



The BIGG Bulletin

July 2014

BIGG Receives \$85,000 in New Grants!

BIGG has recently been successful in receiving significant grants for two new projects in 2014-15: Sustainable Industry Grant from the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board to **investigate the recovery and management of native pastures after the 2014 Eden Valley Bushfire**; and NRM Connecting Communities Grant from the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board to **strengthen the capacity of BIGG to deliver NRM projects**.

The focus of the \$50,000 Native Pastures grant is to improve the capacity of local landholders affected by the Eden Valley Bushfire to sustainably manage the recovery of burnt-out native pastures. This is particularly important for livestock producers who rely on native pastures as part of their grazing system and are aiming to return them to their productive potential. Through various monitoring sites, trials and community

will promote the value and NRM benefits of sustainable native pasture management in grazing systems. As the project site cuts across two NRM regions, the SAMDB NRM Board is also providing top-up funding of \$10,000 and in-kind technical assistance to support the project. BIGG has engaged Daniel Schupann, a grazing management and livestock consultant with Landmark, to facilitate the project for us.

The SAMDB NRM Board is also providing \$25,000 to **support BIGG's capacity to deliver more innovative and sustainable NRM projects for landholders in the Barossa and Eastern Hills regions**. Core funding from this grant will support the role of a Communications Officer to promote greater community awareness and participation in BIGG's projects via the development of a Communications Plan and new social media campaign,

promotion of field days, linkage to stakeholders and assistance with grant funding applications.

Congratulations also to BIGG producer group member, **Koonunga Ag Bureau** that also received an AMLR Sustainable Industry Grant to **engage the local community in driving land management and biodiversity changes**.



Consultant Daniel Schupann, will be the facilitator for BIGG's new Native Pastures Project

Excellent turn out at BIGG Pasture Walk



Even Andrew Koch's cows had a sticky beak at the Pasture Walk!

An excellent turn out of 25 producers, industry and NRM Board staff braved wintry conditions at BIGG's Pasture Walk on July 25. The focus of the Walk was to inspect the pasture paddocks in the *Barossa Pasture Challenge*; the pasture improvement competition between the five local producer groups who make up BIGG (Angaston Ag Bureau, Koonunga Ag Bureau, Barossa Mid North Dairy Discussion Group, Mt Pleasant Beef Group and North Rhine Sheep Group). Participants visited pasture paddocks at:

- Moculta (Andrew Koch)
- Craneford (Anthony Steinert); and
- Flaxman Valley (Jen Light, Vic Patrick)

They saw first hand how pasture production and quality is being improved. This in-turn generated good discussion and learnings at each paddock, including:

- Herbicide options for

key weeds (barley grass, capeweed, geranium, and salvation jane) and the use of good grazing management to improve weed control;

- Using brassica forage crops to help 'clean up paddocks' in preparation for pasture renovation the following year and to provide quality out of season feed;
- Growing diverse pastures to extend feed production throughout the year which also provides stock health benefits (such as the phalaris/chicory/plantain/ cocksfoot/clover pasture of Steinert's);
- Using urea fertiliser with the product eNtrench™ which has the potential to reduce nitrate leaching, particularly in water logged areas or wet years;
- Spring sowing of phalaris is possible but for the best chance of survival, initial weed control is critical as is not overgrazing the stand or

cutting it for hay/silage in the first and second years; and

- Getting the soil balanced and healthy before embarking on expensive pasture renovation and the importance of improving soil phosphorus levels to improve pasture production. However any anticipated production increases may be masked if low soil pH is also not addressed.

Thanks to local agronomists, Peter Wendt (Farmer Johns) and Craig John (Coopers) who were on hand at the Pasture Walk to discuss the paddocks. Participants also benefited from the insights of Tim Prance (T Prance Rural Consulting) and Daryl Turner (Heritage Seeds) who also attended the day.

In late September a follow-up Pasture Walk will be held where all paddocks will be judged by an independent agronomist to determine Barossa's best pasture! The Barossa Pasture Challenge is funded by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.



Bruce Verrall (Eden Valley) & Craig John (Coopers, Mt Pleasant) at Vic Patrick's pasture challenge paddock

From the INBOX

SA Beef School, August 12-13

Early bird registration close tomorrow (1 Aug). Contact: Penny Schulz 0417853094 or penny.schulzlivestock.com.au

Ag Bureau of SA – Spirit of Excellence Awards

Now open until Aug 31. [Click here](#) to find out more.

Precision Livestock Management Workshop, August 26, Clare

Looking at new technologies for sheep producers. Contact: Hamish Dickson on 0427446499 or hamish@agripartner.com.au

Barossa Young People in Ag (YiAg)

Excellent key learnings from the recent tour of Nitschke Chaff & Freight found [here](#).

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