

# LUCERNE *Leader*



ISSUE 69 | JUNE 2023



## LUCERNE VARIETY TRIAL UPDATE

*Assess optimum plant stress levels for seed production*



**AgriFutures<sup>®</sup>**  
Pasture Seeds

Lucerne Australia's variety trial was harvested by Kalyx in mid-March 2023. The desiccation and harvesting of the individual bays was timed to suit the maturity of the crop with the high and moderate stress strategies harvested in advance of the standard farmer practice. The analysis of the clean seed yields is expected to be completed in June.

Keith Bowling Club from 8.00 to 10.30am. Further details will be released shortly.

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

The summary report of the fifth (and final) year seed yield results will be made available by email to all members in early July. The full results will be presented at an information session to be held on Wednesday 26th July 2023 at the

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



**SAVE THE DATE**  
ANNUAL INFORMATION MORNING  
WEDNESDAY 26TH JULY 2023



**Rabobank**

# GLOBAL GRAIN AND OILSEED ESTIMATES: 'ASSUMING NOTHING GOES WRONG'

May 29, 2023

by Dennis Voznesenski, RaboResearch Senior Analyst, Australia & New Zealand



Rabobank

This month has seen the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) have its first crack at world grain and oilseed supply and demand estimates for 2023/24, and it has been a mixed bag.

While the outlook for wheat was bullish for prices, Rabobank agricultural analyst Dennis Voznesenski said, corn and soy were both bearish.

Mr Voznesenski said wheat market bullishness is being propelled by a decline in production across Russia and Ukraine. "And also expectations of lower production coming out of Australia. There may also be more to come to fuel bullish wheat price sentiment, considering the USDA's May WASDE report assumes both a record wheat harvest in Canada – which is seeing dry conditions – and a rebound in Argentina's production to the five-year average, despite no material improvement in the weather there so far," he said.

For wheat, Mr Voznesenski said the USDA estimates saw particularly dramatic cuts to both Russian and Australian production – down 10.5 million metric tonnes and 10 million metric tonnes year on year respectively – amid a switch to an El Nino weather pattern.

"Ukrainian production was slashed by 4.4 million tonnes year on year (21 per cent), while planted area is estimated to be down by 19 per cent and exports five million metric tonnes (33 per cent) lower. Forecast 2023/24 wheat production for the US is for a decline of 0.3 million metric tonnes on last season," he said.

Rabobank's outlook for wheat prices is currently 'slightly bullish' due to global production being lower year on year in these key exporting countries, and with further cuts potentially on the horizon.

"While production is expected to be down in major wheat-exporting nations, overall, from a global perspective, the USDA forecasts world wheat production up 1.5 million metric tonnes year on year to 789.8 million metric tonnes," Mr Voznesenski said.

The Rabobank analyst said notable increases include Argentina, up seven million metric tonnes year on year, with the expectation the country will recover from the 2022/23 drought. "However drought is still ongoing there and, in our view, the USDA's decision to place its estimation in line with the five-year average may prove overly optimistic.

"The USDA also estimated increases for Canada's wheat production (up 3.2 million tonnes year on year), which again may



RaboResearch Senior Analyst, Australia & New Zealand  
– Dennis Voznesenski

be optimistic given the continued dry weather in that country. EU wheat was estimated to be up 4.7 million tonnes."

Mr Voznesenski said global ending stocks for wheat are forecast to decline 1.9 million metric tonnes, which, as the USDA notes, would be the lowest stocks-to-use ratio since 2014/15.

"Global wheat consumption has also been trimmed – three million metric tonnes down on last year to 791.7 million metric tonnes, as larger feed grain supplies make wheat less competitive.

"Soy and corn prices are bearish due to rising global stocks for both. This also, to a large extent, hinges on weather in north and south America playing ball," he said.

There are expectations of a record US corn crop, Mr Voznesenski said, despite several states in that country currently being in drought. And Argentina is rebounding to a record production year.

“While the global outlook does not look overly bullish following this report, drying conditions in Australia may see local crop prices hold up comparatively well to global markets.”

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## THINK RAGT, THINK SOLUTIONS

by David Barnett



Nurturing the agricultural growth demanded by Australia's world-leading farming systems requires significant investment, research, development, and real-world trialling. By leveraging the resources of 18 research centres across Europe, 300,000 experimental sites worldwide, 45 research programs across 32 species, and over 1,450 employees dedicated to enhancing yields, resilience, and quality, RAGT is striving to meet this demand.

Through RAGT, Australian growers, primary, secondary and tertiary producers gain access to the technological and plant genetics derived from these endeavours. It takes years of development to create a new cultivar, however by investing the time, effort and resources this aids in ensuring the confidence in a variety once it's commercialised.

For cultivars to thrive in the Australian market they must withstand the unique challenges presented by environmental factors whilst meeting the demands of world-leading farming systems. Some key breeding parameters are required from the outset, that being a focus on robust genetics. RAGT plant breeding is based on the fundamentals of great genetics teamed with high production and quality. It's these foundations which help ensure the materials they produce perform as expected in the field. Throughout the process, selections are made with a key focus on not just yield but a range of factors which help ensure robustness and strength in the real world, and especially in the Australian climate.

With global strengths in plant breeding, use of new technology and access to other global markets. RAGT has created a unique global breeding collaboration utilizing R2n breeder experts.

