



## Winter Pasture NRM Update

August 2013

### Barossa Soils Forum

On Wednesday, 21st August, BIGG will host the 'Barossa Soils Forum' at Nuriootpa Sports and Convention Centre. The event will discuss the influence of alternative fertilisers and biological products on sustainable cropping and grazing systems and provide insight into soil nutrient and fertility levels for the Barossa region.

Keynote speaker **Dr Doug Edmeades** from agKnowledge, New Zealand, will present farmers with science-based solutions on nutrient management to maximising profitability while minimising the environmental footprint. His company agKnowledge does not endorse or sell any products bringing a voice of independence to the fertiliser industry. Other presentations include:

- **Tony Craddock** (Rural Directions): Opportunities of utilising recycled organic

wastes (i.e. eco-shelter bedding and grape marc) as fertilisers and implications this has for crop and pasture production

- **Simon Ellis** (Simon Ellis Consulting, Verdun): Key findings from a recent soil survey taken from over 200 paddocks spanning from Cape Jervis to Lyndoch
- **Andrew Koch**: Local dairy producer case study
- **Brett Nietschke**: Outline of a new project facilitated by BIGG - Monitoring soil moisture in grazing systems. Producers will have an opportunity to chat with speakers and other producers over a BBQ dinner and again later in the evening through a Q&A panel. Anyone interested in attending the Barossa Soils Forum is asked to register with Sarah Weaver. Email [sarah.weaver@biggroup.org.au](mailto:sarah.weaver@biggroup.org.au) or phone 0430 713 639.

### Upcoming Events

**Barossa Soils Forum**  
Nuriootpa Sports and  
Convention Centre -  
Wednesday 21 August  
**Contact Sarah Weaver**



**Dr Doug Edmeades**  
Soils Expert, AgKnowledge

### Koonunga Pasture Walk – Grazing in Vineyards

A successful Pasture Walk was held on 12 July in the Koonunga district as part of the Winter Pastures NRM project funded by the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Board. Twenty attendees including producers, private industry and NRM Board representatives visited local properties to learn about different aspects of pasture management, including growing lucerne, capeweed control in pastures and grazing cereals crops.

A highlight of the Pasture Walk was a visit to Jamie Nietschke's mixed farm where dairy calves grazed a section of his vineyard. Jamie has been grazing his vineyards since 2007, mainly with calves but also sheep. He generally sows cape barley as a cover crop in his vineyards and then after the cover crop is well established he grazes stock until new shoots appear on the vines. This is usually in September but also in some

years he grazes immediately after vintage to utilise available feed. Jamie said that his calves virtually cause no damage to the irrigation lines in the vineyard while sheep never cause any damage.

Apart from stock utilising the feed in vineyards, grazing reduces the reliance on herbicides for weed control and slows the onset of herbicide resistance in key weeds such as annual ryegrass. For those vignerons who don't have stock, grazing provides additional income through agistment, while it can also assist graziers to fill any winter feed gap they may have on their property.

The visit to Jamie's vineyard, together with other highlights from the Koonunga Pasture Walk, will soon be on YouTube. A video was produced on the day by the AMLR NRM Board to help get the message out about sustainable pasture management. Stay tuned!



Calves grazing in Jamie Nietschke's vineyard, Koonunga.

## Local Producer features at the Pasture Update, Clare



Alan Humphries, SARDI Lucerne Breeder, and Greg Koch, Moculta at the Clare Pasture Update

On 25 July the Grasslands Society of Southern Australia in conjunction with Meat and Livestock Australia held a 'Pasture Update' at Clare. The day was supported by BIGG and included talks on various aspects of pasture and livestock management such as stock health, phalaris as a pasture species, and how lambs can achieve 400 grams a day from birth to weaning (yes, apparently it is possible!). The final talk of the day was reserved for a producer and was presented by Greg Koch of Moculta who discussed the various pasture management

tactics he employs on his 800ha property. These include a rotational grazing system, growing a variety of pasture species (annuals, perennials, native grasses) to diversify his feed options and keeping his sheep in a containment lot in autumn to help the pastures "get away". Greg has been one of the key producers involved in BIGG, specifically through trialling the temporary electric fence system, the Rappa. Well done Greg on your talk!

## From the INBOX

### EverGraze website updated

EverGraze is a project that aims to design, test and implement farming systems based on perennials, which significantly increase profitability of livestock enterprises and at the same time reduce ground water recharge and soil loss by water and wind in the high rainfall zone of southern Australia. It contains a heap of groundbreaking research, case studies and fact sheets so check out the new website!

[www.evergraze.com.au](http://www.evergraze.com.au)

### Activity Plan template

The Winter Pasture NRM Project encourages individual producers to develop an simple activity plan to trial an aspect of pasture management. Its not too late to be involved (especially for those who may be considering spring sowing) so contact us if you would like to discuss.

### Fleurieu Forage Innovation Project

DairySA has recently released an update about its perennial pasture project on the Fleurieu.

[www.dairysa.com.au](http://www.dairysa.com.au)

## Further Information

### Technical Facilitator/ Coordinators

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