

# LUCERNE *Leader*



ISSUE 66 | SEPTEMBER 2022



## LUCERNE VARIETY TRIAL UPDATE

*Assess optimum plant stress levels for seed production*



The trial continues to look good coming into its fifth year and the final spring for the project. Winter cleaning has been carried out with a herbage cut due to be taken on the seed plots later in September.

you to our guest speakers for providing some excellent, highly informative presentations. A copy of the fourth-year summary results has been provided to all members by email.

The results from the fourth-year seed harvest were presented at the LA Information Session held on 27th July 2022. The Information Session was well attended by 46 members and industry representatives. Attendees heard from Kalyx (Trial Results), Rabobank (Informed Land Purchasing Decisions), Seed Services Australia (Certified Seed Delivery) and AHBIC (Varroa Mite Update). Thank

Seed varieties have been supplied by: Alforex Seeds, Barenbrug, DLF Seeds, Naracoorte Seeds, Seed Force, S&W Seed Company and Upper Murray Seeds.

*More details on the trial, link to the moisture probe data and photos are available on the Lucerne Australia Website.*



**Rabobank**

# EYES ON CHINA'S DROUGHT – FOR GLOBAL GRAIN AND FARM INPUT IMPACTS



Rabobank

September 2, 2022

by Cheryl Kalisch Gordon, Rabobank Senior Commodities Analyst

China is battling drought in parts of the nation. The hot, dry conditions have river levels falling dramatically in some provinces and questions emerging about crop production.

Rabobank senior commodities analyst Cheryl Kalisch Gordon said while this adds to drought concerns elsewhere in the world, the effects on global grain prices are likely to be fairly limited, at least for now.

“The drought is focused in China’s south, southwest and eastern regions, particularly the Yangtze River Basin, an area accounting for two-thirds of China’s rice-planting acreage. As a staple food in China, this triggers alarm,” she said.

However, Dr Kalish Gordon said irrigation is widely used and, while available water supplies are falling, farmers still have this option for much of the region. Moreover, China’s rice production is staggered, with some single and some double cropping at different times of the year.

“The rice crop most at risk is single-season paddy rice, which is entering grain filling at the moment. Last week, China’s State Council announced a 10 billion yuan (USD1.45 billion) subsidy to support rice farmers experiencing drought conditions to alleviate higher costs of irrigation, including for this crop.



“According to China’s Ministry of Water Resources, 2.2 million hectares of arable land has been affected by drought, which might normally produce around 14 million tonnes of milled rice,” she said.

Dr Kalisch Gordon said it is difficult to project the potential yield losses, but China is essentially self-sufficient in rice production and, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, holding around 115 million tonnes of rice as inventory, most of which is controlled by state reserve. “This volume means China’s rice stock-to-use ratio is over 70 per cent. As such, a drop in production in the single-season paddy rice is manageable and unlikely to trigger a material lift in imports or change the broader grains and oilseed complex.”

For now at least, the Rabobank analyst said national corn, soybeans and wheat production in China is not at heightened risk from the drought, due to different growing seasons and planting regions. The majority of the country’s corn and soybeans are produced in the north and northeast region.

“As for wheat, it will only be planted in October in northern China. Regionally within China, supplies may get tight, but, as a whole and unless the drought expands into the north and lingers into October, there is no strong signal that China’s grain import program will lift dramatically.

“A more immediate impact to watch is ongoing power rationing in China.”

Dr Kalish Gordon said the affected region is home to the majority of China’s hydroelectric power capacity including the world’s largest hydroelectric power station, the Three Gorges Dam, and hydroelectricity accounts for more than 20 per cent of China’s electricity supply.

“With greater demand for air-conditioning due to the heat, and less hydroelectricity able to be produced due to lower river levels, electricity rationing is taking place in many provinces, and ranging from turning off non-essential lights in Shanghai to factories reducing operating hours to reduce pressure on the power grid.

“Based on previous periods of electricity rationing, we might expect farm input manufacturing to be prioritised. But also to be prioritised to ensure domestic, not export, supply.”

Keeping watch on China’s drought in coming months should not just be about how global grains prices might be affected, Dr Kalish Gordon said, but also whether the supply chain of agri-chemical and farm vehicle parts will be disrupted.

To find out more about other Rabobank research, contact Rabobank Mt Gambier on (08) 8726 2500 or subscribe to RaboResearch Food & Agribusiness Australia & New Zealand on your podcast app.

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# S&W SEED COMPANY UPDATE

by Peter Gibbs – National Production Manager



Since our last report, a lot has been happening within S&W Seed Company.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate all of our growers for producing excellent quality seed given the weather circumstances presented to us before harvest. Some areas totalled more rain than others, which was reflected in the clean-out, reducing the final yield. But overall, the seed quality was very good, and our end customers will be happy.

With the US harvest all but complete, the focus will be on what is left of the Australian harvested seed, with prices remaining very stable alongside what they were during the Australian lucerne harvest.

We are continually receiving interest in all our products both internationally and domestically. This means that we will be close to a sell-out position by the time the next harvest comes around on all our lucerne varieties.

Export shipping continues to present challenges regarding booking vessels, uncertain vessel times, and allocations. In conjunction with these challenges, the constant price changes have kept our international logistics team busy so we can get seed on the water and to its destination. There doesn't seem to be any relief on this as we enter 2023.

Domestically S&W had been very busy moving a lot of Autumn demand seed earlier in the year and is now focusing its energy on the summer crops such as forage and grain sorghum, along with millet and other summer forage crops.

## Production

This is the first year we have been able to offer two of our new varieties SW18NPK91 & SW18NPK92, both have been in the top 5 performing varieties in the LA trial in all stress levels. These two exciting products are getting interest in both the domestic and export markets. Along with these, we have also been busy planting more proprietary dormancy 5/6/7 varieties to cater to the increasing domestic market.

## Staffing Update

There have been some staff changes in the last three months. David Callachor has left the business, and Cameron Henley has now taken over his role as Managing Director of the International business unit. Cameron was responsible for the majority of sales in the MENA region. Andrew Brooker has now taken over his role. Andrew is based in the UK but will be responsible for all lucerne and sorghum sales into the MENA and EU regions. We hope Andrew can make it over to Australia in February to meet our lucerne growers and discuss the market in person.

