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The latest news from the Barossa Improved Grazing Group

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Natural Resources
Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges



Natural Resources
SA Murray-Darling Basin



The BIGG Bulletin

November 2017

In this issue

- Stock Containment Area Webinar
- BIGG Conference
- Summer Forage at Koonunga
- Utilising Native Pastures for Lambing
- Getting the most out of Lucerne

Stock Containment Area WEBINAR



Plan now and join the Webinar:

**NEXT TUESDAY 5 December
8.00pm**

- Benefits for livestock/soil/pasture
- Successful and practical design
- Feeding considerations
- Livestock requirements

[Register HERE](#)

Stock containment areas should be part of a farm management system to reduce soil erosion, maintain and enhance soils and pastures, save labour and can improve the productivity of animals.

It can be used when paddock feed is limited as a result of early spring finishes or late autumn breaks, droughts or after fires. It can also be used to quarantine new stock, for weaning and for holding stock prior to other handling tasks.

There are a number of benefits to containing stock. These include:

- reduced feeding, watering and handling time for stock as they are located in one area
- pasture maintenance or improvement due to the ability to rest paddocks, prevent over-grazing (especially of perennial grasses) and allow pasture to recover after opening rains
- containing weeds potentially brought onto the property with imported feed
- less chance of soil erosion or damage to paddocks during a drought or dry conditions
- reduced energy expenditure of stock from walking around paddocks looking for scarce feed



BIGG Conference- Don't forget!!

Buy Tickets NOW!

B I G G C O N F E R E N C E 2 0 1 8

BUILDING RESILIENCE

STRATEGIES FOR A ROBUST GRAZING BUSINESS

VENUE: Lambert Estate, Angaston

DATE: Thursday 22 February 2018, 1pm for a 1:30 start

COST: \$50. Includes presentations, afternoon tea and dinner

Summer Forage at Koonunga Demo Site

Anthony Ellis, Agronomist Farmer Johns



Rebound Forage Millet (Left) and Bounty Forage Sorghum (Right) enjoying the November and December rainfall providing summer forage options at the Koonunga Demo Site

Summer forage options are roaring out of the ground at the Koonunga site. Rebound Forage Millet is slightly ahead of the Bounty Forage Sorghum at this stage, as would be expected, but this will soon catch up to provide good quality feed as things get lean over the summer months.

Bounty Forage Sorghum has been bought in as a replacement for the long standing Zulu 2. Bounty offers a new package with improved cold tolerance, early vigour and prolific tillering characteristics. Bounty is a good all round forage option for grazing, silage or hay. Being classed in the lower risk group for prussic acid, Bounty is suitable for all forage enterprises from dryland grazing to irrigated Beef and Dairy operations. The ability to graze quickly for farmers is important and this key trait was critical in Bountys selection. With aggressive tillering after grazing, results in an overall increase in dry matter production, Bounty can then be either continually grazed, ensiled or taken through as a quality baled hay product.

Rebound Millet is a very fast growing, high yielding leafy plant for either grazing or hay. Rebound provides palatable feed of good quality. A feature of this plant is its very rapid growth during the first 8-10 weeks. In this period it far out-yields other fodder crops. Typically Rebound sown in early November can be grazed about 6 weeks later (mid-late December). Rebound is a useful feed supplement during the hot summer months when the growth of permanent pasture may suffer. Regrowth of

hot summer months when the growth of permanent pasture may suffer. Regrowth or Rebound following grazing is very good if soil moisture and nitrogen levels are sufficient.

If anyone would like to come and have a look at the Pasture Evaluation Site, please contact Anthony Ellis, 0438 488 606.

Utilising Native Pastures for Lambing

Case Study- Kirsty and Jason Treloar, Keyneton



August 2017 the pastures contain over 100% ground cover with the winter grasses beginning to grow after the late break in the season.

In the Eastern Mt Lofty Ranges, native grass pastures are a critical component of grazing systems. Understanding and utilising their potential can provide production gains and ensure longevity of these important areas.

Jason and Kirsty Treloar, utilise native grass pastures for lambing their merino ewes. This year they lambed 630 merino ewes, mated to merino rams, onto a 650ha paddock between May and June. Although this is a low stocking rate of 0.5 DSE/Ha, the ewes were able to remain on the pastures for the winter and spring months. This

allows flexibility across the rest of Kirsty and Jason's property ensuring they can save high quality paddocks for weaning.

The paddock contains a huge variety of native and annual grass plants. These different varieties provide opportunities for flexibility within a grazing system. Previous testing across the site demonstrated an average of 19 wallaby grass plants per metre growing in winter which then decline over the summer months. This is replaced with the summer active c4 plants such as brushy wire grass which are dominant at 4 plants per metre square respectively.

