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Fertiliser and liquid nutrient update

The Middle East conflict has obviously had a significant impact on fertiliser and agchem availability and pricing. Nitrogen supply continues to tighten and as a consequence, rapidly increase in price.

Most of the media discussion in recent weeks has been focused on the approaching winter cropping volumes and what that means for the broadacre cropping community this year.

Our Farmer Johns nutrition business also includes a significant volume of specialised nutrition products that support horticulture in orchards and vegetables.

China has halted exports of key fertilisers including nitrates, phosphates and nitrogen-potassium blends to protect its own domestic market amid the global supply disruptions.

Fertigation grade (Tech Grade solubles) products affected are MAP, Urea, DAP, MKP, Pot Sulphate, Cal Nitrate, and Pot Nitrate.

This decision has removed a major contributor from the global supply chain and has significantly tightened availability. An obvious knock-on effect is a lift in prices across the entire range from those suppliers that remain in this market. Despite all our early orders being locked out, we are working closely with our suppliers to find alternative sources outside of China and ensure continuity of supply.



My opening line last month was “what a difference a rain makes”.

Most of our market area has received sufficient rain to get a solid germination of both

pastures and weeds – something that we haven’t enjoyed in the past few seasons!

These ideal conditions have provided an opportunity to clean up paddocks before the winter cropping program starts.

We discuss some of the watch outs associated with an early break in the season in some of the articles in this Landlink.

The Middle East conflict has taken everyone’s focus over the last few weeks. Most of the attention has been focused on the daily fuel price and whether or not our governments supply agreements will satisfy demand in the weeks ahead. No doubt we will find out in due course. Less attention has been given to the myriad of other products impacted by a rising oil market. The entire plastics industry is reliant on the petrochemical industry. Poly tanks, pipe and fittings, twine, horti plastics etc are all on the rise.

I have mentioned our relationship with DLL and the external seasonal finance option they offer. We now have a few seasons experience utilising this resource for a number of clients. It is available for clients that require additional short term funds to cover seed, fertiliser and agchem products to get the crop in the ground. It might be particularly useful for a number of businesses especially after several lean seasons. Applications up to \$250k can be made via myself at our Nuriootpa office. The DLL application is a very simple and straightforward process. We generate a quote which provides full visibility of the loan amount, terms and payment date. Once accepted, funds are drawn down each month against any purchases for crop inputs - seed, fertiliser and agchem. Interest is charged on the total amounts drawn down over the course of the season which in most cases is less than the total available. Please contact me directly on 0412 739 396 or via any FJs staff member to discuss how the DLL finance offer might provide some short-term relief for your business this year.

Greg Schubert

Quote of the Month

“All you need in this life is ignorance and confidence, and then success is sure.”

- Mark Twain

Broadacre

The early rains over the last month or so have provided the opportunity for robust weed control **before** the season gets under way. The temptation to get in, rip up and sow early on the current moisture certainly exists. This early moisture is showing the level of glyphosate resistance that exists in broadacre cropping paddocks across our entire region. Ryegrass is not the only weed challenging local farming systems. Both fleabane and Roundup Ready Canola(RR) are also demonstrating high persistence subsequent to robust glyphosate applications. Glyphosate resistance has generally started from repeated fence line spraying applications which has been exacerbated over the last couple seasons due to “dry sowing” before any weed control could be undertaken.

Obviously, the wide adoption of RR Canola has also contributed to glyphosate populations in paddocks that have been hosts of that technology. It is therefore very important to use an alternate active to glyphosate when managing grass weeds including ryegrass in RR Canola rotations.

Plan weed management well ahead in these susceptible fields – the following options could be included in your resistant weed strategy.

Option 1 - Terrador at 40gms/ha plus Kwickin adjuvant should be added to the glyphosate tank mix to improve efficacy on a wide range of weeds including resistant plants.

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Seasonal reminders

- **Crucial is the complete glyphosate package in one drum and will take care of even hard to kill weeds. Add Terrador and Kwickin to get an even better result!**
- **Arrange to have all final knock down and pre-emergent herbicides home on the farm in readiness for your sowing program!**

- **Protect the house with a safe residual insecticide such as Ficam or Coopex and knock out the nuisance autumn insect invasion.**
- **Get yourself a new pair of Rossi work boots for 2026. Rossi boots are still made in Adelaide!**
- **Replace dry feed loose licks with high magnesium options to prep ewes for lambing and cows to calve.**

- **We have a full range of turf care products available to help your lawns through a cold and wet winter season – call our stores for info.**
- **Please return all Chep pallets. 1000ltr shuttles and 110ltr Enviro’s.**
- **Castrol oils will keep your engines running during the busy autumns sowing program. Call our stores to sort all your lube requirements.**

from page 1/.... **Option 2** - best practice still includes the traditional (and very reliable) Double Knock strategy. An initial glyphosate application using robust rates followed by a paraquat application 1-3 days later.