On another staffing note, our regional territory managers recently got together for the first time since the COVID pandemic hit in early 2020. This was an essential week for our Territory Managers. Not only to reconnect in person but also to view our various facilities in SA, as well as to see our R&D sites in Meningie for salt tolerance work and Keith, where we have a large demonstration site of all our products.

## R & D Site

We have been fortunate to be able to access an irrigation block on the outskirts of Keith. This will be a pivotable block for the future of our lucerne breeding work, alongside some of our other proprietary products we will be releasing in the coming years.

S&W is planning to get back to a regular field day slot from February 2023, where we will showcase some of our new lucerne varieties that will be released in the coming years. We also plan to have an open invitation to all farmers in the region to view our pasture demonstration site, which may be helpful when making pasture seed decisions as we come into 2023.

These events will be well advertised closer to the date.

With good rains over August and the potential for good spring rains, it looks like growers in all our growing regions will be well set up for a good season with their livestock and annual crops. We wish all our growers a successful spring/summer harvest.

Peter Gibbs – 0427 574027

# HELP US MAP THE SPREAD OF INSECTICIDE RESISTANT BLUEGREEN APHIDS

by Dr Evatt Chirgwin, Cesar Australia



Bluegreen aphids (BGA) can damage pasture seed crops by feeding and spreading harmful plant viruses. Historically, growers have protected their crops from BGA by spraying insecticides that efficiently control these aphids. However, recent research revealed some BGA populations have newly evolved resistance to the chemicals registered and routinely used to control them.

Cesar Australia and Lucerne Australia have commenced a new project to help growers manage insecticide-resistant BGA. To do so, we are gathering key information on these resistant strains of BGA, including where they have spread, what crop types they are most common, and whether resistance is increasing over time (seasons and years).

For our project to succeed, we need your help!

If you, or someone in your area, has experienced any issues with BGA, we request samples of these BGA be posted to Cesar Australia's laboratories for free resistance testing.

Your help will allow Cesar Australia and Lucerne Australia to provide regional and seasonal recommendations (e.g., which chemicals are most effective) for BGA control and help prevent future resistance (e.g., to new chemicals) arising in coming years.

For information on collecting and posting samples, please contact Dr Evatt Chirgwin (email: [echirgwin@cesaraustralia.com](mailto:echirgwin@cesaraustralia.com) or phone: 0487292556).

Bluegreen aphids can be identified by their grey-green to blue-green colour, oval-shaped body, long legs. Adults are ~ 3 mm long and are most common in spring and autumn. Further details on BGA and other aphid species can be found on the Cesar Australia's PestNotes page: <https://cesaraustralia.com/pestnotes>



## SEED FORCE UPDATE

by David Barnett, Territory & Key Account Manager



### Cropping Update

The season is shaping up very nicely with a weather forecast of a good finish to the growing season as writing this and commodity pricing is still very strong. Seed Force have just released 2 exciting new products to the Australian market for 2023:

RGT Baseline TT Hybrid Canola – Mid/late maturing, Triazine tolerant, with excellent seedling vigour with top end yield and oil % suited to later maturing growing areas.

RGT Waugh Winter Wheat – RGT Waugh is a high yielding, long season winter wheat with exceptional yield potential and excellent disease package. It is another top yielding wheat to come from the RAGT dressing room.

Both the above releases have just populated on the NVT website and are worth checking out at local NVT sites as they are very well suited to the SE SA environment.

We will also be attending the Millicent Hyper Yielding Field Day on Thursday 20th October and look forward to catching up with you on the day.

### Spring Forage Options

With excellent red meat and milk pricing, Seed Force can offer many options to suit the spring planting window, including Seed Force proprietary Lucerne range SF614QL, SF714QL & SF914QL or our high-performance Forage Brassica's - SF Greenland forage rape & SF Pacer leafy turnip. We can also offer complimentary herbs in SF Punter chicory, SF Endurance plantain and SF Rossi red clover and SF Quest white clover to maximise animal health and weight gains.

Once we hit consistent soil temperatures of 16C and rising our forage sorghums will come into play - SF Flourish (Sudan x Sorghum) is ideal for grazing, hay and silage.

Spring sown Oat/Pea mixes are perfect for excellent quality silage/hay for fodder conservation.

Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss spring forage options for your farm.

**David Barnett**

Phone: 0467 246 326 Email: [davidbarnett@seedforce.com](mailto:davidbarnett@seedforce.com)

# FODDER INDUSTRY WRAP UP

by AFIA



The 2022 National Fodder Conference was recently held in Toowoomba and the event was warmly received as an opportunity for the fodder industry 'family' to be reunited after several long years of pandemic lockdowns and travel restrictions.

The conference covered a wide range of topics including innovation, cyber security; changes at the Bureau of Meteorology to better support the needs of agriculture; safety and mental health; oat breeding and agronomy; the NFF 2030 \$100 billion campaign; recruitment and employment tips; attracting young people to agriculture; and new export entities.

A highlight of the event was the "Our Place" session which included presentations from a diverse set of fodder producers from across the country sharing their business and life stories.

During an interactive session, conference delegates raised a number of issues impacting their business operations. These included logistics and freight, export information; ring testing, the fodder levy, hay quality, water and succession planning.

The AFIA 2022 AGM was held during the conference and saw the re-election of Frank McRae and Jason Palmer to the AFIA Board, and the election of two new Directors - Alex Peacock and Phil Snowden. We would also like to congratulate Peter Gillett who was elected by the membership as an AFIA Life Member. Peter's significant contribution and leadership to the Australian fodder industry was recognised at the conference gala dinner.

As part of a project partnership with Dairy Australia, AFIA generates a Hay Report 40 weeks a year which tracks the movement of hay and fodder nationally across the 12 key dairy regions. Trends across recent reports include that good quality hay



*The AFIA Board following the recent AGM at the National Fodder Conference in Toowoomba, from left to right, Brad Griffiths (Chairman), Jason Palmer, Alex Peacock, Louis Kelly, Suzanne Woods, Frank McRae and Phil Snowden.*

is in demand as supplies have tightened; input costs continue to impact cropping decisions reducing the quantities of pasture hay produced during late winter; and opportunistic hay production has not been seen as a price competitive cropping option in many regions where grain crops are an alternative. In a number of regions hay/fodder producers have little hay on the open market for sale to new customers, most has been contracted for sale to long-term buyers.

