

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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5. Maximise stock weight gains.

Please return all Chep pallets to our stores or call us to have them collected off farm.

Sheep Management Information

Tuesday morning 17th Oct 2023 at FJs Nuriootpa store.

8:00am to 10:30am with BBQ Breakfast provided

Featuring:



RSVP prior to the 14th October for catering;

Ph 08 8562 1311

or

sales@farmjohns.com.au



The dry weeks of September have seen most winter crops drop some yield potential, our wine grape producers are under serious production pressure, sheep and cattle prices have fallen off a cliff and worst of all, Collingwood won the AFL flag! On a brighter note, we will finally be free of Voice ads and the barrage of media and political posturing by the middle of October.

Whatever the referendum outcome and, just as the AFL result has proven, the sun will rise on the morning of the 15th. No doubt, there will be weeks of analysis afterwards which will most likely drive us all mad! But life will still go on!

I read an interesting article a couple weeks ago discussing the uptake of new technology on farms. Farming and agribusiness are economically driven endeavors. Put simply, there is an assumption that decisions in those businesses get made on precise economic returns.

However in reality, ego, aspirations, and values

beyond money drive us all to do economically irrational things all the time. Eg, we all probably have something in our care that we have placed a higher value on than would be the case if we didn't own it! As we consider how we go forward in the difficult times forecast over the next 12 months or so, are there things we place more value on within our business than we should? The average farmer has about 40 or 50 crops in their care over their lifetime.

What technologies should be introduced in your enterprise, rather than the status quo being maintained?

The Ag industry provides a whole host of learning opportunities, including new technologies and tools that a few (very few really) take on board.

Have a chat to any of our agro's and ask them about some of the "new stuff" that local producers are adopting to improve their systems – maybe you could make some changes too?

Greg Schubert

Quote of the Month

“There is no limit to what can be accomplished if it doesn't matter who gets the credit”

- **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Viticulture

Everyone is aware that the wine industry in Australia is under a fair amount of duress at the moment. Pressures are evident all the way through the chain, from the top end distributors and consumers all the way down to the grass roots participants, local family-owned vignerons, generational growers who deal with the demands of all those above them in the industry. Unfortunately, there is little light at the end of the tunnel currently which simply means that **growers will have to make some decisions about where best to put the effort over the course of this season!**

Obviously, those **vineyards that are contracted or have fruit sold should be prioritised** over the course of the season. They will probably provide the lion's share of the farm operations income so should be managed to ensure quality, saleable fruit is harvested at the end of the season.

Unsold blocks should be managed to support vine health ensuring vine viability into following seasons. This can still mean reducing the value of expenses by cutting back on nutrient applications and by trimming the spray program.

Petiole testing is an important step in targeting specific areas of nutrient deficiency rather than using a "blanket" approach. Managing any nutrient supplementation to a minimum while still applying maintenance quantities to promote healthy vines will result in a reduction in costs to most vineyards.

Carry over disease from last season's high-pressure infections may be an issue if leftcont page 2

Seasonal reminders

- We have a volume of grain bags in stock at our Murray Bridge store. Give us a call to lock in your requirements.
- Paddock feed is rapidly going off. Consider dry feed loose lick supplements to maintain livestock weight gains over the remainder of spring.

- **Vine and tree guards should be ordered to protect new plantings from rabbits and hares in the vineyard and for native re-veg jobs.**
- **Use Bunny Bait to clean up rabbits before they become a bigger problem around the farm - they breed like.....!!!!?**
- **Don't forget the booster shot of vaccine 4-6 weeks after the first dose**

- **Use new Flexolt, the first ever oral sheep lousicide treatment. Flexolt delivers reliable lice control in both long wool and shorn sheep. Use Flexolt in purchased mobs to ensure undetected lice are cleaned up.**
- **3 to 4 week delivery times apply to most poly rainwater tanks or store more water with onsite Aquamate squatters tanks - call our stores.**

“with you in the *GROWING* business”

from page 1... untreated this year. Although the Bureau of Meteorology has officially announced the onset of an El Nino event, our key viticulture diseases have little regard for their forecasts! The 22/23 season closed with significant levels of Downy Mildew, Powdery Mildew and Botrytis present in many vineyards in all winegrape regions.

Recent cold, **dewy mornings provide ideal Powdery Mildew conditions**. Powdery will infect early in the season, incubating and developing within the vine with visible symptoms generally showing up in November and December. Early season preventative sprays are the most important applications in a robust seasonal disease management program. Given the focus on reducing the cost of inputs in the vineyard, sulphur is likely to be the most common fungicide used this season. Sulphur can cause some crop damage if applied in high temperatures above 30°C and in conjunction with elevated humidity. We are likely to experience higher day time temperatures this season making this an important consideration at the time of application.

Our agronomy team are able to assist in refining a cost-effective disease control program for your situation.