Option 3 - paddocks with serious resistance issues could be treated with glyphosate followed by a paraquat plus Terrador and Kwickin adjuvant within a 1-3 day period.

Option 4 – where large populations of highly resistant weeds are present (typically along fence lines) a tank mix of paraquat at 2ltrs/ha and Amitrol T also at 2ltrs/ha should provide a satisfactory result.

Several of these tank mixes have plant back period restrictions which would need to be observed in your planning considerations.

Regardless of the option you choose, all cropping plans should have a focus on stopping the spread of glyphosate resistant weeds whenever the opportunity presents.

Although recent rainfall has gone some way in alleviating residual herbicide activity, this will still be a watchout heading into an early sowing program. Please check in with any of the FJs agro's if you have any doubts at all.

As well as early weed establishment, the **recent rains has also seen a lift in insect activity**. Insects can have a serious impact on germinating crops, especially emerging legume and canola blocks. Monitor crops closely and account for these early populations in your crop establishment tank mixes.

Fertiliser has obviously been a major challenge for all of us over the last month or so. There are significant supply and pricing issues that we are continually working through on a daily basis.

Unfortunately, prices have increased rapidly on the back of the Middle East conflict as we would expect. However, an early start to the season has also seen supply as a major issue for our Australian distribution network. Booking slots are at a premium from all fertiliser supplier warehouses and are rapidly being filled extending potential lead times.

FJs have phosphates, urea and SOA available for sale but the real concern is the supply window as freight challenges are a major issue. We therefore encourage all growers to proactively finalise planting fertiliser orders and have your tonnes picked up and home onto the farm. Please take this advice seriously and don't leave collection to the last minute!

When input prices are increasing (as is the scenario now) it becomes critical to maintain production on the farm - what happens on your farm is still the one thing you can control. Although out of our control, experience also suggests that commodity prices are likely to increase in value in line with all the other recent product increases. This scenario will run until global markets work through the supply and demand mechanics over the course of time. It would therefore be wise to have some nitrogen product on order while it can still be sourced.

Alternatively, Utrisha N might be an opportunity this season. Growers that purchase 50kg or more of Utrisha N (50 kg treats 150 Ha) can register their purchase with the manufacturer Corteva, and if they don't get a result (100 kg / Ha or more yield improvement), then they can make a claim and get their money back! Give any of the FJs stores a call for more info.

Some of our readers may have seen the news report a couple weeks ago – our supplier Adama had their Makhteshim plant in southern Israel damaged either by an Iranian missile or debris from an intercepted missile. Despite the hit, supply to Australia has not been impacted.

Pasture

Pastures have taken a hammering over the last few dry seasons. Most have received a very welcome early drink and paddocks are now flush with a green cover of germinated pasture species, volunteer cereals and of course weeds! Every paddock will be different but common themes do exist - control weeds and develop a seasonal plan based on your pasture requirements. Over sow older blocks to increase

available pasture for grazing and weaning or push them on and maximise hay and silage conservation. High rainfall and irrigation pastures can achieve significant value from the many species available from low cost, short-term annuals through to five plus year perennial rotations in either straights or blends. Multi species blends have become "fashionable" in recent seasons but aren't really new if we reflect on the wide range of blends our agro's have successfully managed with a large number of clients in recent years.

Give them a call to discuss suitable mixed species blends for all rainfall zones and complimentary local advice on nutrition and pest and weed control to maximise your pasture investment in season 2026.

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Viticulture

Ideally **autumn soil tests in vineyards** should be taken prior to the vine shutdown and post-harvest nutrition management. Sodium toxicity has again been more evident across our viticulture regions. Any tests undertaken should include a check on sodium levels with a follow up water analysis too.

Nitrogen based products such Easy N or Maxiphos 23 (N and P) and Calcium Nitrate (N and Ca) will assist vines to recoup nutrients that have been used over the course of the growing season and via the recently harvested fruit crop.

Winter rainfall will assist **autumn gypsum applications** to be more effectively incorporated into the soil profile. Please contact any of the stores to arrange orders for gypsum.

Compost applications will also assist in managing weed populations over the winter growing season, conserve soil moisture later in the year and allow sufficient time for beneficial soil microbes to begin to populate. Other soil ameliorants can also be blended with compost to make the addition a one pass operation.