For all the latest Hay Report information visit : <https://afia.org.au/resources/#hay-report>



# BARENBRUG UPDATE



by Daryl Turner, Southern Production Manager

## Domestic

Favourable conditions in most key lucerne growing areas has again seen solid demand for lucerne seed in preparation for spring sowing. Winter active varieties such as SARDI 7 Series 2 and SARDI 10 Series 2 are mostly sought after with high winter active varieties being preferred by some specialist hay producers. There are some growers however that are taking a more cautious approach preferring to retain older pastures for another year rather than investing in a new lucerne stand. This is mainly due to lower livestock numbers and hence reduced need for improved fodder options. Moving forward we anticipate good demand for Autumn 2023.

## International

Market demand for lucerne seed globally has remained strong. All major markets have been active and taken good quantities of seed. Consumption levels have been above average in the EU which has relieved much of the carry over stock in that region and around average for other regions. The outlook for the Lucerne seed industry is looking rather positive for the short to medium term given some of the challenges USA producers are facing with water availability and the ever increasing demand for hay. Barenbrug

will be attending the World Alfalfa Congress in California later this year where we will be hearing from the scientific community about new developments in lucerne breeding and how they are tackling key issues such as water utilisation and salinity. These issues, amongst others, will have a significant impact on the future directions for the global industry.

## Seed Production

The 2022 harvest of the Lucerne Australia seed yield trial results once again highlights the importance of local breeding and selection regarding consistent performance of seed and forage yields. The Barenbrug portfolio once again performed extremely well with Heritage 10 (PX 1), SARDI 7 Series 2 and Heritage ST (BAR ST) ranked at the top of the list for seed and forage yield.

We are currently looking to secure large areas of new plantings of these varieties for the 2023 sowing season. To ensure you secure your variety of choice please contact our production agronomy team consisting of Justin Elliott or Michael Birks on the below details.

Justin Elliott - 0408 851 411

Michael Birks - 0456 437 976

# LIMESTONE COAST SEEDS UPDATE



by Greg Excell, Limestone Coast Seeds

It is pleasing to see the Royal Adelaide Show going ahead this year after a two year hiatus due to Covid. Our facility is being utilised by the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society to conduct seed testing for the entries in the Seed and Grain Section. We are also sponsoring the Bordertown High School Show Team and are enjoying receiving updates on their success at the Show. It's refreshing and exciting to see so many young people who are interested in Agriculture.

I recently took part in the Lucerne Australia Study Tour to the Yorke Peninsula and Mid North. This was a well organised trip and it was good to see another part of our state and visit a diverse range of agricultural businesses. A topic that came up at many of the places we visited was that of value adding and how businesses are diversifying to offset the cost of living and improve their bottom line.

It is interesting to note that in the last 12 months there have been dramatic increases in the cost of running a business in the seed industry. The cost of the bags required for processing have gone up by 55%, export pallets by 65%, as well as an increase in pallet wrapping, general consumables and electricity. Whilst we try to

keep our prices as low as possible, we have had to make a few adjustments in recent months and we thank our clients for their continued support.

Our warehouse still has many lines of lucerne seed in it, however, it is pleasing that it is all sold and waiting to be shipped. Once this has moved it will free up our pallet racking ready for the 2022/23 season.

We are currently preparing for the upcoming season with the purchase and set up of another cleaning plant which has been trialed recently and is operating as planned. Furthermore, we have also purchased another Cimbria Screen Cleaning Machine, with installation scheduled for the very near future. These two pieces of equipment should aid us in keeping up with increasing tonnages being delivered to the site, and further our ability to complete jobs in a timely manner.

Spring has arrived and the crops around the district are looking impressive. How fortunate we are to live in the area we do. I hope the hay making and cereal harvest goes according to plan, and I look forward to answering any questions you have about your processing requirements.

# LUCERNE AGRONOMY REPORT

by Scott Hutchings, Senior Agronomist, Cox Rural



With the start of spring, mild conditions & good available moisture we are starting to see good growth on lucerne stands as they emerge from the winter cold. At this stage pest numbers are low, but we have seen some cow pea aphid issues in livestock earlier in the year, but incidents seem to have dropped off in the last few months due to greater awareness of the pest and a more proactive management approach. Blue green aphid numbers have been low mainly due to the regular rain event and wintery conditions but monitoring into the spring will be essential. Monitoring and only treating threshold outbreaks in paddocks locked up for hay or seed will be essential due to widespread resistance to commonly used insecticides. Consult your agronomist for control options and use insecticides with a low impact on beneficials where possible. Unfortunately, the registration of alternative products in the grazing/hay crops has been further delayed but Mainman remains an option under permit in seed crops.

September is also the month for Timerite earthmite control to reduce earthmite carryover into next year. Go to <https://www.wool.com/land/timerite/> to get spray by dates for your property and spray a suitable insecticide taking into consideration application method, grazing withholding periods and insecticide resistance status to make your decision. Resistance screening is currently being conducted so we can make more informed decisions moving forward.

Poor spraying conditions over the last few months have often delayed winter cleaning. Be careful in your winter cleaning herbicide choices as you get later in the season as some residual products such as Terbutylazine and Simazine can cause crop damage if applied too late and later winter cleaning can decrease

forage production. With widespread resistance developing in ryegrass, it is also a timely reminder to target problem paddocks and winter clean early (June) as smaller weeds are easier to kill and there are less issues with ground cover effecting residual chemicals. Products like Flumioxazin (Terrain) are less likely to cause crop damage but are only active pre- emergent of weeds or on small weeds. So to optimize its use it should be applied early or in a double application strategy where a burndown product is applied then the terrain applied after weed brownout has been achieved.