We then apply careful planning and trialling of mostly European varieties in various regions across Australia. Pinpointing similar climatic conditions, seasonal growing windows and soil structures that enable extensive trialling programs to prove a variety's adaptability and worth. Should the variety be a leader in performance outcomes it would then proceed to being wholesaled.

In south East SA, we are actively involved in trialling our products including the Lucerne Australia seed yield trial, GRDC, FAR, Mackillop Group, Naracoorte Seeds and other local assessments of pasture, cereal and canola varieties.

Presently RAGT Australia seed portfolio possess strong foundations rooted in global genetics, yielding production outcomes that are rarely witnessed in the history of Australian agriculture. It's a welcome shift that has been well overdue for our hardworking farming communities – and we're passionate about cultivating this trend further with more R&D work.

A lot of these trials will be open for viewing this spring and I look forward to seeing you at them.

For further information please feel free to contact me at any time.  
David Barnett 0467 246 326

# TATIARA SEEDS REPORT

by Graham Ramsdale, Stephen Excell and Andrew Fulton

There is light at the end of the tunnel, but it is still a distant light! What a busy cleaning season we have had and still experiencing.

We experienced high volumes of Lucerne delivered in just under a four-week period (14th March to 8th April), which put us under immense pressure, especially for storage – we were never “full”, but we got extremely close to it! During this period, 72.2% of our Lucerne was delivered (see graph).

This current season has been one of the most intense seasons we have had to experience for a very long time. The main causes because the cleaning season got off to a late start due to the cooler and wetter spring, which meant other small seed commodities that we clean were late being delivered and thus pushed all our cleaning back. However, we have managed to work things out and hopefully kept everyone happy!

PCR Testing: SARDI this season started to report Lucerne Seed Wasp (LSW) in conjunction with the Golden Dodder PCR results so that we could publish these results on a single certificate to growers.

So far, we have seen LSW/g Sample results range from 0 to 78; *Idiomacromerus perplexus*

Wasps/g Sample range from 0 to 41; and *Pteromalus sequester* Wasps/g Sample range from 0 to 11. By the time this report is printed, we will have sent the team at SARDI the data they require so that they can do some preliminary reporting. This data and the reports will be updated once all cleaning has been completed and growers will start seeing their own reports delivered to their inboxes.

We are not seeing any wax build-up on our machinery due to LSW.

Drying: Our driers have been busier than previous seasons due to mother nature deciding to send down some precipitation during harvest and giving us an earlier than usual “break”.

Cleaning: We are seeing a lot of hard seeds this season, above average brown seed in late deliveries, however overall, pretty good quality. Weed seeds are no better or worse than other seasons.

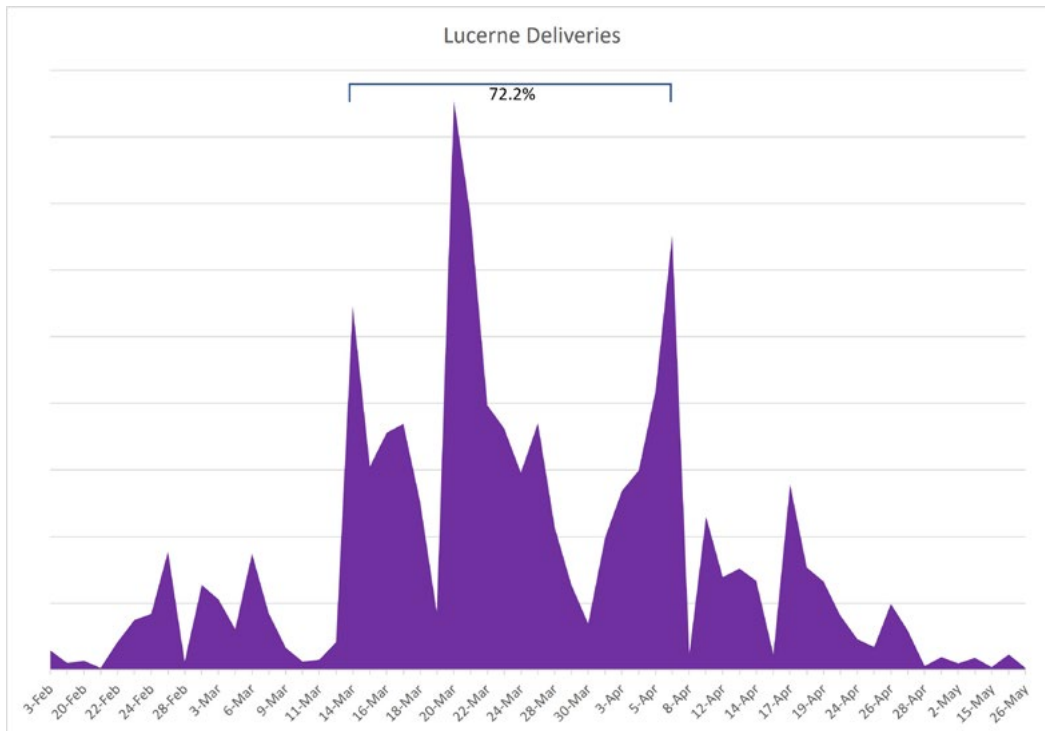
An example of hard seeds and scarifying is – one grower’s pre-processing sample that we tested had 27 normal seedlings and 64 hard seeds. Delivery was between the 13th of March and the 5th of April. After processing and scarifying, the tests ranged from 73 normal seedlings and 16 hard, to 90 normal seedlings and 4 hard seeds.

