



Winter Pasture NRM Update

December 2013

Vineyard Grazing Management

Last year BIGG received a Caring for Our Country Grant to demonstrate good grazing management using a mobile electric fence system. As part of the project a 'RAPPA' was purchased. The RAPPA is a device, which mounts on the back of a quad bike and efficiently rolls and unrolls up to four electric fence wires at once. Throughout 2012 and 2013 the RAPPA was trialled at various local grazing properties ([see case studies on the BIGG website](#)) but during August was used for the first time in a vineyard, on Karl Schiller's property at Angaston.

Karl runs a 26 ha vineyard but also has 400 merino breeding ewes, which he runs on both his grazing country and vineyard. The vineyard has a permanent mid-row sward consisting of ryegrass, fescue and subclover, which are grazed in winter prior to bud burst. This season there was also a greater proportion of capeweed in some vineyard blocks so Karl wanted to concentrate the sheep in these areas to help manage it.

Using the RAPPA, Karl divided an 8.5 ha vineyard into two sections, consisting of 5 ha and 3.5 ha



Karl Schiller after putting out a temporary electric fence with the RAPPA in his vineyard at Angaston

separated by two electric fence wires. On 6 August, 80 merino hoggets (equivalent to 1 DSE/hd) were introduced onto the 5 ha section (stocking density of 16 DSE/ha) and remained there until being removed just prior to bud burst on 4 September. At this stocking density the Feed on Offer (FOO) remained at about 2800 kg DM/ha over the 29-day grazing period.

Karl had originally intended to also

graze the 3.5 ha section of the vineyard. However, due to the high amount of feed available and greater concentration of capeweed in the 5 ha section, he felt it was more important to keep the stock in this area. By doing this Karl was able to reduce the potential for capeweed seed-set although ideally he would have liked to increase the grazing pressure (either through increasing the stocking density or

grazed the same number of stock on a smaller area). By rotationally grazing between several sections Karl would have also increased pasture utilisation. In addition, grazing reduces the reliance on

herbicides for weed control including slowing the onset of herbicide resistance in key weeds such as annual ryegrass, which is an endemic problem in vineyards. Through trialling an electric fence system in

his vineyard Karl saw first hand the benefits of the strategy and has since purchased his own system. You won't get a better recommendation than that!

Skills for Public Speaking and Running Effective Meetings

On 26 November, the Barossa Mid-North Dairyfarmer's Co-op held a workshop at Kapunda focusing on public speaking and ethical behaviour in running meetings. The workshop, supported by Dairy SA, was aimed at helping to improve the presentation and corporate governance skills of its members. It was facilitated by consultant Sharon Honner, from Ag Consulting Co. and explored:

- challenges of public speaking;
- characteristics of a great presentation; and
- tips for effective governance.

All participants rated the workshop highly with most saying they learnt more than they expected. Below are some take home messages from the day, developed by the participants.

Characteristics of a great presentation

One of the key characteristics of a great presentation is to know your audience and what they are interested in. This means respecting and valuing participants by being authentic and not pushing your personal



Karen Slape (Director) and Andrew Koch (Chair) of the Barossa Mid-North Dairyfarmers Co-op at the Kapunda workshop

agenda – the audience will see through this! Content should be structured so the audience can follow your message. There should be an *Open* that defines the message, a *Body* and a *Close* with take away messages.

Standing up is also an important factor for creating energy in your presentation, especially for voice projection, creating presence and building confidence. The use of a roving microphone also helps. Where possible, use visuals to strengthen your message such as powerpoint, props or products to handout. And a warning, use humour only if it is a strength!

Top 10 tips for running effective meetings – corporate governance and ethical behavior

1. Clarify roles and responsibilities
2. Be accountable to the vote
3. Running on time
4. Treat others as you like to be treated
5. Follow the agenda
6. Risk management
7. Be on time – respect others
8. Be professional
9. Know your constitution and meeting procedure
10. Include social time (be inclusive of all members)

From the INBOX

Barossa Young People in Ag (YiAg) Conference

The Barossa YiAg Group will be holding a statewide conference on 7 March 2014. For more info contact Georgie Keynes georgieandtoby@bigpond.com

Groundcover app

For those with smartphones check out this free app [Ground Cover](#), which allows you to accurately assess the ground cover of your paddock (don't forget the 'rule of thumb' of aiming to have above 70% groundcover to minimise soil loss).

Further Information

Technical Facilitator/ Coordinators

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