

The latest news from the Barossa Improved Grazing Group

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# The BIGG Bulletin

December 2022

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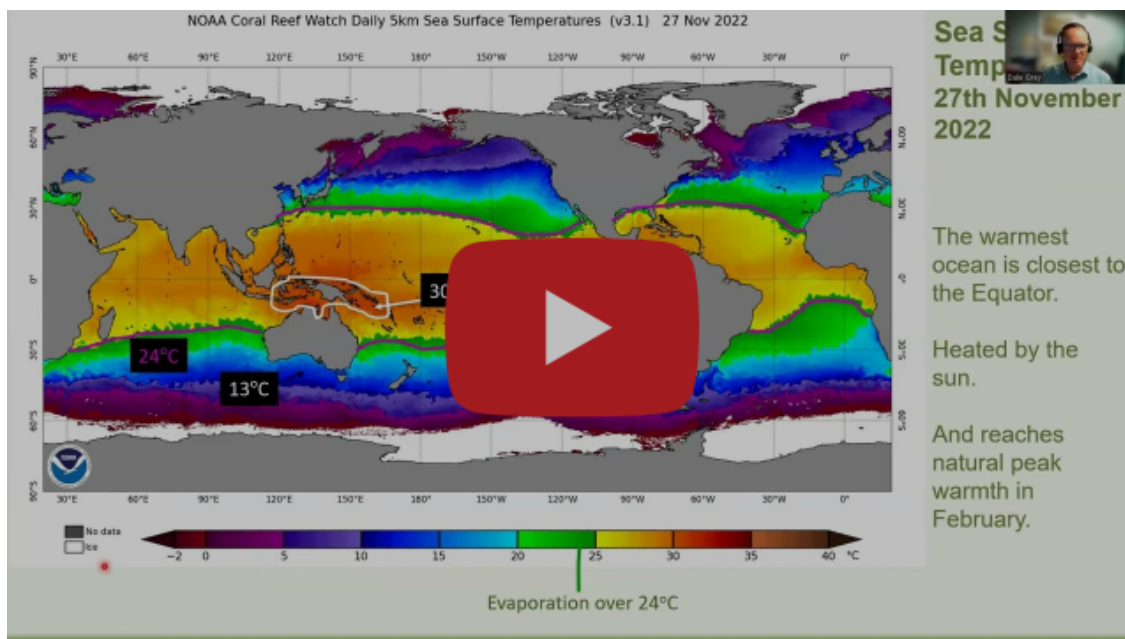
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## Local Climatic Outlook for the Season WEBINAR

**Presented by Dale Grey**

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the Barossa region.



Click on the black box above to go to the video link!

***This project is supported by the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program and the landscape levies.***



Australian Government

National  
Landcare  
Program



**LANDSCAPE**  
**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**  
MURRAYLANDS AND RIVERLAND

**Soil moisture report –  
soil moisture remains high**



BIGG’s four weather stations recorded substantial rainfall totals in November, ranging from 126mm at Keyneton to 153mm at Moculta. This has significantly extended the growing season, particularly at Flaxman Valley and Moculta where over 650mm has fallen since April.

Throughout the growing season, soil moisture levels in the profile have consistently remained high. Flaxman Valley, Keyneton and Moculta are currently estimated to be at 81-87% of capacity, while Koonunga is 68%. Compared to what they were 12 months ago, soils moisture levels are significantly higher, averaging (across the four sites) 35% on 14/12/21, compared to 81% on 14/12/22.

Check out BIGG’s current ‘soil moisture report’, which gives some interesting analysis by Peter Toome from TOIP Pty Ltd about the soil moisture status of each weather station site, including what landholders have been doing in these paddocks. The report can be viewed [here](#).

Site	Rainfall (mm)		Estimated soil moisture in the profile (%)	
	Nov 2022*	Apr-Nov 2022**	14/12/21	14/12/22
Flaxman Valley	150	664	21	87
Keyneton	126	555	47	81
Koonunga	130	552	25	68
Moculta	153	656	46	86

\*Rainfall: 1/11/22-30/11/22, \*\*Rainfall: 1/4/22-30/11/22

*This article is delivered by BIGG, through funding from the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program*

## Seeking BIGG growers to test late summer sowing French Serradella



**Our project is seeking land managers who can sow 10 ha of their farmland with hardseeded French Serradella pods provided by the project in February 2023, to examine the viability of summer sowing as a management option for the Barossa.**

Early establishment of serradella could provide early feed, an extended growing season and decreased sowing workload for farmers after the break. Hardseeded French serradella cultivars have an unusual pod softening process that means they can be sown in February to early March and germinate with the opening rains, without the need for scarification. This practice has been used for many years in Western Australia and New South Wales and recent work in South Australia shows that it can work here too.

Participating sites will ideally be sandy, lower pH, and free from waterlogging. Sites that have previously been used to produce lupins would be especially compatible and desirable. The project team is happy to talk in detail about management of serradella. Aside from small areas under exclusion, the participating farmers would be free to graze or harvest seed from the trial site, depending on growth and their interests. The project would like to hold a field day to show other farmers how the pasture has performed.

If you are interested in participating in the trial, please contact Matthew Denton, 0417026227, or [matthew.denton@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:matthew.denton@adelaide.edu.au).