Another grower’s pre-processing sample we tested had 46 normal seedlings and 49 hard seeds. Delivery was between 14th and 27th of March. After processing and scarifying, the tests ranged from 60 normal seedlings and 35 hard seeds to 71 normal seedlings and 24 hard seeds.

Both lots were processed on the same processing plant, scarifiers were set the same, the rest of the processing plant was set the same and there was almost identical throughput per hour.

Those with more than 24 hard sees needed to be scarified again to meet customer requirements.

Our question is why are some lots of seed much harder than others? What is done in the paddock, or during harvest or caused by climatic conditions to have this situation?



We know that a cool summer like we had this year, equates to higher hard seeds, but both these growers should have had everything similar!

Treating: The workers on our treating plant have been non-stop and they are now changing over to treating and packing lucerne for export markets. Lines of Siriver have not long been off test and they are getting blended and treated ready for shipping to Saudi Arabia. This department of ours will be kept very busy for quite some time!

With lots of blending and treating, plus some re-bagging, this means our warehouse staff are also extremely busy with all the exporting that is happening and coming up. This is on top of all the domestic despatching they are doing, and with the early rains, things got very frantic at times!

We would like to thank all our growers – whether they be new or existing – for supplying us with their Lucerne to clean. With over 450 combined years of experience between our sites, we hope we have provided the service that you expect from us.

As we approach the “off-season” (July onwards), our staff will start planning their annual holidays and enjoy a well-earned break.

## LUCERNE AGRONOMY REPORT

by Scott Hutchings, Senior Agronomist, Cox Rural



One of the best seasons starts in recent memory for the SE region has been fantastic for pasture growth and the livestock in the region. Unfortunately, this April rain caused significant harvest delays and resulting damage to later locked up or maturing lucerne seed crops. Many of these crops have had significantly above average clean outs and pre harvest losses. It has also been noted that paddocks where desiccation or windrowing were delayed trying to get the last 10-20% of pods ripe that these crops also experienced higher clean out just from foggy and dewy mornings without having significant rainfall on them. Earlier shut up and harvested crops reported closer to long term averages but with only a handful of irrigation paddocks nudging the 1000kg off the header mark. Dryland was a mixed bag with really early crops failing to set well and giving disappointing yields due to cool & wet spring conditions, but mid-season shut up crops and the Tintinara & Field areas performing well with some exceptional dryland individual crops and averages. Lucerne demand seems to be strong with solid pricing available for the recently harvested crop.

Autumn pest pressure has been high with high Red Legged Earth Mite numbers, Blue Green Aphid areas and cowpea aphids also present in pastures again.

Earthmites are developing resistance to some of the commonly used insecticides so please make sure you consult with your agronomist on the best management strategy and monitor paddocks after application and test failures for insecticide resistance.

Cow pea aphid have affected some lambs in the upper southeast and we have heard of some severe incidents in NSW. Currently numbers seem to have declined but continue to assess paddocks

before introducing stock, particularly young lambs. Locally the issue seems to have decreased in the last few weeks with a combination of rainfall, overcast days, predator build up and greater producer awareness and monitoring prior to grazing paddocks being the major influence. Please monitor thoroughly and select product in consultation with your agronomist to manage current Blue green aphid resistance and delay the development of insecticide resistant cow pea aphid.

Lucerne flea have also appeared in isolated pockets with the mild early start and Italian and conical snails have been an issue after a cool damp summer with minimal cultural control opportunities. Slugs are also an issue on heavier soil types with constant monitoring required.

The early start to the season and less pressure on feed will also mean that winter cleaning should commence as soon as possible. There are already some large weeds present in paddocks so paddocks will need to be grazed heavily to get biomass down before applying winter cleans or possibly look at strategies such as double knocking paddocks to burn down bulk before applying soil applied residual herbicides to paddocks 7-10 days later. Many producers should have results from the herbicide resistance samples taken for the Lucerne Australia resistance survey, please use these to formulate a strategy for on going resistance management on your farm.

Growers should also be looking to spray channels and check banks so residual products can be used as required and not cause damage once irrigation occurs.

# UPPER MURRAY SEEDS REPORT

by David Cowle - National Production Manager



Following a difficult production year due to climatic conditions, I am certain everyone will be hoping for a return to some normality. These conditions resulted in some variable yields across all varieties, but on a positive note clean outs have been good and test results to date are all above spec.

As a result of the ongoing demand for Silver Lucerne Varieties, we have a requirement for additional production area. We have a number of new growers who have commenced growing for UMS this season and we still have a need for more, as such seed production contracts are still available with attractive terms. If you are interested in growing for Upper Murray Seeds, please call David Cowle on 0437 076 920.

## UMS Research Station Update

Autumn has been a very busy time at the UMS Research Station. Cleaning of our basic and very early generation seed has been completed with exceptional yields and test results achieved. Careful preparation and planning preceded extensive new plantings of trial lines with UMS sowing our largest dry matter trials for both annual and Italian cultivars this season with all lines germinating beautifully. Our dry matter trials are ongoing for lucerne, clover and perennial grass which were sown in 2021 and we look forward to presenting this data in the future. Despite May temperatures having declined rapidly, all stands look well and we are looking forward to a good spring.

