

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. Apply Surround sunscreen to trees and vines!
2. Clean up summer weeds.
3. Order fertiliser now.
4. Monitor fruit trees and citrus for insect pests.
5. Manage livestock nutrition.

**Thanks very much for your support in 2023.**

**All our Murray Bridge clients are invited to join us on the 9<sup>th</sup> February for our annual BBQ.**

**Please call the Murray Bridge team for the "finer" details.**



We generally reflect on the past year when we sit around at our family and social gatherings over the Christmas and New Year period.

I'm sure most families are pretty similar in their make-up which makes conversation interesting and on occasions, a little difficult! We also do the same as we conclude another year of trading and begin again in January. Although most of our financial reporting etc is done in June, the calendar year is still used for our seasonal product forecasting, procurement and product supply management. The big decisions are made on supply at this time of year. For example, we have to lock in our basic fungicide requirements for the 24/25 horti season. We also forecast and forward order our broadacre winter cropping volumes now, while our livestock products are offered to us on deals over the summer months. How do we get all these things somewhere close to the mark in order to maintain supply across all our client base, in the various crop segments we are servicing, and not let anyone down when demand escalates from

some unforeseen weather event or other circumstance of influence? We are unable to collate all your individual crop plans and the associated products that would be required to carry these plans out. The question then is pretty straight forward – what is the weather going to do? Knowing that we are going to have a cooler summer than the BOM is telling us helps us to manage the remaining months of the summer horti portfolio more efficiently. We need to ensure all our clients are ready for an earlier opening break. Rainfall in both March and April will set up a very solid broadacre season. Spring time will be much wetter than 2023. It is therefore important that we have products on hand for the resulting fungal diseases that will cause some headaches in Sept and Oct. Unfortunately, hay and harvest will also be interrupted with rain events late in the year. Simple, isn't it - we only need to know what the weather is going to do!

**Greg Schubert**

## Quote of the Month

"Don't worry about people stealing an idea. If it's original, you will have to ram it down their throats."

**- Howard Aiken**

## Viticulture

**Recent high rainfall** totals have provided some relief to the busy irrigation schedule. The vines certainly prefer rainfall over stored water, especially in those situations where water quality is compromised! Our moisture monitoring sites have indicated some recharge, but despite the good December gauging's, it won't be long before the taps will need to be turned on.

Unfortunately, **weeds also love a decent rain** as well. The germination of typical summer species should be targeted when they are small - ideally at the four leaf stage. Managing weeds when they are quite small will provide a much more effective knockdown and also negate their water use. More economical herbicide rates can be used to control small weeds, this might be a very important consideration this year.

Any herbicide applications made to the vineyard should be completed within recommended Withholding Periods prior to harvest and also with consideration to your winery's specific requirements. These requirements may differ to the product label and the AWRI dog book recommendations, particularly within 30 days of harvest commencing.

Ideal growing conditions since the rain will see weeds such as Caltrop mature rapidly. Our scouting teams have seen large germinations with flowering and seed set well underway. Stop the spread of all weeds by checking machinery and vehicle tyres particularly when moving from block to block.

**Disease risk was always going to be elevated** this season as growers considered how ...cont page 2/



The Endura 303

## Seasonal reminders

- Protect summer crops from birds with an Avix Bird Laser. Effective for all species and allows access to blocks subsequent to rain.
- Get ready for vintage. Order Mega bins, snips and buckets. We also have stocks of personal sun protection – hats, sunscreen and shaded safety glasses.

- Castrol oil is available for all machinery maintenance and servicing before and during the approaching vintage.
- Please return all Chep pallets to avoid additional hire fees and 110ltr Enviro drums and 1000ltr shuttles.
- Grab a new pair of Rossi boots for the summer. Rossi boots still made in Adelaide here in SA!

- All poultry feed available from FJs. Specials on chook layers pellets, ask our store staff.
- Maintain garden nutrients over summer with Nuetrog fertilisers. For veggies, flowers and lawns.
- Poly pipe, tanks, troughs, Pentair pumps and fittings all in stock for all livestock water supply, Don't let livestock stock get thirsty!

"with you in the GROWING business"

from page 1.... to manage vineyards with a high level of uncertainty on grape contracts. Powdery Mildew has been detected throughout the Barossa as recent weather conditions also favour disease development. Ideally any blocks that have had a recent history of disease should be carefully monitored especially as we anticipate final sprays will be applied over the early weeks of January.

