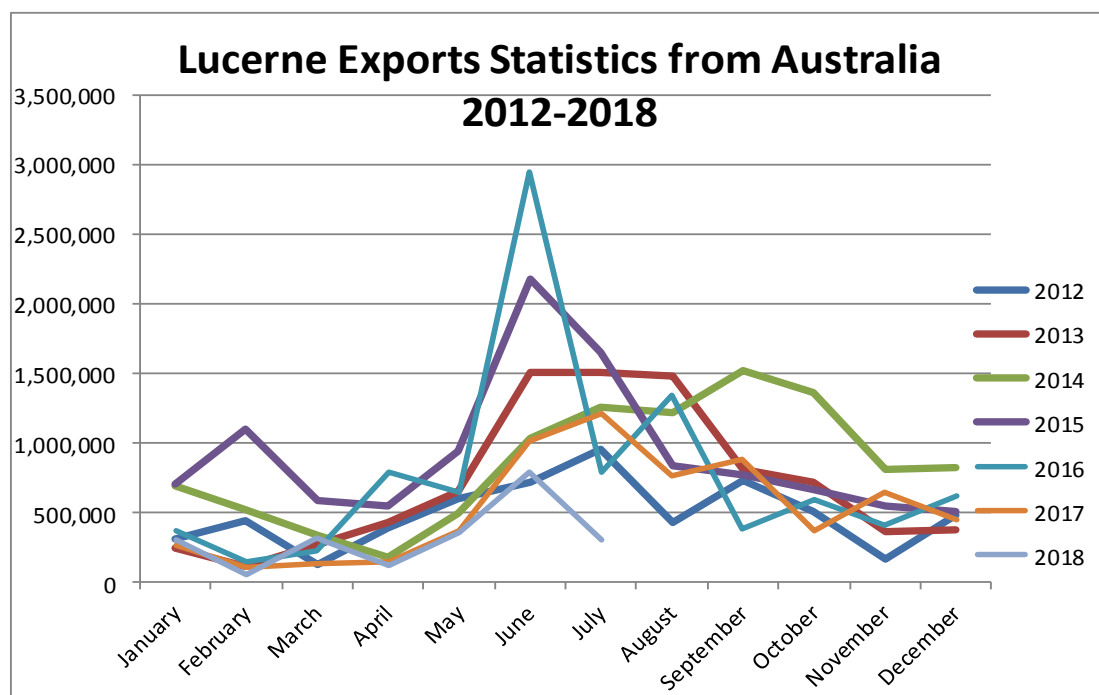
Courtesy of Teague Australia



Quantities below are in kg

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Year to date Difference 2017 & 2018
Jan	310,144	245,741	687,172	698,895	374,150	266,596	307,530	40,934
Feb	445,793	118,025	518,553	1,099,252	148,919	108,988	57,008	-11,046
Mar	130,625	269,091	334,033	582,929	227,050	127,000	321,205	183,159
Apr	385,262	424,057	171,816	549,340	784,031	143,025	123,100	163,234
May	594,069	647,509	495,472	940,000	644,704	363,023	355,575	155,507
Jun	721,122	1,509,605	1,029,000	2,176,805	2,942,685	1,018,477	794,995	-67,975
Jul	951,685	1,510,278	1,260,782	1,649,080	786,450	1,214,352	303,288	-979,039
Aug	430,924	1,482,357	1,217,121	834,178	1,339,684	767,256		
Sep	726,310	811,667	1,516,965	770,857	388,207	882,195		
Oct	509,447	719,882	1,356,922	667,503	588,199	364,673		
Nov	169,450	363,877	810,704	543,246	409,700	649,318		
Dec	483,832	379,122	829,293	511,127	623,560	443,729		
Total	5,858,663	8,481,211	10,227,833	11,023,212	9,257,339	6,348,911		

This summary was produced using data supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.



We thank Teague Australia, an associate member of Lucerne Australia, for supplying these figures.

Unlike many areas in the nation the SE of South Australia has, after a slow start to the season, received good growing season rainfall with the Keith to Willalooka area receiving close to double long term average rainfall for August and most crops in this region are looking solid. Pasture growth rates particularly on sand have been slow but have increased from mid August. Broad acre crops are showing solid potential but will still need some more rain over the next eight weeks and a mild frost free finish to realise potential.

Currently lucerne growers are just beginning to lock up dryland and irrigation stands for hay and some very early stands are set to be cut for hay within the next 14 days, if an opportunity occurs with suitable weather conditions. This is particularly early but unprecedented demand for hay out of the paddock has created an opportunity to creep in an extra hay cut over the season and capitalise on high pricing driven by high livestock prices and drought conditions in other regions.

Uncertainty about lucerne seed prices for the coming season has made many growers review their programs and look at enterprises with less perceived risk such as livestock finishing and hay production. It has not occurred often that other enterprises offer more potential income than seed production but without strong market signals in the next month much of speculative dryland seed area will be put to hay production and for finishing lambs and growers will be looking to marketers for indicative seed pricing to make management decisions on irrigation. Much of the remaining area of irrigation will be reviewed as the season progresses and seed lock up occurs over the November/ December period.

Currently lucerne hay crops are being monitored for aphids with some early numbers or blue green aphid being detected and warmer weather forecast for next week will possibly see numbers increase. These infestations are often not treated in grazing stands that are crash grazed to allow beneficial insect numbers to build up, but with a premium for hay and biomass this year many stands are being treated upon detection of infestation. The insecticides are being added to foliar trace elements such as manganese, zinc and copper to maximise potential yield.