High fertiliser prices currently highlight the need for informed decisions around fertiliser applications, look at removal figures, soil tests and historic trials to make decisions on applications. Lucerne Australia completed fertiliser trials a few years ago for seed crops and that trial could be used as a reference point combined with the above factors to make informed decisions with your agronomist.

Growing conditions throughout the Upper southeast have been fantastic year to date with regular but not yet excessive rainfall this has led to some of the best pasture establishment I have seen for a long time, it's amazing what happens on sand with regular rain, modern seeding equipment and soil wetters. Hopefully further rain will allow these stands to fully establish and provide strong pastures and seed stands moving forward.



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**AFIA's 2022 Photo Competition is now open!**

This year's theme is: *Fodder: supporting agriculture to thrive!*

Great prizes to be won! Entries close: **Friday 14 October 2022**

More details: [www.afia.org.au/events](http://www.afia.org.au/events)  
Featuring a 2021 competition entry by Logan Stohel



Australian Fodder Industry Association

# PRODUCTION PRESSURES PERSIST

by Eliza Redfern, Industry Analyst, Dairy Australia



Food supply around the world has been uncertain during 2022, whether from shipping challenges, war and conflict or unfavourable weather harming production. In dairy, pressures have been rising from the ground up, however, there may be some upsides to constrained production.

The production of farm inputs has been under pressure, leading to high costs for some. Above average rainfall over most of the country has supported pasture growth and reduced the need for irrigation and supplementary feed. Despite temporary water prices being low and hay values remaining relatively steady, it seems all other costs are rising. Skyrocketing fertiliser prices have resulted in some farmers mitigating their use to cut on costs (impeding otherwise positive pasture growth), as grain prices also rise. In August, wheat prices increased up to 36% across the dairying regions compared to last year, as strong global demand focuses on Australian product due to declining yields across the northern hemisphere. With grain prices offering attractive returns for growers, less fodder is expected to be produced during the upcoming hay making period. Less supply available could see fodder prices start to rise leading into the summer months.

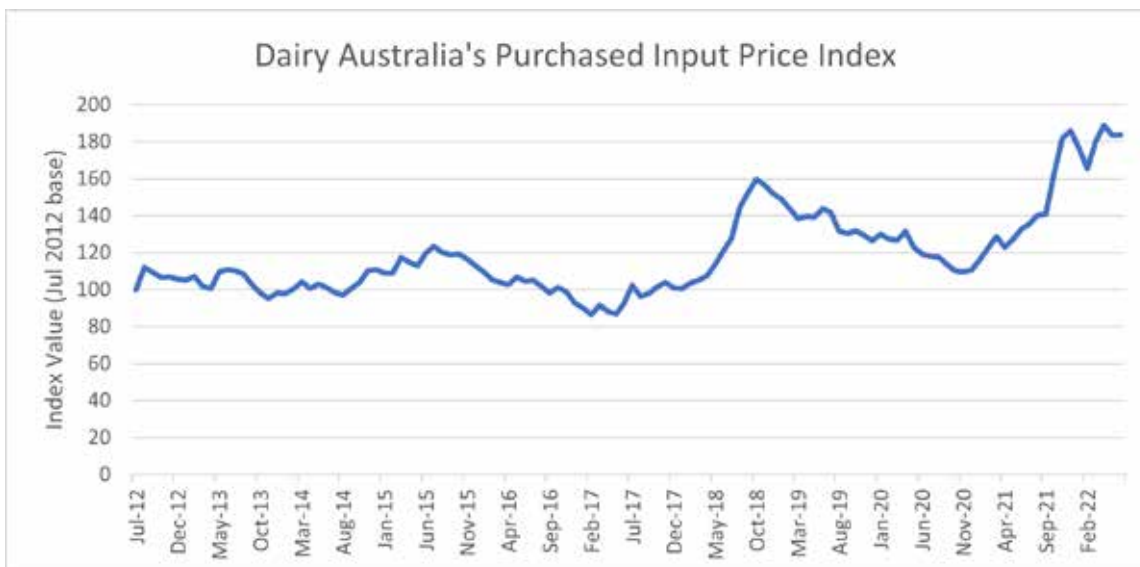
Dairy Australia's new Purchased Input Price Index (as seen in our monthly Production Inputs Monitor) provides a clear picture of cost movement over the past 10 years, illustrating that farm inputs are collectively 56% more expensive than June 2020.

High inputs costs have been a significant milk production growth limiter this season, amongst other constraints. Whilst weather conditions have been ultimately favourable across many dairying regions, above average rainfall has impacted the quality of home-grown feed. Additionally, repeated flooding events have caused devastating damage to farms in several regions across eastern Australia. A lack of labour also weighs on farm operations; whilst leading to increased culling or a conversion to beef, it has acted

as a deciding factor for those contemplating leaving the industry. A smaller national milk pool, however, has led to the highest farmgate milk prices offered to farmers ever, as processors compete to secure milk.

Beyond our shores, there is a similar story. In other key dairy exporting regions, farmers are dealing with high input costs, challenging weather conditions and difficulties securing labour. In New Zealand, wet weather has caused flooding in the South Island, significantly impacting pasture growth during key periods of the season. In the United States (US) and across Europe, drought conditions have diminished feed and milk production. With a third consecutive La Niña event looking likely, Australia and New Zealand are expecting an abundance of rain, whilst the US will be unable to find significant relief from recent conditions. With a smaller global milk pool comes limited product availability, and demand for dairy has been more than ready to scoop it up during the pandemic. However, high than expected inflation and more financially focused buying activity has weakened its power. Additionally, China has been importing less-than-usual volumes of dairy product - a result of repeated lockdowns, lower domestic dairy consumption and strong milk production. Commodity prices have subsequently fallen in recent months. Nevertheless, with milk production growth prospects lacking this season, dairy commodity prices are likely to remain elevated as supply and demand continue to push and pull.

So, whilst there are many challenging factors at play, constrained milk production can come with its benefits. A smaller milk pool in Australia is likely to continue supporting farmgate milk prices. While this compresses processor margins, tight global milk supply may prevent dairy commodity prices from falling too far in times of quieter demand. Tight product availability will also help boost prices when imports rise, extending potential profit margins for processors.