Old scarring from flower separation and any recent berry splitting from heavy rainfall will provide **an ideal entry for Botrytis**. A number of growers will remember that Botrytis was an issue in many vineyards late last season. Recent rainfall has also increased humidity making botrytis a "watch out" now as fruit starts to ripen toward the end of our growing season.

There may be an opportunity to use Intervene, a new product that provides protection against powdery and botrytis. Intervene can be used up to E-L 34 (prior to version) and 44 days from harvest. It is also registered for use in organic programs. Novellus from Sipcam has a 7-day WHP and can be used late in the season for botrytis management.

Talk to our agro's about these and other biologicals suited to late season applications.

**Kelp and BioForge** will assist summer crops deal with heat stress. Applications during recent warm summers have confirmed the benefits that plants receive from kelp and bio-stimulants such as BioForge. Overall canopy health and leaf retention are obvious subsequent to applications before a heat event leading to more even ripening and fruit quality. Ideally Super Kelp and BioForge should be applied to vines before a heat event. Plants will still benefit from the attributes of these products if they are applied immediately after hot weather but with reduced impact.

**Surround** has also been successfully incorporated into summer heat management in many horticulture crops, reducing heat stress and sunburn. Surround is an inert kaolin clay that once applied to the canopy, simply acts as a sunscreen. Surround can reduce the temperature within the vine canopy by as much as 8°C. This significant difference reduces the vines moisture requirement, improves fruit quality, leaf retention and also seems to have a side effect, acting as a bird deterrent over the last weeks of the ripening season.

**Bird control** is an important consideration especially in those vineyards located on the perimeter of regional production areas and in those outlying vineyards encompassed by natural bird habitation and woodlands. Gas guns and other scaring devices are somewhat effective but need to be moved about and also backed up with some physical effort, ie shooting. Netting is more effective but can be problematic for any additional entry for fungicide and herbicide applications etc.

Electronic Lasers have become a more reliable method of fending off all species of birds. We have installed a number of Bird Control Lasers in vineyards. Lasers are very effective and still allow access to vineyards and orchards. They aren't intrusive to neighbours and once installed require very little maintenance. Call Mete to discuss Laser Bird Control, tailored to suit your location and bird management situation.

As we mentioned earlier, **the recent rainfall has certainly helped to top up moisture levels in the soil profile**. Water makes up a considerable part of all horticulture production both as an input in overall crop management and as a component of the cost of production. In some cases, as a significant part of this cost! Having full visibility of soil moisture levels over the closing weeks of the growing season helps to make decisions around irrigation scheduling a simple and straightforward task.

Our agronomy team can assist in helping you understand the various moisture monitoring systems available, how these help in providing a full understanding of what is happening below ground level and how efficiently your irrigations are actually being utilised by the vines (or other crop).

## Citrus and Orchard

**Citrus** crops are sizing with most orchards reaching 50-60mm. Some late or second applications of GA will still take place. Kelp or bio stimulants and potassium nitrate should be included in the GA tank mix.

Always check the tank GA mix pH and adjust with a buffer if necessary.

**Red and Brown Scale populations are on the rise**. Our observations have seen levels around 8% – 10%. These populations are reaching critical threshold levels and should be treated with either Trivor or Movento. Both these products will provide 21 days protection. Always ensure a rotation of actives is incorporated into the spray program to reduce the risk of resistance developing.

Mealy Bug are also active and should be monitored. Any Movento applications for the control of Scale will also suppress these pests. Citrus Leaf Miner are also active at the moment. It's important that inspections are completed and ensure any controls are timely and using products to minimise damage caused.

Movento is a soft insecticide and therefore has only minor effects on any predators.

Recent weather fronts have caused some wind damage on developing fruit. The BOM is still concerned about the likelihood of very warm conditions through the later parts of January and into February. They have issued a heat warning for the period of January 15<sup>th</sup> through to the 1<sup>st</sup> February.

**Some citrus varieties can lose 20% of production to sunburn damage**, with even greater losses in times of extreme heat. Surround's protective particle film layer can reduce plant surface and canopy temperatures by as much as 8°C. Local and international trials with **Surround have shown increased fruit size and quality**, a positive effect on return blooms and improved foliar flushes on young trees if coverage has been maintained over the hotter months.