## Containment Ewe Case Study



Ryan Foulis' property is located 10kms east of Springton. Ryan was keen to bring the ewes into smaller and more accessible containment pens to provide their nutritional needs in the lead up to lambing, and allow the pasture to grow ahead of lambing

Foulis' join their ewes in December and January with first lambs seen mid-May. Of the 1400 breeding ewes 800 were put into containment. The property has very large paddocks with hills grazing which can have its challenges when monitoring ewes, containment has helped with this management issue significantly. In addition to this, having the ewes off the pastures has allowed the existing ground cover in the hills to be preserved which has been invaluable over the last few dry seasons.

Ryan has seen better pasture recovery post season break which allows the growth to get away before lambing. The area had experienced a couple of very dry years with below average rainfall in the lead up to the containment decision. Containment allowed the pasture to get the full benefit of the break, which came in late April and early May this season.

>>>>See the full article [HERE](#)

## Save the Date!



Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February

1.30pm – 7.00pm

Angaston Football Club

## Note from our Sponsors

### Australian Wool Network

Wool market report by Rod Miller AWN December 10 2022

Firstly as a sponsor of BIGG I am pleased to provide this Wool market report to members. AWN has been a promotor of Barossa wools through its DNA knitwear range and the fashion recognised Barossa Throw design by Marni Gilder. The macro-economic and political factors effecting the wool market are unprecedented. The global pandemic and the Russia Ukraine war forcing most economies into recession and hiking energy costs. Related has been shipping cost escalations and shortage of vessels trying to achieve profitable voyages around the globe.

With China consuming around 80 % of our wool it clearly signals if China has a flu, we catch a cold! The big comeback market has been India with bilateral trade agreements assisting with easing tariffs. The Italian and European fine wool market has been active, but with limited volumes due to rapidly escalating energy costs. Their purchases are now almost totally NM/RWS accredited as they have signed on to their retail brand ethical and environmental commitments.

This has created 2 separate markets between ethical brands RWS/NM and commodity types. South Africa has reported the 2 separate markets for some time, and AWEX here in Australia will follow suit. Wool processors shop globally, and this is a competitive factor for us here in Australia.

This global search for RWS accredited wools has us working with New Zealand Merino ZQrx as the largest supplier of ethical brand wool globally. Their brand partners are champions of ethical supply with measurable environmental footprint report with Ice Breaker, Smart Wool, and All Bird shoes as examples.

has eased this week. This brought the wool market back to life with the largest weekly rise in 18 months with the EMI lifting 54 cents to 1278. This brings renewed optimism for the second half in 2023.

Even with this weeks significant increases most Merino categories are below June 22 , and cross bred wools below January 22. The EMI of 1278 is 6% below same time last year, and in US\$ terms 12 % below. Here in SA we have been fortunate with seasonal conditions, and challenged with the frequency of rainfall and dry sheep to shear. I commend the Barossa region shearing teams and Wool classers for the way they have stepped up to the challenges and will continue to do so right up to Xmas day.



*Wool Classer Alison Harris using her professional Stencil for the first time at Grant Burge Shearing.*

## Trac

Anyone who has ever had a conversation with a TRAC consultant, would have heard something along the lines of “we are feeding the microbes, not the animal...” and it cannot be emphasized enough.

Yes, the individual components are being used to build strong, healthy, robust and productive animals, but the food has to pass through the gatekeepers first.

The rumen microbial environment is a sensitive ecosystem where any form of change will have an influence that despite the potential long-term benefit of that change, will take readjusting to reach a new state of equilibrium.

TRAC Ruminant Productivity Consultant, Mikaela Baker looks at the influencing factors that can be termed as stress and what the impact of this "stress" is on the rumen environment and animal productivity.

To continue reading Mikaela Baker's article on the TRAC Blog, please click here...

<https://www.totalresult.com.au/post/rumen-adaptation>

To discuss how we can apply this information on your farm, please contact your local TRAC consultant today, your Experts in Ruminant Productivity, or...

Contact the TRAC Office on to arrange a consultation with your nearest TRAC Consultant...

Phone: 08 8733 1888

Email: [info@totalresult.com.au](mailto:info@totalresult.com.au)

Website: [www.totalresult.com.au](http://www.totalresult.com.au)



BIGG are currently on the lookout for a new Executive Officer.

If you are interested in working with farmers, dealing with local issues through innovative techniques and forming networks with industry and stakeholders, this role is for you!

Currently offering a part-time role with the opportunity to increase hours over time!

Contact Georgie to find out more or to be sent the Terms of Reference:



## Seasons Greetings!



Thank you to the project stakeholders, sponsors and most importantly the producers who provide their time, knowledge and support for all things BIGG.

BIGG exists by producers for producers and will continue to work from the ground up to support the local grazing community.

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Look forward to catching up in 2023!

## From the Inbox

- Have your Say- the [New Barossa Water Allocation Plan](#)
- AgRi-Silience Program- [Upcoming workshops 2023](#)
- Summer reading- check out the [BIGG resources page](#) to look at all of the case studies developed over the year!
- Work out your own on-farm Carbon Accounting using the sheep & beef tool- [LINK](#)

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