# SYNERGY SEEDS UPDATE

by Craig Myall, Managing Director



International demand for Australian Lucerne seed has continued to be strong since our last report. In the period January to June 2022, 2,898mt has now departed our shores to major destinations including Saudi Arabia 1,171mt (40% of total), USA 653mt (23% of total) and South Africa 354mt (12% of total). These three locations equated to 75% of the total amount shipped. Argentina has only imported 124mt of Australian Lucerne seed in 2022, (4% of total), however they normally take seed in the last six months of the year in order to line up with their domestic demand cycle.

Lucerne seed available at grower level would be at its lowest point in a very long time, with basically only weedy and low germ lines available now for purchase. We have recently encouraged some growers with lines of this type (weeds), to reclean which has produced excellent results and thus allowed seed to be marketed (even if lower in germ). If you have seed of this type, please feel free to contact us to discuss your options.

Shipping continues to have its challenges with limited vessel availability to some locations, and delays in transshipments the key issues at present. Pricing of major routes seem to have flattened out (albeit at historically high levels), which is providing some comfort for exporters when pricing seed for buyers. Major currencies have also fluctuated quite a bit of late as world economies grapple with inflation and the fallout of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine.

On a company level, we will welcome Ruth Taylor to our business in the coming October in a newly created role as Operations and Administration Officer. Ruth has a wealth of experience in Agriculture having worked for Viterra in various roles over the last 23 years. We look forward to her joining the team at Synergy!

## CONTACTS

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## LA MID NORTH AND YORKE PENINSULA STUDY TOUR 16 - 18TH AUGUST 2022



# WHAT WORKER RECORDS SHOULD YOU BE KEEPING?

*courtesy of Safe Ag Systems*



From October through until April, Lucerne farmers are focussed on fodder production, both silage and hay. In many cases it would be almost impossible to expect farmers to complete this work load without additional help, whether that be new workers or contractors, even on the odd occasion a family member steps in to fill the vacant role. As an employer (also known as PCBU) it will be your responsibility to ensure the safety of everyone on farm, visitors included.

As a natural summer growing plant, almost 7,000 agricultural businesses involved in Lucerne production across Australia. With high volumes of fodder and seeding production, farmers rely heavily on machinery and equipment to get the job done. These machines can range from headers or combines harvesters, air seeders or mowers, hay rakes, balers, the list goes on. Since most Lucerne is a specialised enterprise with agronomy machinery, workers will require a higher level of skill and training.

It's best to approach new employees as if it was their first time working on farm. Just because they have been in a similar role on other farms you shouldn't make the assumption that they know your safety requirements.

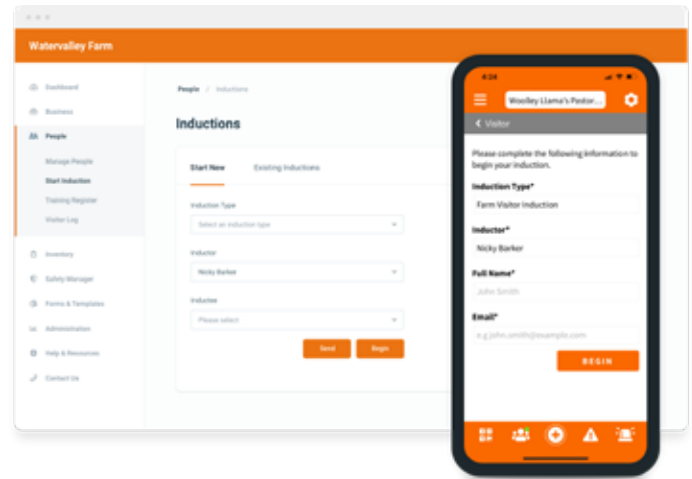
## Inductions and Training

A practical safety induction at the time of starting work can create a positive relationship with your workers. Your concern for their health, safety and wellbeing is important, as is conveying to the worker that they play an important role in their own farm safety and that of their co-workers. Your general safety induction should cover your basic safety information everyone is required to follow on your property, this should include your policies and procedures, known hazards and your emergency plan.

An important part of any farm safety induction is the 'no go' rules. While it may seem like common sense to you, people new to your farm may not understand the risks associated with uneven terrain, confined spaces, tanks, dams etc. Point out overhead powerlines as well when you're taking someone through the no-go zones.

Part of keeping people safe on farm includes the use of policies and procedures. These documents are in place to help prevent or minimise the risks. A good policy outlines acceptable behaviour, allowing for consistency across the business. You may have heard of a Code of Conduct, First Aid Policy, Hazard and Risk Management Policy or a Work Health and Safety Policy. All of these are important and a good place to start.

Health and safety expectations should always be communicated at the commencement of work. Addressing safety at the begin of employment promotes a positive safety culture, allowing you to address any concerns before they become a problem. This upfront communication makes it easier to raise safety issues between workers and managers, and encourages your consultation process.



From the basic safety information you can move onto any specific induction and training related to their job role, such as equipment, machinery, tools they are required to use to get the job done.

## Machinery and Equipment

If you're concerned about training taking your workers off the job for a few days each year, think about the time they'll need to take off if they're seriously injured at work because they weren't properly trained. Farm machinery, including tractors and balers are some of the most dangerous hazards on a farm. The safest option is to go through things with all new workers, even if they are an experienced hand. Every property has a different way of doing things or different expectations, so make the time to take new workers through how things are done.

For something like a tractor, there's no formal qualifications needed but it's just as important to make sure operators are competent. That's an expensive piece of machinery in their hands, which can do a lot of damage if not operated properly. That's where on the job instruction is beneficial.



## Obligations to your Contractors

Most farms will engage contractors from time to time, generally for a specific task or seasonal work. This may include seeding, spraying, harvest, or any other type of contract work.

It's essential to ensure the health and safety of contractors and their employees, including any sub-contractors and their workers too. They are 'workers' under workplace health and safety (WHS) as well so have the same duty, rights and protections as your direct workers when it comes to safety.

When you engage a contractor they also have their own duty towards safety, and in more than one way. They will be a PCBU in their own right, and most likely a worker for you as well. This shared duty can be most effectively managed through good communication and consultation processes, of course which are documented.