New lucernes, clovers and grasses are all under assessment and look to have potential for future release. We are pleased with the assessments and the R&D team are putting them through a stringent evaluation program. Once this program is completed,



Lucerne Evaluation Trials at the Upper Murray Seeds Research Station

we will then be releasing high grade seed for our growers. We are always on the look out for people to take part in our high grade seed multiplication, if this if of interest please contact David Cowle on 0437 076 920 for more information.

We are extremely proud of our Research Station and if any of you are coming to Tasmania with a grower group or on holiday and would like to have a look please reach out and we can help organise a tour of the station.

## FARMTECH PLANNING - MAKING YOUR DATA WORK FOR YOU

Date: 28th June 2023

Venue: TBC, Keith SA

Time: 1.30 to 5.30pm (followed by dinner)

Cost: Free

FarmTech Planning – making your data work for you is a four (4) hour face-to-face workshop.

- It provides a great opportunity to learn and refine how to think, relate, implement & benefit from the use of technology on farm.
- Walks you through the process of developing a personalised plan on achieving improvements in productivity & efficiency using what resources you have now & identifying where technology can fill the gaps.

Further Information or to register please contact Lucerne Australia Executive Officer  
mobile: 0439 538 332 or  
email: [info@lucerneaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@lucerneaustralia.org.au)

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# DAIRY SUPPLY SQUEEZE FEEDS COMPETITION



by Isabel Dando, Industry Analyst, Dairy Australia

Competition is a key feature of Australia’s economy, and the dairy industry is no exception. Dairy Australia’s most recent Situation & Outlook report outlines that decreasing milk production in recent years has ramped up competitive pressure amongst processors, leading to record high farmgate milk prices.

While the last two years have brought their own challenges on-farm, results from Dairy Australia’s National Dairy Farmer Survey (NDFS) indicate that the vast majority of Australian farming businesses (86%) expect to be profitable this season, and at the same time, 84% are feeling positive about their own businesses. However, with past downturns and recent seasonal surprises still front of mind, many are taking a conservative approach, prioritising business stability over expansion while labour and weather continue to challenge growth.

Climate has grown to become a significant concern for 40% of Australian farm businesses (up from 27% in 2022) - partly driven by the unpredictability experienced over recent seasons. After three consecutive La Niña events, the outlook is finally changing; the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) is forecasting a 50% chance of an El Niño event forming later this year.

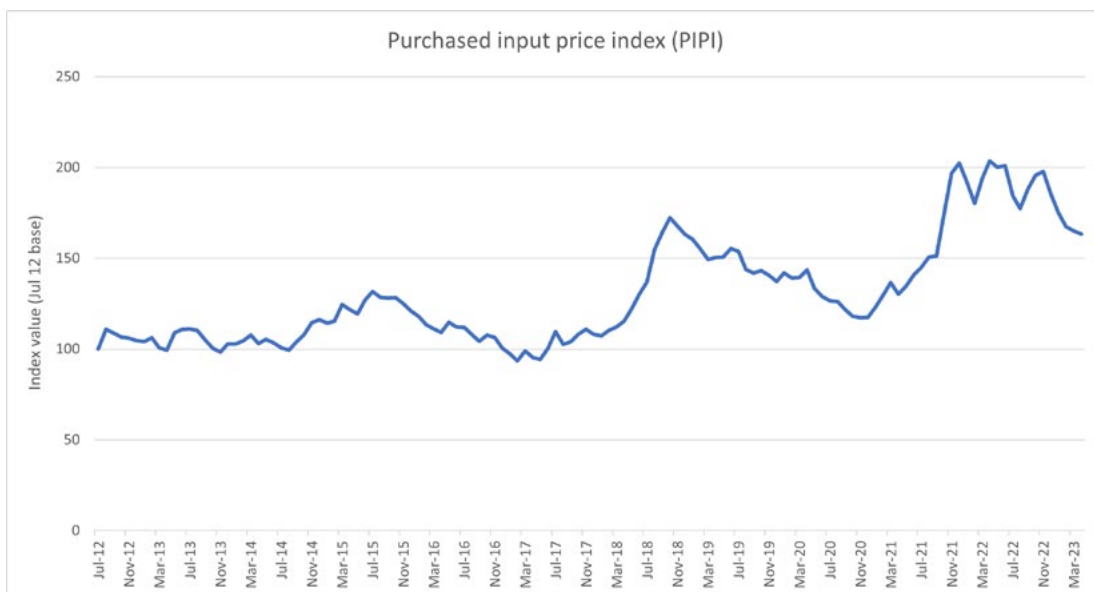
While this will likely bring a drying effect to large parts of the country, there will still be plenty of irrigation water around, with temporary water prices likely to remain low, despite increased usage. A solid autumn break and more attractive fodder returns for growers should produce a rebound in national supplies, and average yields are expected for grain later in the year. Dairy Australia’s purchased inputs price index also shows that costs for feed, fertiliser and fuel have remained high over the season. Additionally, energy and labour costs are also likely to remain above average.

Despite the vast majority of farming businesses maintaining profit margins this season, wet weather conditions and various medium-term constraints (such as high beef and land values, labour challenges and continued farm exits) have weighed on Australia’s milk pool. As such, Australia’s milk production is on track to end the 2022/23 season between 8 to 8.2 billion litres, after the floods derailed the initial steady trajectory.

