

The latest news from the Barossa Improved Grazing Group

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Government of South Australia  
Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges  
Natural Resources Management Board



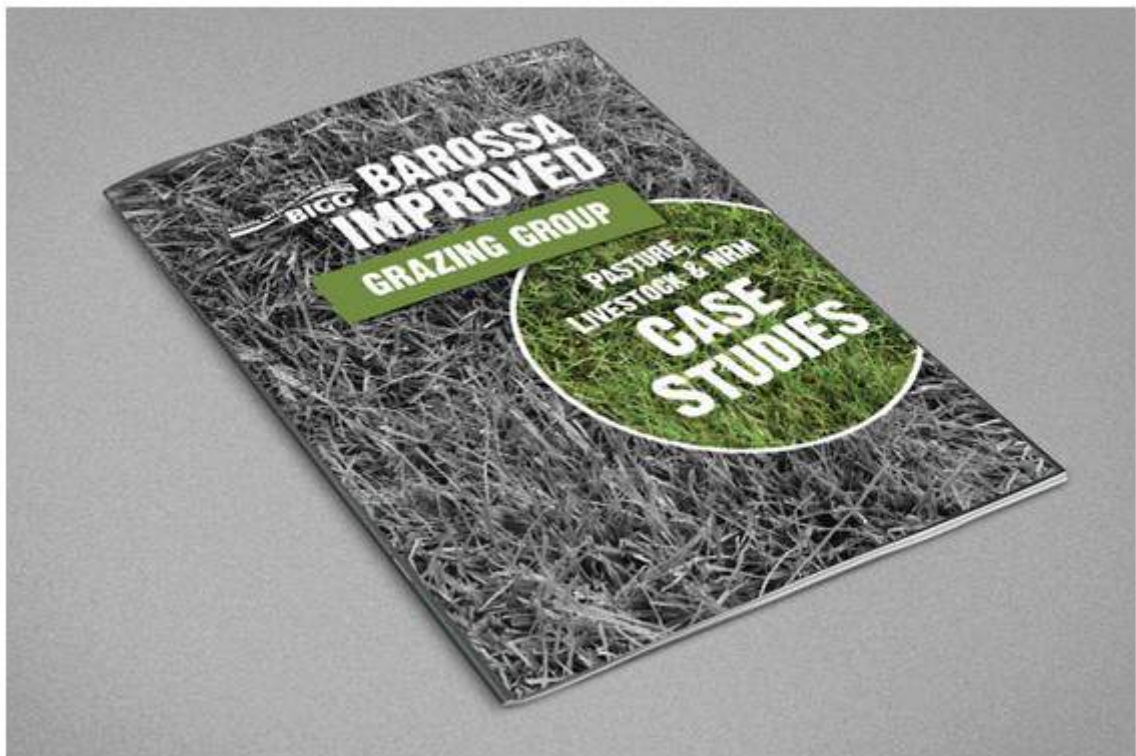
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# The BIGG Bulletin

February 2015

**Case Studies Launch BBQ**



**What:** Celebratory Friday night *free* BBQ

**When:** Friday 6 March, 5-8 pm

**Where:** Barossa Bushgardens, Research Road, Nuriootpa

The Barossa Improved Grazing Group is celebrating three years of operation in March with a community BBQ at the Barossa Bushgardens and the launch of a new case studies booklet highlighting the work performed by the group since 2012.

A range of case studies has been compiled, representing on-farm producer led demonstrations and trials through the 2012-2014 growing seasons in the Barossa and surrounding regions. They provide an insight into what has and hasn't worked, and how issues can be overcome to improve management systems.

In recognition of the producer support in performing all this excellent work, and in celebration of BIGG's first three years, we are hosting a free BBQ for the community.

The evening will include

- Launch of the 'Pasture, Livestock and NRM Case Study booklet.
- Launch and viewing of BIGG's 'Recovery after Eden Valley Bushfires' video
- Tour of the bushgardens native groundcover nurseries

The case studies booklet, which was funded by the Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges Community NRM Action Grant, can be found on the [BIGG website](#).

Register to Bec by February 27 on 0402 788 526 or by clicking 'Register' below.

[Register](#)

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## BIGG Strategic Planning

All BIGG members are invited to a group strategic planning session on Friday 6 March, before the case studies launch.

Funded by the prize money from BIGG's win at the 2014 Ag Excellence Alliance Sustainability Award (sponsored by DEWNR), the session will define the group's vision and mission and define the direction BIGG will take in the future.