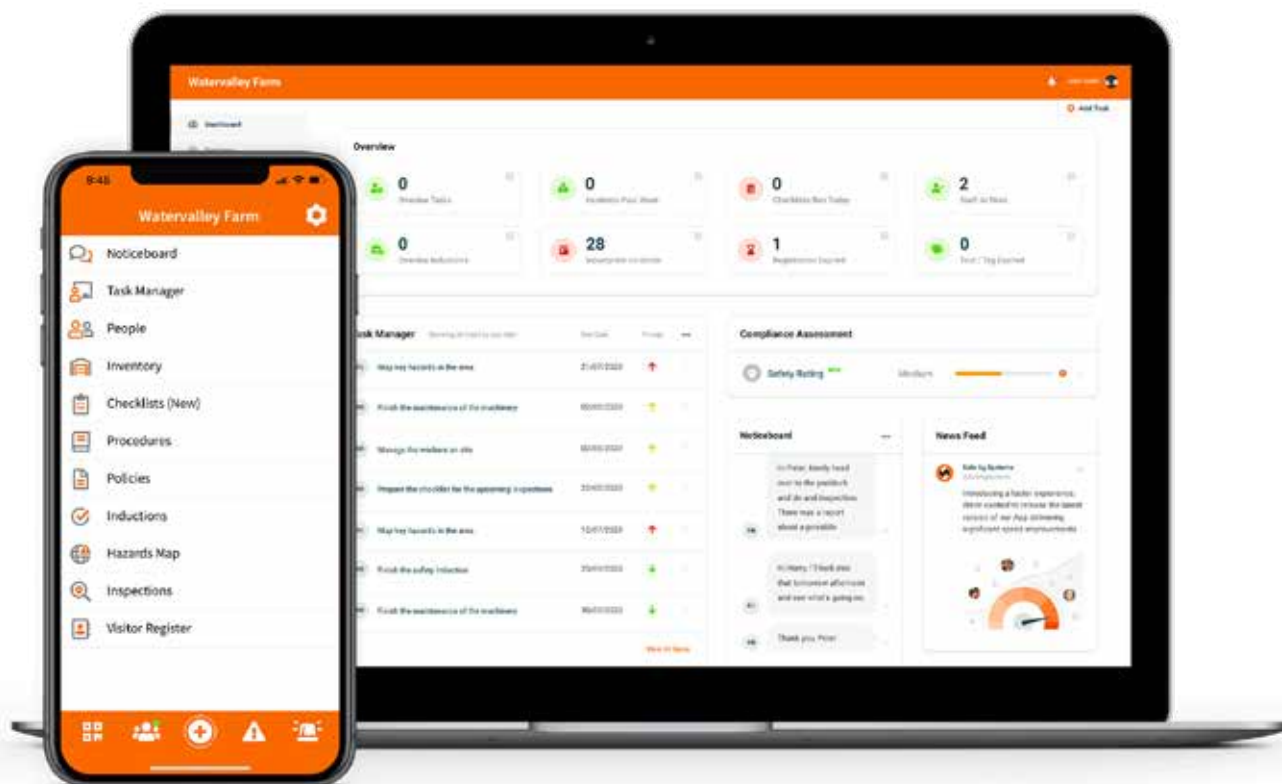
Even after you know they are familiar with the risks on-farm it is still your responsibility to make sure they are following your instructions and working safely to the environmental/physical conditions. This is because your obligation to provide a safe workplace is a non-transferable duty.

As the business owner, you are responsible for managing all hazards that exist on your property, so you need to consider:

- the risks that contractors pose in your workplace, e.g. as a result of having less training in your systems than your employees, or being unfamiliar with your practices and processes
- the risks that they are exposed to as a result of your operations. You must take all reasonable steps to reduce these risks

Consider who owns the farming equipment the workers will be using. If it's yours, it is your obligation to the contractor, and workers, to provide a copy of any Safe Work Procedures you have. If they bring their own tools or equipment then they should have their own procedures for safe use.

This article has been written specifically for our members by Safe Ag Systems. As a member of Lucerne Australia, you can receive a 10% discount off your annual subscription. Terms and Conditions apply so please head to their website [Safe Ag Systems | Safety Management Software](#) or contact their team on 08 8490 0939.



# NARACOORTE SEEDS MARKET REPORT

by Josh Rasheed, Naracoorte Seeds



## Pasture Seeds Stocks Getting Low

After a strong domestic and export pasture seed season we are seeing the lowest carry-over levels of small seed, predominately legumes, recorded for many years. Domestic sales were again strong with confidence in livestock and commodity prices and our export markets have seen consistent sales with many countries enduring very dry and hot conditions affecting their own pasture seed production. Lucerne, Sub Clover, Balansa, Arrowleaf and Persian Clover to name a few are, or will be, very short so we will be hoping for a good seed production harvest this season to restock the shelves.

As mentioned above Lucerne is very short with the lowest public seed levels I have seen in my time at Naracoorte Seeds. Domestic sales have been strong all year and with a wet spring forecast many are taking the opportunity to spring sow. Export was again buoyant with much of the certified seed sold into Saudi Arabia and uncertified seed saw USA and South Africa consume good volumes.

If we look at the export sales to end of July 2021 there has been over 3,900 tonnes move offshore with over half of this happening in June/July. I would expect August and September will show some healthy numbers also. Of the 3,900+ tonnes shipped Saudi Arabia is again our strongest customer with 43% of Lucerne sent to them, followed by strong sales to the USA and South Africa. If you would like to know more about any of the above or have public Lucerne seed to sell, please feel free to give me a call to discuss on 0427 790 655 or email [josh@naracoorteseeds.com.au](mailto:josh@naracoorteseeds.com.au)

## Summer Crop Options

With a good spring anticipated summer crops could be a great option to extend your feed window into next year. Naracoorte Seeds have good stocks of Brassica's, Turnips, Radish, Millet, Sorghum and Chicory so call today to discuss options.