When transitioning from seed production to hay production, growers will need to consider revising the usually more conservative seed production fertiliser programs to a more robust program to push biomass for hay production. Every ton of lucerne hay will remove approximately 33kg/ton of nitrogen, 3.3kg/ton of phosphorus, 28kg/ton of potassium, 2.4kg/ton sulphur and 11kg/ton calcium. Growers will need to at least target removal figures to maintain fertility and maximise production.

Local conditions have once again highlighted the benefits of lucerne as a premium perennial pasture species and the income options it can make available when moisture and management allow.



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Lucerne Australia Members

Welcome to new members: PA & ML Wallis

Adlington, Stuart and Valerie	Hutchings, SC & CA	Newton Pastoral Pty Ltd
Allen's Warrawee Park	Hyfield Pastoral Pty Ltd	Nupey Pty Ltd
Altus, TJ & JL 'Moonmera'	Jaeschke Partners	Obst, MB & SC
Arney, JF & JT & Sons	Jarra Farm Trust	Oldfield, T & J
Ashby, AD & DC	Jesse, Cameron	PSB Investments
Bellsands	Karatta Pastoral	Richardson, AJ & MJ & Son
Bergan Park	Keller Partners	Rillamead Pty Ltd
Brecon Proprietors	Kenwyn Proprietors	Rowett, NJ & LK
Brown, DC & DG	Kester, R.J & J	Ryan, GT & WB
Cacia Downs Farming Company	Kuchel, DJ & CE	Sanders, DE & FM
Circle H Farms	Leach, PJ & Co	Sanders, GE & LM
Connor Pastoral Company Pty Ltd	Loller, B & L	Sanders, SN & DA
Connor, TR & MJ	M & K Harvey Family Trust	Sanders, RJ & ED
Corlinga Partners	Makin Nominees	Scottswell Partners
Crawford, CJ Pty Ltd	Mardango Props	Shepherd, JE & Co
Creston Partners	Maroona Proprietors	Simpson, GE & TM
Densley, NB & MR	Martin, JP & SGP	Twynem Partners
Florando Partners	McMurray, BJ & CB	Vowles, B, K & M
Frith, NJ	McMurray, JA & KA	Yurgo Farms
Fry, AL & JE & Son	McWimay Ptd Ltd	Wallis, PA & ML
Glendoon Pastoral Co	MM Hawkins, Brippick	Wilsdon, RE & TK
Graetz S & H	Munrose Nominees	Zacker, AJ & JM
Hunt, DB & JS	Nalang Pastoral Co	
Hunt, IK & SA	Newfair Investments P/L	



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Welcome to new members: Feedworks Pty Ltd and Fodderlink

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DO YOU KNOW THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Got a question for Lucerne Australia? Contact the Executive Officer or any our Executive Committee Members who will be happy to help.



Bruce Connor, Chairman

Bruce was born on the family dairy farm at Mt Compass. He relocated to a property at Tintinara in the late 1970's to grow out replacement heifers. He and his family now farms beef cattle, cropping, dryland and pivot irrigated lucerne for hay and seed. Contact: 0428 835 310.

Josh Rasheed, Deputy Chairman

In 2011 Josh moved from the family Real Estate business in Meningie to become the Contract Cropping Manager and Pasture Advisor for Naracoorte Seeds. He continued in this role until 2016 where he took over the National & International Lucerne Seed Trading while still continuing his roll of Pasture Advisory. Also in 2016 Josh and his wife Emma bought into the business with Jamie & Peta Tidy. Contact: 0427 790 655.



Guy Cunningham, Grower Member

Guy farms with his wife Sarah and family near Willalooka. The business comprises a 300 cow stud beef cattle herd, dryland winter cropping and lucerne production, mainly aimed at seed with some hay sold off farm. Contact: 0429 875 422.

Rodney Lush, Grower Member

Rodney farms with his wife Sally at Coombe, producing lucerne seed, lamb and wool since 1991. The farm production system is based around centre pivot and flood irrigated lucerne and rain fed perennial pastures. He also provides farm business advice and support to clients in the Mallee, South East and Western Victoria as a consultant with Proadvice. Contact 0419 862 510.



Scott Campbell, Grower Member

Scott and his wife Sophie Campbell own and manage 4100 hectares at Keith. They are highly focused on dryland and irrigated lucerne production and also run 3500 ewes for prime lamb production and a winter cropping program His family have been involved in the lucerne seed industry for more than 40 years. Contact: 0417 887 562.

Sarah Martin, Associate Member

Sarah is a Senior Rural Manager at Rabobank, responsible for a portfolio of rural clients. She holds a Bachelor of Science (Agriculture) from the University of Adelaide. She resides on a mixed farming operation (lucerne, sheep, cattle and horses) with her family west of Keith. Contact: 0429 101 840.



Simon Allen, Grower Member

Simon is involved for 10 years in a family farming operation based at Keith, which produces irrigated lucerne seed and hay, cereal grain and hay, pulses, oilseeds and a commercial merino flock. Simon attended college, studying rural business management and has previously sat on the executive committee of Lucerne Australia and its variety trials committee. Contact: 0408 893 786

Scott Hutchings, Associate Member

Scott is a senior agronomist with Cox Rural Keith and has worked in the upper south east for 21 years covering pulses, oilseeds and cereals and lucerne for seed, hay and pasture. Scott holds a bachelor of Agricultural Science from Roseworthy Agricultural College. Scott and his wife Cath also run a small prime lamb production and opportunity dryland seed production enterprise. Contact: 0428 551 188.



Jenny Aitken, Executive Officer

Jenny was raised on a grain and contract harvesting enterprise and has a good understanding of rural issues. After spending most of her working life in radio, she also worked for a Senator in Queensland and has a passion for promoting agriculture to the wider community. Contact: 0439 538 332.