Looking ahead though, some positive developments have emerged – grain and fertiliser costs have somewhat eased, and a less influential La Niña event helped stabilise autumn weather. Additionally, beef prices have dropped, and live dairy heifer export demand has softened. Coming into the 2023/24 season, Australia’s milk production may finally find some stability. Dairy Australia is projecting that production is likely to remain flat relative to 2022/23 full season volumes, with some modest potential for growth.

While there are upside and downside risks to the forecast, the same can be said for 2023/24 farmgate milk prices. Depressed dairy export commodity prices are impacting returns for processors and incentivising imports, but a tight milk pool has led to historically high prices paid to farmers, nonetheless. Whilst the strain has been significant on manufacturing margins, the need for milk remains just as strong.

So, despite the array of challenges faced over the last season, competition for milk and the resources available within input markets will likely directly influence not only the direction milk production moves in the coming season, but also how the indirect impacts are felt further along the supply chain. As such, the dairy supply chain remains intact despite macroeconomic disruptions, and processors’ thirst for milk is likely to support firm farmgate milk prices next season, as Australia’s milk production finds its way back to stability.





# DLF SEEDS UPDATE

by Jess Nottle, Seed Production Agronomist



## Production Update

What a start to the 2023 growing season! Currently in mid-May, we've got a bit of a dry spell on our hands however the forecast is now suggesting some rainfall relief next week - hooray! Although the dry spell has had us sitting on the edge of our seats, it has provided an opportunity to get some extra knockdowns done or burn that paddock that had a little too much stubble to sow through.

This autumn almost feels too good to be true - our regenerated annual clover paddocks look outstanding with minimal requirement to resow these paddocks. Our new annual sowings are all but completed, and early autumn sown lucerne is firing along with broadleaf and grass weed control already completed on some paddocks!

Autumn pests have generally been managed well. The early start has allowed farmers to take the time to focus on pest control as needed, with plenty of time left to get other crops in the ground. We've now seen a couple hatchings of red legged earth mite. Aphid numbers seem stable however have heard reports of cowpea aphid requiring control to avoid ill health effects on stock. Slugs & snails were taken care of promptly, and measures were taken to control slaters & earwigs in crops with high stubble loads. Black field crickets were a pain in early autumn in the lower southeast, attacking late lucerne seed crops, then hammering seedling plants as they emerged. Luckily crickets can be baited and simply controlled.

We're now starting to see plenty of lucerne seed tests come rolling into our inboxes. DLF Seeds are actively purchasing uncertified lucerne seed. Feel free to give Jess a call to discuss, or forward your purity & germination test to [jnottle@dlfseeds.com.au](mailto:jnottle@dlfseeds.com.au)

Due to the forage quality and persistence of our businesses domestic lucerne varieties, we've continued to receive record demand for these products. As a result, we've shared the premiums we receive for these varieties with our trusted seed growers and thank them for their continued stable/reliable production results. We still have a few opportunities to plant our lucerne seed varieties in 2023, including 'AR-245', a proven seed yield performer as demonstrated in the LA irrigation trial and across paddocks in South-East SA. Call Jess or Anthony to discuss further.

## Company Update

After ten years at the helm of PGG Wrightson Seeds/DLF Seeds, John Stewart has retired as General Manager of Australia. In the ten years that John has been at the helm, he has led a number of pivotal changes within the business. More recently he led the business through a major structural change with the consolidation of our forage seed distribution under the DLF Seeds brand.

We are pleased to announce that Jason Agars (pictured) has been appointed as the new General Manager of Australia. Jason previously held the role of National Sales & Marketing Manager for DLF Seeds Australia since 2019.

Jason is passionate about building sustainable agribusinesses and is optimistic about the role that agriculture can play globally, into the future. His passion for agriculture began on the fourth-generation family farming operation in South Australia, and led to studying a Bachelor of Agribusiness at the University of Adelaide.

Jason remains actively involved in the family farming business, taking the opportunity to expose his wife and three children to the benefits of farming life at every chance.



**Jason Agars**  
General Manager - DLF Seeds

**Seed Production & Purchasing**

Jess Nottle - 0438 302 148

Anthony Quilter - 0427 572 125



# SHARING FARM MACHINERY — WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.

*courtesy of Safe Ag Systems*

Let's be real. Farming is expensive.

Equipment and machinery are costly to buy let alone maintain. A known struggle if you're a small business owner.

Farmers have been sharing their farm machinery for centuries and why not, it's an effective way to curb the price rises. Let's explore the benefits and pitfalls of owning and sharing farm machinery and what you need to know.

To begin with, before you look into adding to your inventory, you need to think about what you are trying to achieve and ask yourself what the best option is for your business. From borrowing, contracting, and hiring machinery, there are options to accommodate everyone.

But proceed with caution. Not every option provides an easy solution that will work for all parties. Some carry more issues than answers, with the potential to cause rifts between your neighbours...

## Join a syndicate — All for one and one for all

The usual method of co-op sharing between farms is done by forming a syndicate. Joining a syndicate allows better machinery to be purchased since the cost spreads over every member. While the idea is cost-reducing, it can provide drawbacks:

- Farmers may require the machinery at the same time
- Who's liable for its maintenance costs and issues that arise?
- How do you figure out an equal share between all members? Is everyone looking after it correctly?
- Legally it's a bit of a nightmare! Who takes ownership and taxation of the machine on paper? What happens when it's time to sell it but not all members want to part with it?

