

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

AUGUST 2016

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## THIS FRIDAY - Koonunga Pasture Walk

Koonunga Pasture Walk: Friday 26th August\_3.30pm at Glen Becker's Pasture Demonstration Site Cnr Carrara Hill and Schnider Rds, Ebenezer.

Also REMEMBER: BIGG's spring pasture walk: Friday 16 September.

## Watercourse Rehabilitation Video



Check out our latest watercourse rehabilitation video.....

## Pasture Demonstration Sites are GO!



The Koonunga/Ebenezer Farmer Johns Site has over 15 different varieties of annual and perennial mixes. This site is being treated with ProGibb to determine the effect on plant growth.



Craig John, Coopers Mt Pleasant and Kirk Brehaut, Heritage Seeds, used a cone seeder to plant over 50 pasture varieties into the Eden Valley Site.

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Producers will be able to maximise their pasture production in a variable climate following the results of an exciting new project from the Barossa Improved Grazing Group (BIGG).

Funded by [Meat and Livestock Australia](#) (MLA) and a collaboration between BIGG and

Barossa businesses Coopers of Mount Pleasant and Farmer Johns, the project aims to develop a more reliable feed-base responsive to the changing climate.

A range of pasture types have been sown including perennial and annual grasses, clovers and forage cereals at sites in Koonunga, Eden Valley and Keyneton with seed donated by Pasture Genetics and Heritage Seeds. These sites will be regularly monitored for a range of outputs including feed value and dry matter production over the next three years, allowing producers to learn about varieties which are suited to their environments.

Project facilitator and livestock producer Georgie Keynes says the challenge is to optimise pasture productivity while anticipating variable seasonal conditions.

“As well as a feed-base that can handle different rainfall patterns, we are also looking for options that increase flexibility,” Georgie says.

“In recent years, climate change has been leading to variable rainfall patterns, late breaks, early finishes and more summer rainfall events. However most pasture feed-bases are still optimised for the traditional weather cycle of reliable, winter dominant rain.

“The advice we are receiving from climatologists is that rainfall is likely to be above-average in 2016 so we have included forage cereals that should run to head in a wet spring to be utilised for hay or silage.”

Producers will be able to assess the trials at pasture walks to be held through the year including the Koonunga Pasture Walk (26 August) BIGG spring pasture walk (September 16).

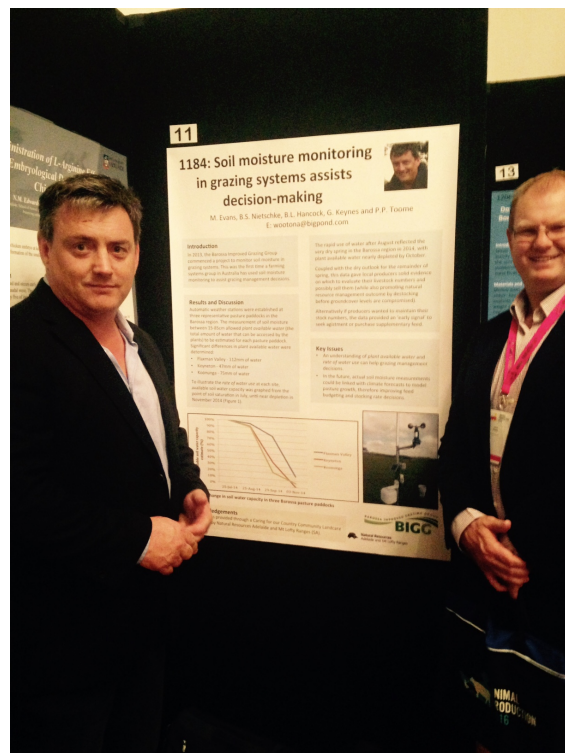
## BIGG Presents at ASAP Conference



Throughout AP2016, there was plenty of trans-Tasman interest, and here, BIGG's Michael Evans discusses the soil moisture project with Natalie Hughes, a SealesWinslow Science



Extension Consultant, from North Island, NZ.



Jason Trompf, a keynote speaker, national sheep reproduction consultant and producer trainer chatted with Michael Evans about the potential value of soil moisture monitoring his Landcare group in Victoria.

Al Jackson, Michael Evans and Anthony Steinert were gratefully supported by the Angaston Ag Bureau and Adelaide & Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Board to attend “Animal Production 2016 Conference”, in Adelaide during 4-7th July, along with over 330 other attendees.

From the Barossa Improved Grazing Group’s soil moisture project, they developed, submitted and had accepted a 2 page Brief Communication and were invited to present a [poster](#) (Paper 1184).

This high level International Conference was co-hosted by the Australian Society of Animal Production and the NZ Society of Animal Production, to provide an opportunity to share collaborative and unique work and early findings. The theme was “Animal Welfare” and the soil moisture project fitted nicely as it generates real-time data for producers to assist in early decisions to buy, sell, agist in dry and short springs to ensure adequate feed reserves for good livestock condition and animal welfare outcomes and ground cover targets are maintained.

A highlight was to hear and personally chat with keynote speaker, Prof Temple Grandin, an International Animal Behaviour expert and designer of numerous livestock handling facilities.



Fostering, mentoring & empowering students was major focus with over 60 students in attendance and many delivering high quality, very informative 3 Minute Snapshots.

Search for BIGG's and other papers [here](#).

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## BIGG Tree Planting

Do you still have trees left to plant in your revegetation site and running out of time to get them in? BIGG's army may be available to help- which will go towards maintaining our important newsletter/website and OH&S requirements. Contact [Georgie](#) for more info....

## NRM Spatial Hub

BIGG are keen to try and get a site as part of this project- if you are interested please read on>>>>>>As part of AWI's ongoing commitment to generate significant improvement in wool's environmental footprint ratings and strengthen wool's reputation for environmental stewardship, AWI is pleased to announce the commencement of the second round of the NRM (Natural Resource Management) Spatial Hub. The NRM Spatial Hub provides grazing managers with the capability to consistently map, plan, analyse and monitor their properties infrastructure, land resources and ground cover to improve grazing and natural resource management.

During this new round of research, AWI is hoping to recruit an additional 50 properties to join the existing 350 properties that are already participating in the project. Most of the existing properties in the project are in the northern pastoral zone, so the new participants we are targeting will ideally be enterprises in the medium-high rainfall grazing and sheep-wheat regions of Australia.

Please contact Georgie for more info asap- the closing date for submissions is COB Friday, 26 August 2016.



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## From the Inbox...

- 2016 Annual GSSA conference, is being held at the Hamilton Showground on Wednesday August 31 and Thursday September 1st. Program and further information can be made via the [GSSA website](#), or on the registration form from the brochure.
- National Landcare Conference will be in Melbourne 21-23 September. [Read More...](#)
- Mallee Sustainable Farming Karoonda Field Day- Topics include grazing cereals and stubbles, cereal variety impact on rhizoctonia and GRDC frost initiative. More info contact MSF (03) 5024 5853
- Dairy SA Spring Sowing Lucerne Success, [Read More.....](#)
- Don't forget to follow us on [Facebook](#)!

## Your BIGG Contacts

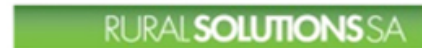
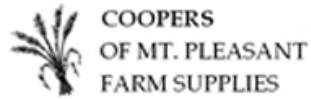
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**Government of South Australia**  
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