Joshua Rasheed – Director Naracoorte Seeds Ph: 0427 790 655

### MAIN OFFICES

**Bordertown**  
08 8752 8888

**Murray Bridge**  
08 8535 5999

**Naracoorte**  
08 8765 7777

### VISITING OFFICES

Coonalpyn  
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# LUCERNE EXPORT STATISTICS FROM AUSTRALIA

## - January 2013 to July 2022

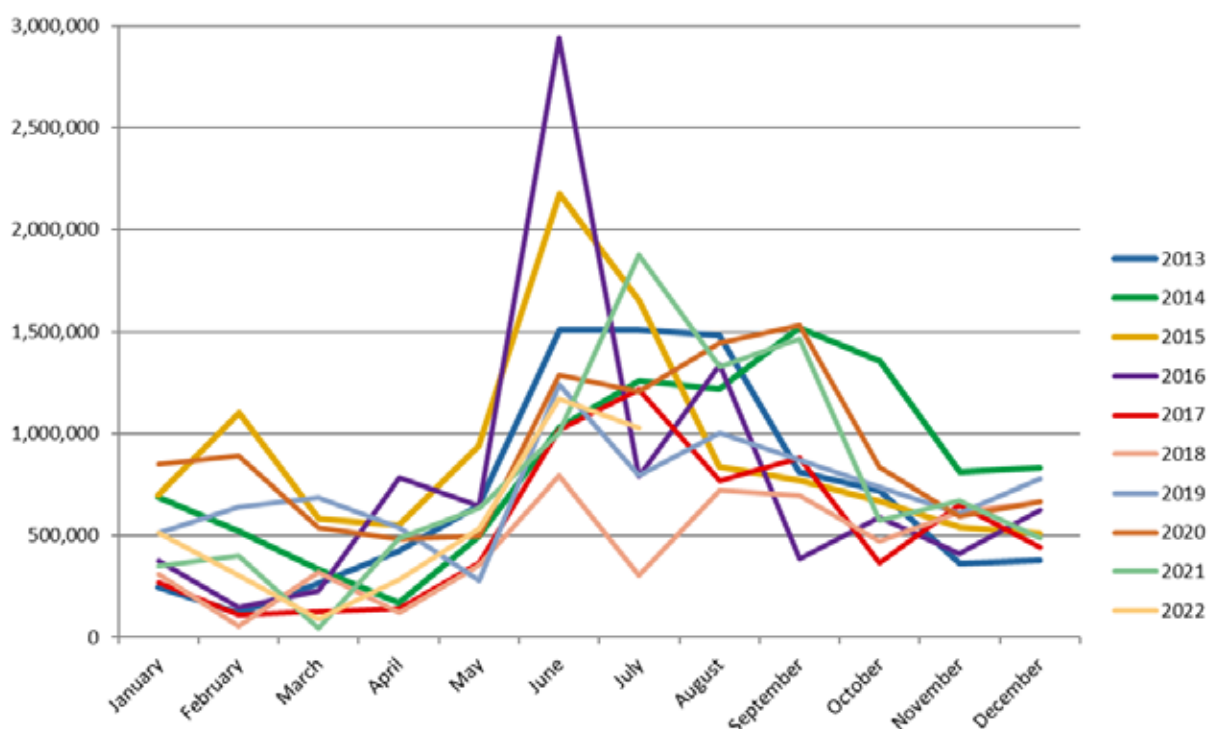
courtesy of Teague Australia

Quantities below are in kg.

| Month | 2013      | 2014       | 2015       | 2016      | 2017      | 2018      | 2019      | 2020       | 2021      | 2022      | Year to date Difference 2020 & 2021 |
|-------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| Jan   | 245,741   | 687,172    | 698,895    | 374,150   | 266,596   | 307,530   | 512,692   | 850,518    | 352,056   | 515,246   | +163,190                            |
| Feb   | 118,025   | 518,553    | 1,099,252  | 148,919   | 108,988   | 57,008    | 639,425   | 887,613    | 400,125   | 302,525   | +65,590                             |
| Mar   | 269,091   | 334,033    | 582,929    | 227,050   | 127,000   | 321,205   | 684,044   | 539,525    | 44,500    | 92,000    | +113,090                            |
| Apr   | 424,057   | 171,816    | 549,340    | 784,031   | 143,025   | 123,100   | 536,501   | 482,194    | 439,500   | 284,839   | -41,571                             |
| May   | 647,509   | 495,472    | 940,000    | 644,704   | 363,023   | 355,575   | 281,335   | 495,875    | 633,571   | 535,715   | -139,427                            |
| Jun   | 1,509,605 | 1,029,000  | 2,176,805  | 2,942,685 | 1,018,477 | 794,995   | 1,239,461 | 1,286,579  | 1,000,145 | 1,167,677 | +28,105                             |
| Jul   | 1,510,278 | 1,260,782  | 1,649,080  | 786,450   | 1,214,352 | 303,288   | 792,380   | 1,205,927  | 1,875,361 | 1,027,575 | -819,681                            |
| Aug   | 1,482,357 | 1,217,121  | 834,178    | 1,339,684 | 767,256   | 721,730   | 1,002,472 | 1,443,626  | 1,329,201 |           |                                     |
| Sep   | 811,667   | 1,516,965  | 770,857    | 388,207   | 882,195   | 698,665   | 871,762   | 1,533,097  | 1,463,717 |           |                                     |
| Oct   | 719,882   | 1,356,922  | 667,503    | 588,199   | 364,673   | 472,480   | 738,090   | 832,925    | 573,749   |           |                                     |
| Nov   | 363,877   | 810,704    | 543,246    | 409,700   | 649,318   | 615,285   | 609,028   | 595,095    | 670,850   |           |                                     |
| Dec   | 379,122   | 829,293    | 511,127    | 623,560   | 443,729   | 664,134   | 775,684   | 667,771    | 488,544   |           |                                     |
| Total | 8,481,211 | 10,227,833 | 11,023,212 | 9,257,339 | 6,348,911 | 5,434,995 | 8,682,874 | 10,661,226 | 9,271,319 | 3,925,577 |                                     |