While on paper a syndicate sounds perfect, it can also lead to a rabbit hole of problems. The last thing you require in a small town is to have discord with your neighbours over equipment.

If the legal requirements and share rights can be sorted out then it may be a plausible idea. Otherwise, it's better to stick with the other options below.

## Borrow and Return it — Simple as that.

Similar to a syndicate, reciprocal borrowing is when farmers purchase and maintain a single piece of machinery. The group then shares each machine as they require.

A good example of this is haymaking. One farmer buys the mower, another the hay rake and the next a baler. As each machine makes its way around everyone's farm, using a contract payment system so no machinery owner is deprived.

Now that you know you're only liable for one piece of machinery it eases a whole load of pressure. However, it still raises the issue of equal sharing between you and your neighbours.

Is your machine being looked after? Will it be returned on time? Where is the liability if someone breaks the equipment or worse, someone is injured?

Valid questions to know while your machine is in the hands of others. Communicate these questions with your borrowing party before entering an agreement to ease any worries.

## Hire a Contractor

Perhaps you've decided to not enter a share agreement with your neighbours? Then why not hire a contractor to do the work for you instead?

Hiring a contractor is quite common on farms, and they're available for a wide range of small and large farming tasks.

Hiring one comes with several advantages:

- The contractor owns, operates and maintains the machinery — no maintenance costs on your end!
- Contractors have access to better quality and larger machinery.
- Standardised contract rates.
- Hiring a contractor is tax-deductible for business purposes.

Disadvantages? You may not be able to book them for when you need them. With the purpose of their business being to work on everyone's farm, their availability may not suit yours.

Despite contractors not being employed under you like your workers, you're also still required to meet your legal obligations of keeping them safe on farm. Which requires inducting them, relaying any risk and notifying them of your emergency management plan.

## Hire equipment — If you want a thing done well, do it yourself.

Waiting on someone to finish a job for you can prove irritating. Hiring the machinery means you're not relying on others to finish the job. This cuts the costs of hiring a contractor and ensures the job gets done exactly how you wanted.

Downsides? It's entirely dependent on where you live. Some rural cities may have a machinery hire company, but accessing machinery for hire may not be an option.

## Which option do you go with?

There are a lot of variables to consider when opting between farm machinery sharing or owning. Property size, location and costs all come into play when considering what option to choose.

Smaller-sized farms may be better off renting or entering a share agreement with a neighbour, rather than owning. Depending on the property size, contractors may not be an eligible option either. Most prefer doing bigger jobs, meaning smaller farms get looked over.

For much larger farms, owning is the preferred option. However, as we discussed it's not always cost-effective in this current era. Contracting is a notable option but consistency and convenience may be an issue. Especially if you're more rural. Entering a co-op share agreement like a syndicate or reciprocal borrowing may be the preferred option. It's the most cost-effective answer and helps out farmers around you who may be in the same boat. The major disadvantage? Holding everyone accountable in the share agreement.

## What are the Top 10 things to consider?

Remember how we mentioned co-op machinery sharing can be a bit of a legal mess at times? To prevent yourself from getting into strife legally or with any farmers you share machinery with, assure you know your rights and everything is documented in a signed contract between everyone.

### Things to consider when entering a sharing agreement:

1. Consider a list of rules for the usage and maintenance schedule of the machinery

2. Record keeping of all Financials related to the machinery and what costs are required from members
3. Consider how the scheduling of using the machinery will work between members
4. How will maintenance records be kept up to date? – Some members may carry out the maintenance work themselves yet not record it. Others may not do it at all and you'd unknowingly be left with a faulty machine that could be considered a hazard.
5. Ensure all operators of the machinery are rightly trained.
6. Have a Pre-Start Checklist for the machinery – Ensure all members are inspecting it for any issues and that everyone completes it.
7. Members are to record the date, time and any kilometres/ miles done in the machine if applicable.
8. When not in use, where is the machine or equipment stored?
9. Classify clear expectations for use – maintenance, hygiene, transport, scheduling, and insurance with policies and procedures.
10. Insurance – is the machinery covered? Does that insurance cover everyone in the agreement to drive it or only specific members?

Consider some of these elements as clauses when drafting the co-op contract. When in doubt, contact a lawyer if you're unsure if all parties will have equal rights to the machinery. They'll be able to draft up a fair and concise contract with all the clauses considered.

Sharing farm machinery is a great method of lowering machinery costs but still getting the job done regardless. With an arrangement of options to choose from, your next piece of farm machinery could be from a share agreement.

# BARENBRUG UPDATE

by Daryl Turner, Southern Production Manager



## Domestic

A later than ideal lucerne harvest put some pressure on available seed for Autumn sowing, however this position has now recovered nicely and puts us in a strong position moving into the Spring sowing season. We are expecting high demand to continue for Winter active varieties such as SARDI 7 Series 2 and SARDI 10 Series 2 for high quality hay production. Our continued collaboration with SARDI is producing some solid results and should lead to new variety releases over the coming years.

## International

The international lucerne market remains strong with interest from major markets such as KSA and South America remaining high. There was some thought that demand would start to soften in the last quarter, but this doesn't appear to have materialised. As per the last update the local industry has been actively addressing the cheap seed being imported from EU into KSA. This is progressing well, and we would hope a positive resolution is made in the not-too-distant future.