The BOM's early advice does provide growers enough time to apply a protective Surround cover to orchards – call us now to ensure you have your requirement covered!



### A NATURALLY DERIVED FUNGICIDE FOR THE CONTROL OF BOTRYTIS IN GRAPES

New NovelMOA: Group 46

Flexible application window from EL-19 through to 14 days before harvest (as per AWRI Dogbook)

Effective on resistant strains of botrytis

Preventative and curative activity

Excellent compatibility

Water based formulation with great shelf life

INTEGRATE NOVELLUS INTO YOUR BOTRYTIS PROGRAM THIS SEASON





## Broadacre

**Phosphate fertiliser** has continued on a similar trend with little global trade over the Christmas and New Year period.

Rainfall forecasts covering the early months of 2024 for the eastern sea board will be the major driver on pricing in the near term. The greatest risk is shaping up to be domestic demand for phosphates outstripping supply. We all experienced the urea issue during spring last season! No top up tonnes of P will not come from China. Additional wide spread rain events will increase the urgency to make a decision to secure supply!

Nitrogen products have been soft but look to have found a floor. We will monitor this closely over the coming weeks and assess if it is time to purchase pre-plant nitrogen.

**Lime** supply from Penlime remains tight again this year. However, we have secured alternative options once our allocations of Penlime are inevitably exhausted.

Please call our agro's if you wish to include lime in your program this season.

**Soil testing** should be completed during the next couple months. Results of tests will be important in assisting to determine soil ameliorant and nutritional requirements leading into the 2024 sowing and growing season.

**Plant back periods for many herbicides are still being challenged** despite the heavy falls of rain during December. Residues from Overwatch, Reflex, Sentry, Intervix, Intercept, Mateno Complete, Sakura, Precept, Velocity, Galaxy or Callisto can all impact subsequent crops. Additional summer rains might help to reach the minimum rainfall requirements associated with

these products post application. Unfortunately, we have seen some crop disasters over the years as a result of herbicide residues. The carpenter's gold rule might come into play here – check, check, check and then check again before the cut. In our instance it should be check, check, check and check again before you spray! Please call our agro's for any additional information on plant back periods!

There are lots of green paddocks meaning that **weeds are still growing rapidly**. From a purely broadacre cropping point of view Caltrop, Silverleaf Nightshade and Potato Weed are starting to flower and need to be controlled. Remember that many summer weeds such as Marshmallow and Milk Thistle have very large root systems and become hard to control as they grow with a small leaf area above the ground. If livestock are also managed on the farm the decision is then a little more difficult in determining what is of value as feed and what is not.

**Seed** supplies need to be sorted for the approaching planting season. In more recent seasons the higher demand, new varieties have largely sold out early. We encourage you to place your orders early and avoid the last-minute frantic chase for stock when the pressure of the season is on!

Our FJs agronomists attend **industry training and education opportunities** with peers, researchers and industry leaders during January and February each year. This obviously assists them to stay in front of new technologies, product recommendations and label updates as well as personal growth and development. Please flag any specific areas or products of interest that you may have in order that our team can also research and evaluate with you. We do have a new high yielding, high protein wheat variety that will have its own segregation for the '24 harvest that started several years back from a casual conversation with one of our agro's. call us for additional details on this one!

## Pasture

There has been a significant germination of all species across most pasture paddocks subsequent to the large December rainfall tallies. **All the typical weeds** we deal with have taken off and should be taken care of to ensure they don't take over pastures and rob nutrients and moisture. If left uncontrolled, most weed species will make it through the remaining dry months, becoming well-established mature plants that are difficult to control when new seasons pastures germinate in a few months' time. Give our agros a call to sort the best control options now and **ask them about seed for the autumn pasture sowing program**. Given our opportunity to clean up paddocks on the back of the current weed germination, there may be an opportunity to sow earlier in autumn.

Summer rain has certainly benefited permanent pasture stands (e.g. Phalaris, Cocksfoot, Lucerne) providing opportune summer grazing options. Similarly, Greenland Brassica has again been highly successful and provided a grazing window from mid-winter to beyond Christmas. Additional rain fronts could see these stands persist through much of summer now. Chat to our pasture agro's about brassicas as an option in your program.

**Autumn applied fertiliser** should also be ordered to ensure stocks are available for spreading. Planning for the annual aerial spreading over the hill country is also on the drawing board. Please let us know if you require any product to be included while we have planes available.