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

### Lucerne Exports Statistics from Australia 2013-2022



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

# LUCERNE AUSTRALIA *Members*

|                             |                            |                         |                     |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Allen's Warrawee Park       | Farmer, BL & RE            | Kester, RJ & J          | Rowett, NJ & LK     |
| Altus, TJ & JL 'Moonmera'   | Florando Partners          | Kinyerrie Partnership   | Ryan, NJ & LK       |
| Bergan Park                 | Forster, SA & KA           | Kuchel, DJ & CE         | Sanders, DE & FM    |
| Berry, S & J Family Trust   | Fry, AL & JE & Son         | Lake Ellen Pastoral     | Sanders, GE & LM    |
| Brecon Proprietors          | Glendoon Pastoral Co       | Leach, PJ & Co          | Sanders, SN & DA    |
| Brown, DC & DG              | Graetz, S & H              | Loller, B & L           | Sanders, RJ & ED    |
| Cacia Downs Farming Co      | Harvey, M & K Family Trust | Makin Nominees          | Scottswell Partners |
| Circle H Farms              | Hawkins, MM                | Maroona Proprietors     | Simpson, GE & TM    |
| Colara Farms                | Hunt, DB & JS              | Martin, JP & SGP        | Twynem Partners     |
| Connon Pastoral Co Pty Ltd  | Hutchings, SC & CA         | McMurray, BJ & CB       | Vowles, B, K & M    |
| Corlinga Partners           | Hyfield Pastoral Pty Ltd   | McMurray, JA & KA       | Wallis, PA & ML     |
| Crawford, CJ Pty Ltd        | Jaeschke Partners          | McWimay Pty Ltd         | Wilsdon, RE & TK    |
| Creston Partners            | Jarra Farm Trust           | Nalang Pastoral Co      | Zacker Pastoral P/L |
| Crouch, RJ & Co             | Jesse, Cameron             | Newton Pastoral Pty Ltd |                     |
| Darwent Agriculture Pty Ltd | Keller Partners            | Nupey Pty Ltd           |                     |
| Dinyarrak Farms             | Kenwyn Proprietors         |                         |                     |



James Allen and Jeremy Lush were the lucky recipients of the Tour Bursaries generously supported by AgriFutures Australia (Pictured on tour at "Anna Binna" near Maitland, SA).

# LUCERNE AUSTRALIA

## Sponsors

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| Alpha Group Consulting             | Imperial Valley Milling Company | Seed Force                   |
| AFIA (Aust. Fodder Industry Assoc) | JJ O'Connor & Sons Pty Ltd      | Stoller Australia            |
| Barenbrug Australia Pty Ltd        | Kalyx Australia Pty Ltd         | Synergy Seeds Pty Ltd        |
| Brandt                             | Kongal Seeds                    | Tatiara Seeds                |
| Cox Rural Keith                    | Limestone Coast Seeds           | Teague Australia             |
| D & M Rural                        | Naracoorte Seeds                | Upper Murray Seeds           |
| DTS Seed Assurance                 | Nutrien                         | Vermeeren Bros Manufacturing |
| Elders Keith                       | DLF Seeds                       | Western AG                   |
| Farmers Centre                     | Riverina Local Land Services    | Wilchem                      |
| Forage Genetics International      | Safe Ag Systems                 | Wise Farm Equipment          |
| Frank Fatchen Pty Ltd              | SA Apiarists Association        |                              |

# LUCERNE AUSTRALIA *Executive Committee*

Got a question for Lucerne Australia?

Contact the Executive Officer or any our Executive Committee Members who will be happy to help.



**Scott Hutchings, Chairman**  
Contact: 0428 551 188

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.



**Aaron Freeman, Deputy Chairman**  
Contact: 0428 875 600

Aaron manages 'Colara' at Tintinara owned by the Munro Family producing dryland lucerne hay and seed, cereal hay and cropping along with a self-replacing merino flock and prime lambs. Aaron and his wife Penny also own and operate a contract harvesting business Colara Contracting along with a prime lamb enterprise on a recently purchased property.



**Katrina Copping, Executive Officer**  
Contact: 0439 538 332

Katrina was raised on a mixed farming enterprise at Mundulla and as an active partner in a family farm at Avenue Range has a good understanding of rural issues. She has spent most of her career working in research and extension and is strongly passionate about agriculture.



**Josh Rasheed, Associate Member**  
Contact: 0427 790 655

Joshua started with Naracoorte Seeds in 2011 and has since become a part owner/director of Naracoorte Seeds. Originally employed as the Contract Cropping Manager gave Josh a solid grounding in pasture seed production, including Lucerne, and he has now moved into his current role of Lucerne Seed Trading and Pasture Advisory. Josh has always enjoyed getting out working with clients and looks forward to working in the lucerne industry for years to come. Josh lives in Naracoorte with his wife Emma and three daughters but prior to this move he worked as a Real Estate Agent for 12 years at the family Real Estate business in Meningie.



**Adam Zacker, Grower Member**  
Contact: 0417 853 799

Adam owns and operates the family farm at Tintinara with his wife Hannah. They run a mix of cropping, sheep (both self-replacing Merinos and prime lamb production), a herd of Angus cows and both dryland and irrigated lucerne seed and hay. Adam is passionate about the lucerne industry and its challenges.



**Rodney Lush, Grower Member**  
Contact: 0419 862 510

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 Proadvise.



**Scott Campbell, Grower Member**  
Contact: 0417 887 562

Scott and his wife Sophie Campbell own a mixed farming business at Keith, producing Lucerne seed, hay grain and prime lamb production. As a business with a high reliance on lucerne Scott believes it is important to keep abreast of industry issues both domestic and international. His family have been involved in the lucerne seed industry for more than 40 years.



**Simon Allen, Grower Member**  
Contact: 0408 893 786

Simon is involved for 15 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.



**Greg Excell, Associate Member**  
Contact: 0408 838 684

Greg has more than twenty eight years experience in the seed industry. He has performed various roles including seed cleaning, grain drying and engineering, and has now purchased his own seed processing site called Limestone Coast Seeds. Greg works collaboratively with both growers and marketers to ensure that only Lucerne seed of the highest quality is exported. From working in the seed business for many years it is obvious to Greg the many benefits that Lucerne Australia can offer the industry.