This is a unique opportunity to have your say in the way BIGG operates, and let us know what is important to you.

The session will be held from 1pm to 5pm on Friday 6 March in Nuriootpa. To register your interest please contact Bec on 0402 788 526 or [admin@biggroup.org.au](mailto:admin@biggroup.org.au).

## Landcare grant succes

Fresh on the heels of the recent success with the Natural Resources Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges grant to look into [grazing in vineyards](#), BIGG has been successful in winning a 25th Anniversary Landcare grant to the value of \$20,000 for a revegetation demonstration to manage watercourse erosion.

The grant is from the Federal Governments National Landcare Programme, but will also include top-up funding of \$5,000 from Natural Resources Adelaide Mt Lofty Ranges.

The project will be conducted along a sensitive riparian area of a local producers property and investigate different vegetation types (pastures, trees, shrubs) for their effectiveness to manage soil erosion.

The project site will also be used for field days to promote and discuss the benefits of watercourse segregation and revegetation, including both direct benefits of erosion mitigation and improving water quality and the indirect benefits associated with revegetation such as increased biodiversity and bird life.

The project will kick off in the next couple of months, so stay tuned!

## Sub-clover project update



Mark Grossman, Chair of BIGG presenting at the sub-clover project meeting held in January



Layout of the sub-clover trial plots conducted at Moculta (June 2014)

Sub-clover is a vital component of Barossa pasture systems and in 2014 Barossa Improved Grazing Group (BIGG) received a three-year Producer Research Sites grant (\$70,000) from [Meat & Livestock Australia](#) (MLA) to investigate the effect of soil borne root diseases on local sub-clover productivity.

As part of the project, in 2014 BIGG conducted various small plot trials, the results of which were presented at a project meeting held in Adelaide in January 2015. The meeting included participants from BIGG, Rural Directions (MLA's SA project coordinators), The University of WA (the project's research partner) and the Mackillop Farm Management Group which, like BIGG, received an MLA grant and are investigating soil borne root diseases on sub-clover in their region (south-east SA).

BIGG's 2014 trials were conducted at Moculta (Murray and Ben Klemm's property) and Eden Valley (David Woodard's property) and evaluated the productivity of three different sub-clover cultivars (Clare, Trikkala and Woogenenellup) with and without the fungicide seed treatment metalaxyl. Metalaxyl is registered for the control of seedling diseases caused by pythium and phytophthora in sub-clover but has not been trialled locally.

Treatments in the trials were sown in one metre row plots (see picture) and assessed for seedling emergence (2-5 weeks after sowing), plant nodulation and dry matter production throughout the growing season. Although soil borne root diseases were known to be present at both trial sites, the results indicated that no clear conclusions could be drawn on metalaxyl's effectiveness to reduce the impact of root diseases. This was also complicated by the short growing season, with well below average rainfall occurring in late winter/spring at both sites.

The meeting also reviewed BIGG's field trials plans for 2015, which include further investigations with metalaxyl. They complement a range of similar field research that the University of WA is planning to conduct at a trial site in the Barossa this year. These trials will include chemical seed and spray treatments, cultivation and livestock grazing as potential root disease management strategies in sub-clover.

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## From the Inbox...

Don't forget to 'like' the Barossa Improved Grazing Group on [Facebook](#) to keep up to date with the latest news and event information.

- A sheep health workshop, 'Healthy Sheep are Happy Sheep', is being hosted by the Mid North Young Guns at Roseworthy on Feb 24. [Read more](#).
- A free post-bushfire seminar is being run in Mt Barker on Monday 23 February for small landholders. [Read more](#).
- A Grazing Master Class will be held at Hahndorf on 3-5 March. [Read more](#)
- [Youth Parliament](#) participant applications are open until Friday 13 March for young people aged 15-24.
- The GRDC has released the 2015 [Gross Margin Guide](#). This provides a gross margin template for crop and livestock enterprises to assist with decision-making.
- Tim Prance has completed a study looking into the performance of a range of cereals as a pasture crop. [Read the report](#) at the BIGG website.
- The [Climate Kelpie](#) website outlines tools and information about climate so to help farmers make decisions about their farm business. The various decision support tools include several pasture management options which you might find useful:
  - [AussieGrass](#)
  - [DairyMod](#) (not just for dairies)
  - [GrazFeed](#)
  - [SGS Pasture Model](#)

## Your BIGG Contacts

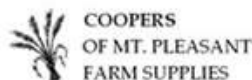
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