

The latest news from the Barossa Improved Grazing Group

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SA Murray-Darling Basin



# The BIGG Bulletin

October 2018

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## A flexible pasture to fill summer feed gaps



*With enough spring feed, Tracy*



*The goats grazed the second half of*

*decided to split the paddock in half and  
bale one half to provide supplementary  
feed in summer*

*the perennial grass, lucerne and  
chicory pasture*

Tracy and Owen Bonython, at Ebenezer worked one on one with Pasture Genetic's Rehn Freebairn to develop a customised pasture mix which is flexible and can help fill the summer feed gap to help meet growth weight targets of 40 to 50kg for weaner goats.

The mix included GTL60 Lucerne, and summer active perennial grasses Australis Phalaris, Convoy Cocksfoot and Valley Diploid perennial ryegrass. It also included a small percentage of Balance Chicory which Tracy had heard was a favourite variety for goats. Although summer active, these varieties will also respond in winter and spring to produce high quality feed.

The pasture was sown on the 28<sup>th</sup> May into a 2.8 Ha area at a rate of 25Kg/Ha.

Given the dry winter and spring conditions with only 203mm received in the growing season, it established well and was measuring over 3,000 Kg of dry matter at the end of September.

In October, Tracy decided that she had enough spring feed available so split the paddock in half and baled 1 ha of the paddock for hay. Considering the season, she decided the fodder conservation would be valuable for filling a feed gap later in the season. The hay was baled on the 24<sup>th</sup> October with six bales made totalling 1.5 tonnes of hay. Six days after baling, the pasture was measuring 2,400 kg per hectare of dry matter, with a large percentage of chicory which was short enough to be missed by the mower at cutting.

The remaining 1.7Ha of the paddock was split into two sections and strategically grazed. The goats were slowly introduced with a couple of half day grazing's on the pasture to ease them into the new pasture varieties before they were left to eat the pasture down.

Seventy five goats remained in the first 0.7 hectares for 11 days, utilising 2,475 kg of dry matter, with a residual of 1000 kg of dry matter per hectare.

The second section was grazed for 12 days. Tracy has noticed that the goats did not preferentially graze any particular variety, however when moved through the freshly cut hay section, they went straight for the chicory, which she thought they may preferentially graze within the pasture.

The pastures will now be rested to allow the perennial grasses, Lucerne and chicory to recover and set seed prior to further grazing in the summer months.

# BIGG goes to 'Brissy'



*Gerry Butler (Landcare Assoc. of SA), Brett Nietschke (BIGG) and Jodie Pain (NR AMLR)*

The National Landcare Conference was held in Brisbane on 10-12 October. The event is the peak knowledge-sharing forum for the landcare community and is run every two years. Apart from the conference itself, a key part of the conference is the announcement of the national landcare award winners.

There were nine national landcare award categories, including the Australian Government Excellence in Sustainable Farm Practices award, which BIGG was a national finalist. This award is for an 'individual, group or organisation that has demonstrated excellence and leadership in implementing integrated land management practices to a farm property or properties that protect soils, water and vegetation'.

Unfortunately BIGG didn't win the Sustainable Farm Practices award but particular congratulations goes to the SA award winners who won three of the nine categories! These were; Mount Compass Area School Swamp ambassadors, Birdlife Australia Gluepot Reserve and Hindmarsh Island Landcare Group Inc. For further information about these awards, check out the Landcare Association of SA.

BIGG was represented at the conference by Brett Nietschke who gave a presentation on BIGG's soil moisture monitoring in grazing systems project, including being a panel member for a conference session on drought recovery.



Speaker presentations from the conference can be found [here](#).

## BIGG into the future.....a new strategic plan



This year has been an exciting one for BIGG with the development of a new strategic plan. Over 20 producers and stakeholders were involved in the development via two strategic planning meetings which resulted in our 'plan on a page' which will help to guide BIGG's projects and development for the next three years. This support and guidance helps ensure BIGG continues to be driven 'from the ground' up.

Overall, BIGG reviewed its mission and vision to concisely state the:

- Vision: resilient landscapes and land managers
- Mission: to improve farm grazing systems

The full plan and a list of our project priorities are available on our [website](#)

Thank you to Natural Resources SA Murray Darling Basin for supporting this process and helping BIGG grow into the future.

## From the Inbox.....

- BIGG's Livestock Containment Areas webinar provides great advice for those still contemplating implementing one for summer [CHECK IT OUT](#)
- Dairy SA Ladies Luncheon- Monday Nov 11th Langhorne Creek [TICKETS](#)
- One Biosecurity is a new state-wide approach to managing, protecting, and promoting South Australia's strong biosecurity regime across its livestock

industry- Visit the website for [MORE INFO](#)

- Subscribe or check out the Sheep Connect Website for fantastic South Australian sheepy information! [VIEW](#)
- Dry Times Resources Website- Natural Resources SAMDB [Check it Out!](#)

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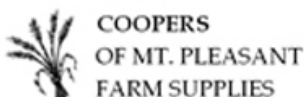
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