Major markets such as South Africa and Argentina are continuing to deal with the impacts of inflation, depreciating currencies and in the case of Argentina, availability of USD. Although we continue to see positive demand from this region it does make trading more challenging.

## Seed Production

Now that the 2023 harvest is completed we have all been able to reflect on what a challenging year 2022/23 has been. In general, Barenbrug varieties performed quite well particularly our PX lines yielding strong amid the varying weather conditions around flowering and harvesting times. Our SARDI varieties held up to the challenge showing their Australian genetics has an advantage with varying seasonal conditions.

We now turn to sowing and getting paddocks prepared for new seedling crops to be planted with near ideal soil conditions for good weed control and soil preparation. Barenbrug have a number of key varieties still available to sow, so please reach out to your Seed Production Agronomist

Justin Elliott – 0408 851 411 Michael Birks – 0456 437 976

# SYNERGY SEEDS UPDATE

by Craig Myall, Managing Director



Australian Lucerne seed exports totalled 812mt in the first quarter of 2023, which is in line with the quantities shipped in the same period over the last 2 years, however well behind the 2 years prior when more carryover seed was available and 1,800 - 2,200mt was exported. Almost half of the seed exported during the period January to March 2023 was destined for USA (403mt), supported by Saudi Arabia (138mt), China (106mt) and South Africa (76mt).

Harvest is now well in the rear vision mirror but cleaning and testing still has some time to run. The delay in the harvest of Annual Clovers, which flowed into Sub Clover and Lucerne harvests has created a log jam at most cleaning facilities. To date seed quality has been quite variable with high abnormal's again an issue in some lines as well as some with high hard seeds, but in general seed quality has been quite good. There is no doubt however that the harvest has been below average in yield across the board which will mean very low, if any, seed stocks again leading into the next harvest.

The Lucerne market domestically in 2022 had seen a reduction in area planted due to heavy rainfalls and limitations on farmers to sow in Southern/Riverina NSW. This has led to a carryover of sowing seed in retail stores and on farm for sowing in 2023. In many areas this year, dry conditions have restricted traditional planting with limited rainfall on the horizon. The demand for all forage, especially high quality such as lucerne, has driven areas that have had a good autumn break or irrigation options, to plant lucerne. The need to resow older stands that have been damaged by floods or wash outs over the past 12 months, will provide for resow options in the upcoming spring period.

For those who have new planting areas available in 2023, Synergy Seeds currently have seed contracts with attractive terms for its Proprietary Lucerne range. Please feel free to contact Wayne, Nathan or myself on the numbers listed below to discuss our options.

## CONTACTS

Craig Myall

Nathan Smith

Wayne Heading

Adam Davies

Managing Director

Sales & Supply Manager

Production & Procurement

National Forage Sales  
& Marketing Manager

0409 392 320

0487 655 220

0427 071 458

0498 632 496

craig@synergyseeds.com.au

nathan@synergyseeds.com.au

wayne@synergyseeds.com.au

adam@synergyseeds.com.au

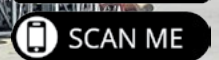


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- Length Separators

- Velvet Roller
- Seed Scarifiers
- De-awner
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- Export Container Loading Facilities



71 Bunker Road, KEITH SA 5267 | [lcseeds.com.au](http://lcseeds.com.au) | [admin@lcseeds.com.au](mailto:admin@lcseeds.com.au) | (08) 8755 1777 | 0408 838 684