Disease risk has increased over the last few weeks as rain events prompted berry splitting and the potential of botrytis and bunch rot infections. Some more severely impacted bunches are still slowly drying. Keep a close eye on these impacted blocks and check in with our agros for the most appropriate solution. This will also be dependent on the fruit destination and time to harvest. Obviously, this discussion will also need to include your winery GLO where the fruit is scheduled to be delivered.

Recent overcast conditions and dewy mornings may prompt late **season Powdery Mildew infections** to generate on the new flush of unprotected growth in vineyards. Again, our agros can offer some advice in regards to threshold infection levels to negate over wintering spores that may become a source of infection next season.

Scale have also become a more relevant issue in many local vineyards. Vineyards with Scale can also have sooty mould growing on the honeydew produced from scale. Scale infections should be documented in order that they can be accurately covered later in the dormancy period. They can be difficult to identify initially and will cause damage to the vines and ultimately impact yield if they are ignored and allowed to become well established in the vineyard.

Cover cropping in vineyards has an important role in weed management, soil health and nutrition. Although we expect a number of growers will elect not to sow a cover crop this season due to the financial constraints present across the industry, we have a comprehensive range of suitable seed stocks for any cover cropping that is being planned.

Please give our stores a call to discuss your cover cropping seed requirements.

Weeds will be active in most vineyards as a result of the late summer rains. These early populations will rapidly develop and become difficult to control if left unchecked. A product such as Hellcat from Agnova contains glufosionate and carfentrazone so will provide robust weed control especially while conditions are warm and humid.

Orchard, Citrus and Horticulture

The Citrus harvest has finally been completed with some really late Valencia blocks picked last week. Next seasons fruit management is now in full focus for all growers with yield and fruit size the drivers for maintaining business returns.

Growers that have included robust nutrition programs are seeing orange varieties push through the 70mm plus and mandarins in the 45 – 55mm range. **The old adage – you reap what you sow is very evident across a range of properties and nutrient programs.** Obviously, the supply challenges that we have mentioned earlier in this Landlink may have some impact on the availability of nutrients for timely applications this season.

Back-to-back rain events coupled with the unusually high humidity we have experienced have also seen a flare up in insect populations. Insecticide applications since this increase in pest activity will have made a significant difference to the populations present. The BOM have predicted a drier run of months over the next quarter but cooler temperatures over the next few weeks will also slow pest pressure. Conversely, continuing dry and warmer days will encourage additional pest cycles which in turn may need further attention in the weeks ahead.

Fungicide protection should also be maintained to ensure trees are protected **while the warm and humid conditions continue.** Various copper options form the base of these applications. We have stock available ex our stores.

Colour break has occurred in orchards containing earlier varieties. Please be in touch with our team to sort your seasonal Gibberellic Acid and 2-4 D requirements. These options will obviously be dependent on the destination of the fruit you produce.

Recent rain events and subsequent weed germinations have confirmed there is still a decent seed bank ready to spring to life even after a run of particularly dry seasons. The ideal growing conditions have seen a carpet of Fleabane, Rhodes Grass, caltrop and the usual mix of other weeds appear everywhere. Herbicides will be much more effective when they are applied to young, actively growing weeds rather than more established older plants. An appropriate spike suited to improve the activity on those weeds present will also improve the result. Again, have a chat to one of the FJs team to determine the best product for your situation.

Residual herbicides could be included in these early herbicide applications as well. Although Alion has offered outstanding results in many situations, it has struggled a little in sandy soil conditions. It will be interesting to see its performance when more soil moisture is present as well.

Please contact our Ramco store or call Mete Gunhan 0458 297 946 or Georgie Pater 0448 679 125 to discuss how you might be able to improve your orchards prospects over the growing season.

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Animal Production & General Merch

The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has **reviewed the current labels for all second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs)**. As a result, from 24 March 2026 most rat and mouse baits we stock and sell can only be supplied to commercial users - primary producers have been interpreted as commercial users. All purchases of the applicable baits will be provided with a printed physical copy of the Deemed Permit, which contains the updated instructions for use.

The following key requirements need to be considered when SGAR baits are offered to vermin- **Outdoor** use is no longer permitted for mice. **Outdoor** use of rat baits is permitted when they are secured in tamper-resistant and weather-resistant bait stations, which is secured in place and located within 2 metres of buildings (e.g. warehouses, sheds, grain terminals). **Indoor** use for rats and mice is allowed only in areas not accessible to non-target animals, pets or children, unless baits are secured in tamper resistant bait stations.

