



## The BIGG Bulletin

February 2014

### How much feed value is in your crop stubble?

In my travels this year looking at crop stubbles, there has been a large variation in the amount of grain on the ground - from 50kg/ha up to 2500kg/ha.

Stubble feed value varies from year to year but the real feed value of stubbles still lies in the grain remaining after harvest and not in the dead plant (leaf and stem) material.

While grain or palatable green feed is in a stubble, livestock will generally maintain or gain weight. If the remaining dry matter is below 50-55% digestible (7-8 Metabolisable Energy) stock will lose weight. The stem and leaf is generally high in fibre and this reduces the amount of feed the stock can physically eat. If the protein in the dry matter is less than 6-7% the rumen microbes have less "fuel" and are unable to

digest the dry feed efficiently.

The digestibility of the leaf (which generally makes up 20% of the dry matter in a stubble) is higher than the digestibility of the chaff and stem and generally ranges between 35-50% (4-7 ME) and 4-7% protein. These levels are below the maintenance requirements of a dry ewe which require feed with an energy density of 8ME and 8% protein. If a ewe was losing 100g of live weight per day you would not notice this, but over 2-3 months this equates to a loss of a whole (i.e. 1) condition score.

It is critical to maintain ewes in condition score 3 by supplementing with grain or by providing a protein source in the form of blocks or licks to help promote a healthy population of rumen microbes to increase the amount of dry feed taken in and digested.

To measure the amount of grain in a stubble, count the number of grains in a 0.1m<sup>2</sup> quadrat ten or more times across a paddock. Approximately 28 wheat grains, 25 barley grains, 8 lupin grains, 5 pea grains and 2 faba bean grains in 0.1m<sup>2</sup> will equal 100kg of grain per hectare on the ground.

The key to making the most out of stubbles is involved with grazing management. Firstly, having a good water supply is essential for performance and secondly, regularly rotating stock is important for even grazing.

**Daniel Schuppan, Landmark  
Animal Production Specialist**



## Free Property Management Plan Offer for BIGG Producers

Producers who have a property management plan have often found this integral to improving their farm productivity and land condition. BIGG has received funding support of \$10,000 from Natural Resources Adelaide Mt Lofty Ranges for up to eight (8) producers to have an individual property management plan developed for free.

BIGG has engaged agricultural consultant Simon Ellis to produce



the plans. Each plan will include a half-day farm visit and a 4-5 page management report that will consider your enterprise productivity, environmental issues and personal goals.

To register your interest and to find out more about this significant opportunity contact Simon directly on 0402 027 235, [simon@ellisfarm.com.au](mailto:simon@ellisfarm.com.au) by Monday 3 March.

## Bushfire Recovery Assistance

The recent fires in our area have undoubtedly been a challenging time for those affected. Just a reminder that Primary Producers SA and Livestock SA have a register to match donations for those producers that have been affected across the state. For more info please see their [press release](#).

Mark Grossman, Secretary of Angaston Ag Bureau is also coordinating assistance for local producers. This includes a register for fodder (hay and grain), cartage, fencing materials and agistment (for those with vineyards this may be an option post-vintage). Mark can be contacted on 0408 085 682.

The volunteer fencing organisation [Blaze Aid](#) have set up a base camp at Palmer (to service both the Eden Valley and Rockleigh fires). No fencing experience necessary, alternatively you can help out with catering for those fencing. For more info contact Carli Richardson on 0488 309 243.

## From the INBOX

### Silage Seminar

Lauckes Mills at Daveyston are hosting a seminar about silage production on 20 February. See [flyer](#) for info. Register ASAP with Alex Stewart, [alexstewart@lauckemills.com.au](mailto:alexstewart@lauckemills.com.au)

### Bred Well Feed Well Workshop

Sheep nutrition and breeding workshop to be held at Eudunda oval on 20 February. See [flyer](#) for more information. Register with Bernadette Lawson, [bernadette.lawson@sa.gov.au](mailto:bernadette.lawson@sa.gov.au)

### Barossa Young People in Ag Conference – Agtastic

Being held at Yalumba Winery, Angaston on 7 March. For more info contact Georgie Keynes or go to [www.facebook.com/barossayiag](http://www.facebook.com/barossayiag)

### Joel Salatin workshop

Noted US farmer Joel Salatin is running a workshop at the Barossa Farmers Market on 2 March. BIGG and Ag Bureau members are eligible for a 20% discount, for more info contact Julian Maul [relax@abbotsfordhouse.com](mailto:relax@abbotsfordhouse.com) or go to <http://barossafarmersmarket.com.au/events/>

### Soil Moisture Monitoring Workshop

On 11 April BIGG will be hosting a workshop about using soil moisture monitoring information to assist livestock producers make key management decisions. The workshop will be held at Keyneton Hall. More details in next month's newsletter.

## Further Information

### Technical Facilitator/ Coordinators

**Brett Nietschke**

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**Georgie Keynes**

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### Hogget Competition

Angaston Ag Bureau will be holding their annual hogget competition on 26 March at Keyneton Park. For more info contact Bruce Hancock, [bruce.hancock@sa.gov.au](mailto:bruce.hancock@sa.gov.au)