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## Animal Health & General Merchandise

As you are likely aware, Australian Federal & State Agriculture Ministers have agreed to work towards **mandatory sheep and goat electronic identification (eID) by January 1st 2025**. Until January 1st 2025, the application of eID tags in sheep and goats is voluntary.

The SA Government has announced funding to incentivise the early adoption of sheep eID tags for the 2024 season. The funding is intended to support the provision of an eID Tag Payment via manufacturers of sheep eID tags, to eligible producers in the hope of encouraging early adoption of sheep and farmed goat eID tagging in 2024. The proposed eID Tag Payment Program will offer a discount of .95 cents per tag to eligible SA primary producers through a payment to a supplying tag manufacturer.

In **2024**, the TP will be available for **black** coloured (for 2024 births) Integrity System Company (ISC) or National Livestock Identification Scheme (NLIS) **fully accredited sheep eID tags** purchased by SA sheep or goat producers who have an active and current South Australian Property Identification Code (PIC) registered with PIRSA. In **2025** the TP will be available for similar tags and similar eligibility, but **white** in colour for 2025 births.

**Please contact our store staff to discuss this in more detail and to arrange tag orders well before they are required.**

**Livestock nutrition** during joining and over the course of pregnancy has a large influence on both lambing and calf survival rates as well as the health of those newborns. Recent rain events have deteriorated remaining dry feed reserves. In order to maintain livestock condition over the summer months most graziers have started the tedious routine of supplementary feeding. Depending on the quality and volume of hay or grain being fed, additional vitamins and minerals may be required. We recommend the range of loose lick products from either Performance Feeds or TPM or blocks from Rods Blocks or the Olsson range.

We have a wide range of products in store and can assist you to sort the most appropriate options for your stock – call our store teams for advice.

**Fire protection** over the summer months is taken very seriously by all rural residents in Australia. There have been a number of serious bushfire incidents in recent weeks, including a number of local fires from lightning strikes coinciding with the spectacular thunderstorm activity last week.

We have a range fire-fighting units available ex stock, with various tank capacities and pumping systems including Polymaster products.

**Vermin should be baited over the summer** season while natural feed reserves are low. Bait stations should be used to protect domestic animals

and pets from consuming baits. Waxed blocks are particularly attractive to rats as they like to gnaw. Gnawing helps to keep their teeth in good order! Mice on the other hand will take smaller baits more readily, such as pelleted or treated grain baits. Don't allow these populations to grow over the summer season when conditions suit their rapid propagation!

Rabbits should also be given a New Year welcome with a feed of Bunny Bait. Repeat doses may be necessary to ensure any survivors are also taken care of.



**Huge range of fire-fighting packages, ready-to-go!**

**Polymaster**

**Compact Packages 400-800ltr**

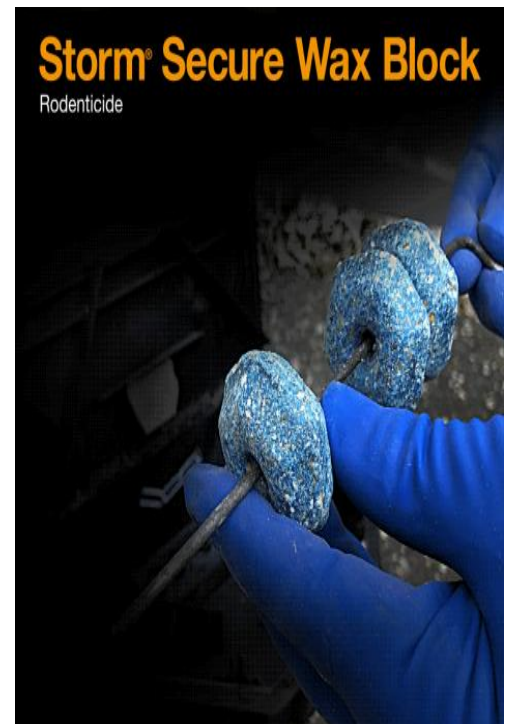


**Galvanised Skids 600L - 2,000L**

- 6.5HP genuine Honda-powered twin impeller pump
- 36m hose reel & fire fighting nozzle
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- 6m suction hose
- Heavy duty galvanised skid frame

**Compact Packages 400-800ltr**

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- Wear pads allow airflow and protect ute tray
- Integrally mounted pump - saves tray space



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