The state of the infestation and the efficacy of the treatment must be assessed within 35 days of commencing treatment. Users must read and follow the updated PPE requirements and the hazard statements relating to wildlife.

The 2026 lambing season has begun, evidenced with the bright white additions in odd mobs across our region. This will be the first occasion for a number of seasons where lambs will hit the ground on green feed.

This situation provides an ideal opportunity to set the lamb up for maximum production over its journey, no matter if this is a short prime lamb or a much longer replacement ewe life.

Ideally, ewes will have had an annual booster vaccination (or about to receive one if lambs are still a little way off) to continue their immunity against the clostridial infections that we need to guard against. Lambs will then need to be included in the vaccination program at marking.


We have talked at length about the impact on live lambs, weight gains and earlier turn off times when a robust vaccination and drenching plan is maintained on the farm.

Tags should be ordered well in advance to ensure their availability when required at marking. Allflex have a 10% bonus offer available for all orders of 200 or more RapID tags as well as applicator offers for new users.

Speak with the staff in any of our stores for further information to ensure your flocks maximise their performance in what is set up to be a great grazing year!

Colder weather over the coming months highlights the importance of maintaining calcium and magnesium supplies in sheep and cattle diets.

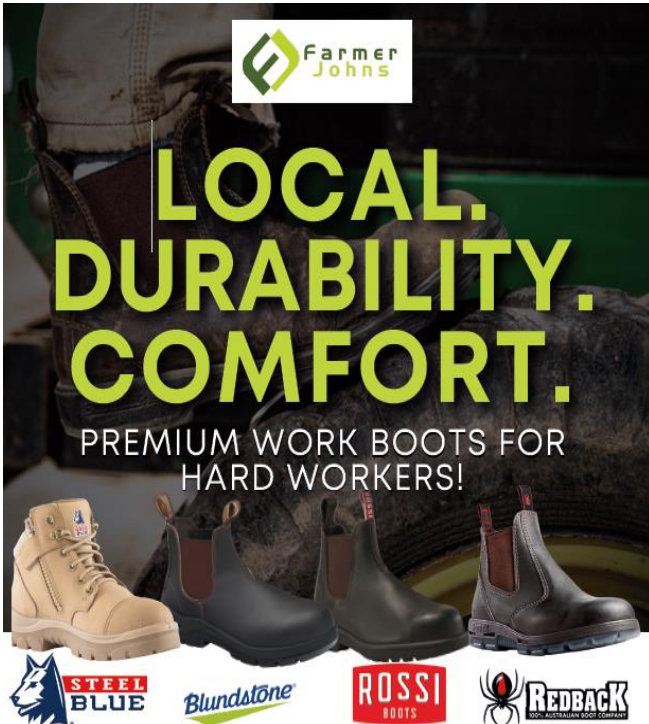
With new born lambs and calves hitting the ground, ewes and cows should have free access to either MagPlus or TRAC's Dry Feed 3 - 4 weeks both pre and post lambing/calving. Naturally occurring magnesium in fodder reserves currently being fed may not meet the mothers' total requirements. Ongoing availability of magnesium will also allay the risk of stock losses due to grass tetany. This risk is especially present during the weeks when a feed gap exists as we transition from the dry summer over the season break as new pastures slowly establish. Allow sheep a daily intake of 35-50g per head and cattle 70-100g. Please talk to any of the FJs team about these matters and the best options for your livestock.



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Farmer Johns

53 Railway Terrace
Nuriootpa SA 5355
08 8562 1311

General Manager

Greg Schubert - 0412 739 396
greg@farmerjohns.com.au

Chief Operating Officer

Gavin Keller - 0417 886 038
gavin@farmerjohns.com.au

All Account queries:

Phone 08 8562 1311
Dee Hunter
dee@farmerjohns.com.au

Blyth

22 Harley Street
08 8844 5141

Branch Manager

Adam Conradi - 0432 571 653
adam@farmerjohns.com.au

General Sales for Blyth

salesblyth@farmerjohns.com.au

Murray Bridge

190 Thomas Street
08 8532 5264

Branch Manager

Ashley Clothier - 0488 128 169
ashley@farmerjohns.com.au

General Sales for Murray Bridge

salesmb@farmerjohns.com.au

Nuriootpa

08 8562 1311

Branch Manager

Dave Crockett
davecrockett@farmerjohns.com.au

General Sales for Nuriootpa

sales@farmerjohns.com.au

Ramco

422 Ramco Road
08 8541 4222
0408 068 190

General Sales for Ramco

salesramco@farmerjohns.com.au

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