# LUCERNE EXPORT STATISTICS FROM AUSTRALIA

## - January 2013 to March 2023

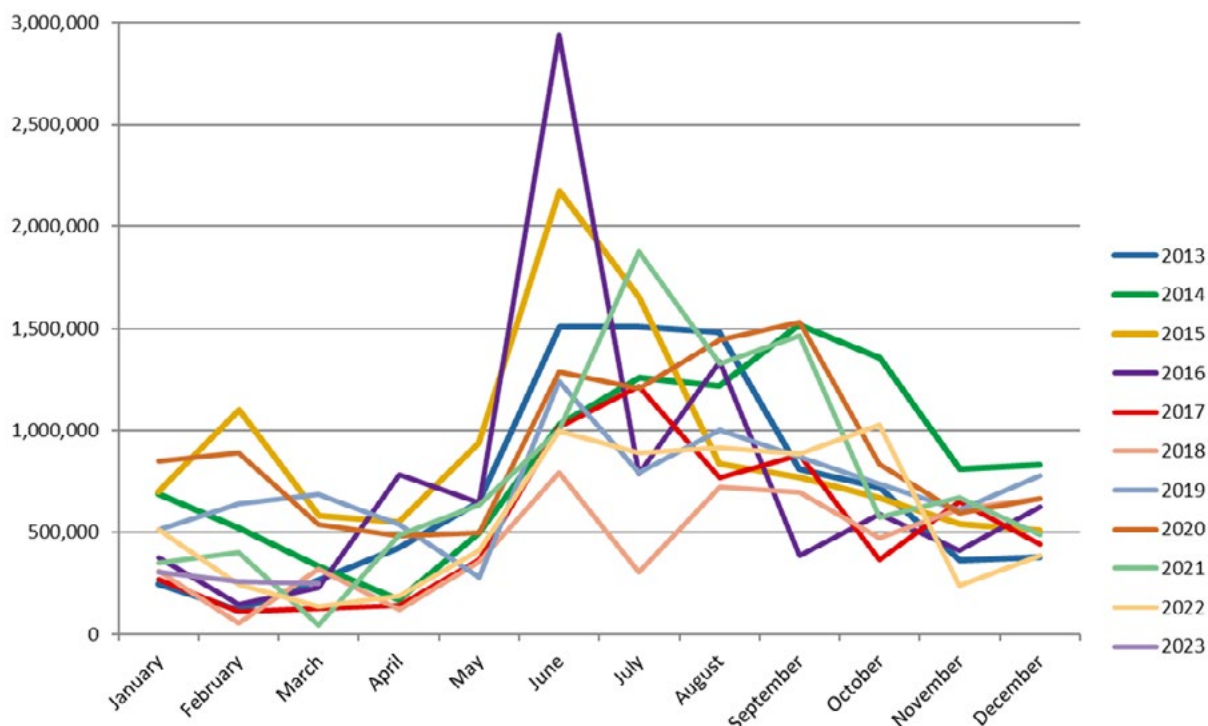
courtesy of Teague Australia

Quantities below are in kg.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	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	302,931	-212,315
Feb	118,025	518,553	1,099,252	148,919	108,988	57,008	639,425	887,613	400,125	243,786	258,832	-197,269
Mar	269,091	334,033	582,929	227,050	127,000	321,205	684,044	539,525	44,500	137,329	249,850	-84,748
Apr	424,057	171,816	549,340	784,031	143,025	123,100	536,501	482,194	439,500	186,064		
May	647,509	495,472	940,000	644,704	363,023	355,575	281,335	495,875	633,571	409,715		
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	996,989		
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	891,632		
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	914,012		
Sep	811,667	1,516,965	770,857	388,207	882,195	698,665	871,762	1,533,097	1,463,717	885,058		
Oct	719,882	1,356,922	667,503	588,199	364,673	472,480	738,090	832,925	573,749	1,026,920		
Nov	363,877	810,704	543,246	409,700	649,318	615,285	609,028	595,095	670,850	237,888		
Dec	379,122	829,293	511,127	623,560	443,729	664,134	775,684	667,771	488,544	385,212		
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	6,829,851	811,613	

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

### Lucerne Exports Statistics from Australia 2013-2023



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

# DON'T MISS THE 2023 FODDERGANZA!

The Australian Fodder Industry Association (AFIA) has merged its two premier events into one three-day fodder extravaganza in 2023, a FODDERGANZA! Combining its biennial Fodder Festival and annual National Fodder Conference in Elmore and Bendigo in Victoria, all the major hay and silage players will come together to present the technologies on the market and discuss key fodder issues and innovations.

The 2023 Fodder Festival on Tuesday 15 August is a great opportunity for those in the hay and silage business to come along and see the latest machinery in action and other products. Companies including Kuhn, Krone, New Holland and John Deere have already confirmed their participation.

Under the broad heading of 'future proofing fodder' a variety of machines will be put to the test in a ryegrass crop. Each demonstration will be followed by a Q&A session with the audience. This will be followed by an opportunity for non-machinery suppliers to demonstrate their tools and technologies, with the audience moving from one demonstration to another.

The Fodder Festival will be followed by the National Fodder Conference in Bendigo, an annual event for members that

brings together those engaged in the production of fodder, and fodder customers, to discuss and debate industry issues, new technologies and research and development opportunities.

For more information visit: [www.afia.org.au/events](http://www.afia.org.au/events)




AFIA Australian Fodder Industry Association  
**2023 FODDERGANZA!**  
[www.afia.org.au/events](http://www.afia.org.au/events)

**Tuesday 15 August**  
**Fodder Festival**  
 Elmore Field Days Site  
 See the latest hay & silage technology in action.

**Wednesday 16 & Thursday 17 August**  
**National Fodder Conference**  
 Bendigo  
 Discuss & debate key fodder issues & innovations.

## LUCERNE AUSTRALIA Members

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

# LUCERNE AUSTRALIA

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SEEDS**



Associate/Bronze

AJ Cotton & MA McDonald	Gibbs Agricultural Consulting	SA Apiarists Association
Alpha Group Consulting	Imperial Valley Milling Company	S & W Seed Co
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	RAGT	Wilchem
Forage Genetics International	Safe Ag Systems	Wise Farm Equipment
Frank Fatchen Pty Ltd		

# 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.



**Ben Farmer, Associate Member**  
Contact: 0438 501 269

Ben started with Alpha Group Consulting at Keith in 2013 before purchasing a lucerne property with his wife Rachel in December 2016. After a period of time with Nutrien Ag Solutions they began Wilkei Seeds trading a large portion of feed grains and suppling a wide range of pasture seeds both to seed exporters and businesses throughout Australia. Ben believes his direct experience within most facets of the lucerne seed supply chain brings a valuable and unique perspective to the LA Executive Committee.



**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 Proadvice.



**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.



**Harrison Berry, Grower Member**  
Contact: 0447 998 421

Harrison manages a family farming operation at Brimbago, south east of Keith with cropping and sheep enterprises and as well as producing flood irrigated and dryland Lucerne seed. Before returning to manage the Brimbago property 5 years ago, Harrison worked in the Mining industry and also the Civil/Construction industry. This variety has provided a range of different insights and learnings, but he has a strong passion for the agricultural industry and is keen to contribute in building the lucerne seed industry further.



**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.