The pasture was rested through the summer months, allowing it to recover. With the very late break this year, which occurred in June, this recovery of the pastures was critical. It allowed the summer active grasses, which grew with the above average summer rainfall, to produce feed which was then utilised in the lambing period, when the winter grasses had not responded due to lack of moisture. The summer recovery process also ensured the winter active grasses could recover from last years grazing so when the break did come in June, they could respond and grow, providing feed through late winter and spring.

Monitoring through the winter and spring showed ground cover remained at 100% which is resultant of the lower stocking rate. These levels reduce the risk of soil erosion and improve organic matter.

The benefits to the production system were measured when they marked 722 lambs, resulting in a lamb marking percentage of 115%. In October, just after weaning, the lambs weighed 35 kilograms. This resulted in an average weight gain of approximately 250 grams per head per day. The lambs can now remain on the higher quality pastures to continue to grow, whilst the ewes will go back to the native grass pastures before they are again rested over the summer months.

This is supported by the Meat & Livestock Australia's Producer Demonstration Site Project.

Folio- Zyme: Getting the most out of Lucerne

Anthony Ellis, Agronomist, Farmer Johns





Lucerne is a very important summer forage crop in SA with great grazing and hay making qualities, good dry matter (DM) and protein levels and outstanding ability to tap into moisture stored deep in the soil profile. Together with Stoller Australia and Pasture Genetics, Farmer Johns have been looking at squeezing every last bit of potential out of Lucerne crops on our Evaluation Site at Koonunga. By applying Stollers Foli-Zyme at 4L/ha and Canopy Master 10 at 6L/ha to Pasture Genetics L56, L71 and L71 + Chicory just after cutting, we were able to increase DM production by an average of 300kg/ha over the untreated control. This falls in line with research in other parts of SA which have demonstrated that 5L/ha of Foli-Zyme alone can increase production by up to 264kg/ha (Figure 1).

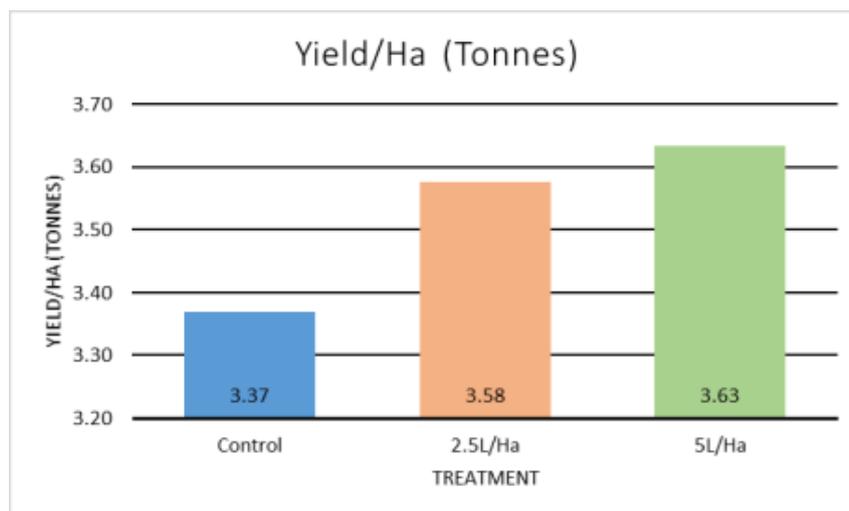


Figure 1: Yield from Foli-Zyme @ 2.5L/ha and 5L/ha

Foli-Zyme is not just about feeding the plant, it's about managing the stress hormones produced when the plant is cut and encouraging the growth hormones that promote rapid regrowth. By providing the plant with a comprehensive suite of targeted, chelated nutrients, Foli-Zyme can manage stress factors and encourage rapid regrowth after a stress event, like cutting. As well as N and K, it also has Zinc which is vital to the production of Auxin, a growth hormone. Auxin is the hormone that activates and directs new cell division and food movement within the plant. By supplying Zinc at the key timing, just after cutting, the plant is encouraged to produce Auxin and commence vigorous regrowth as quickly as possible. As well as Zinc, Foli-Zyme also combines Boron, Copper, Manganese and Molybdenum which also regulate Auxin levels and remove anti-oxidants from the plant.

Stollers unique organic chelation technology ensures that nutrients are available to the plant in a wider range of pH's, tank mixes and in the presence of negatively charged particles in soils or on leaves.

For more information, contact us at Farmer Johns

From the Inbox...

- MLA Sheep productivity and profitability [webinars series](#)- continuing through summer.....
- [Thriving Women's Conference](#)- 19/20 February, Hahndorf
- Safe Ag Systems- [Top 10 Blogs for Farmers](#)
- World Merino Conference at Uruguay Fellowship 2018- [Merino SA](#)
- Better Farm Management Workshop- Beginning 23 Feb [Mid North Young Guns](#)

Your BIGG Contacts

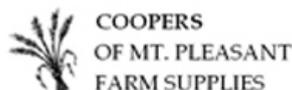
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Government of South Australia
Department of Environment,
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