Recent warm weeks have promoted very vigorous early season growth with flowering not too far away in many vineyards. If botrytis was an issue in the vineyard last season, some time should be spent assessing the need to apply botrytis protection during flowering. Developing fruit is most susceptible to botrytis as the loosening flower caps create wounds for botrytis to enter the berry and cause latent infections.

Again, prevention is key in ensuring a clean, botrytis free crop for the remainder of the season.

Monitor vineyards for insect pests to ensure their populations remain below threshold levels. Light Brown Apple Moth populations were also high last season. Hot and dry conditions this year may suppress numbers somewhat, however, we still expect to see high populations causing damage in some areas. Pheromone traps are useful to help in determining LBAM populations.

Please give our viti agro's a call to discuss any other issue you may have in the vineyard!

Citrus and Orchard

Citrus flowering is well underway in all orchards. There is some evidence of split flowering in Navels this season. This may have been influenced by the late finish to last season combined with ground temperatures being slow to get away.

Early foliar work has been completed in a number of orchards with a little follow up being considered to assist with fruit set.

Products such as OmniMol and OmniBor from the Omnia portfolio or Sett Enhance and BioHold from Stoller are valuable tools to use in these operations.

Check with our Ramco team for additional product information and to assist in determining the most appropriate for your situation.

Earwig numbers are high and are therefore a "watch out" especially in young trees. Monitor mature trees as well particularly if these trees are bordering vineyards.

Earwigs favour young flush growth and flowers. They can cause significant damage and may be the main cause of sporadic flowering evident in some areas of the orchard.

A combination of boundary spraying between blocks and along headlands as well as consistent baiting with products such as Transcend will assist in controlling growing earwig populations.

Brown Scale and an early flight of LBAM have also been detected during our scouting visits in the region. Thrip populations exist in nominal numbers, these populations should continue to be monitored as the season progresses.

Snail activity may be prompted by irrigation applications in the orchard, especially after the drier finish to winter and during the recent warmer weeks of spring. Baiting should be continued if snail populations are still active on the ground. Depending on the level of infestation and control from last year, a more overarching approach may be required.

Give our team a call to talk in more detail about the options for snail control that may assist you here.

Citrus Gall Wasp will be a consideration as the season is rapidly moving along. Chemistry rotation is vital in managing wasps against resistance development. Where are you in your rotation of chemistry - there are a number of controls available and strategic options to consider for Citrus Gall Wasp.

Although most product supply has eased somewhat since last season, our suppliers aren't planning to carry stock over from season to season.

Planning for chemistry requirements such as Nuprid and Samurai will greatly assist us in having product available when it is required for that November time slot prior to these "managed" shortages.



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Broadacre

A warm and dry September has forced crops toward an early finish. Harvest is likely to begin sooner than anticipated for most croppers and certainly inside average time lines. The BOM has reported that we didn't have any days in September 2022 over 20°C and we recorded our first plus 30°C day in November last year. What a contrast 2023 has been compared to last year!

Despite the drier weeks, some **levels of Stripe Rust and Powdery Mildew infection persists in many crops** across our regions. Treatment may be necessary to preserve the flag leaf on later sown crops. Monitoring should continue with a view to treat only if any present infections worsen substantially. Crops that have been exposed to early fungicide applications with a follow up spray for weeks later have also benefitted with improved leaf retention and maintained greener canopies over untreated crops. Robust fungicide programs will reward in yield and improved grain quality at harvest. Those crops that received a July fungicide cover followed by another application one month later have certainly held better leaf mass and colour with a likely yield benefit to come at harvest.

Our agro's are **sweeping legume crops with some Heliothis grubs and Cow Pea aphids** evident in a number of locations. Grubs should be treated prior to their entry into the developing pods to avoid grain damage. Give our team a call if you need any additional crop checking done or another set of eyes to check your work.

Crop topping prior to harvest has become an important tool in many broadacre management systems in recent years. It is a useful addition to weed control, particularly the difficult populations of resistance ryegrass present on most farms. The most important element of crop topping is to ensure a registered herbicide product is used for the job, Crucial from Nufarm has a wide registration profile for crop topping and fits this job perfectly. Other important considerations include withholding periods, intended market for the grain, crop and weed maturity and plant back periods relevant to next seasons crop. Timing is key in achieving a satisfactory outcome especially if the grain crop is intended for seed retention. Ideally you will have a chat with your FJs agro to discuss all of these matters in more detail and especially to determine the best crop topping strategy relevant to your situation this season.

On farm grain storage capacity has increased in recent years as croppers take a different approach to a wider range of grain marketing opportunities. Obviously if grain is to be stored on farm for any period of time the facility that contains the grain also needs to be managed to ensure insect pests don't impact the grains quality. We have a range of products in stock for this purpose and the knowledge to advise on their use. Please contact any of the FJs team to discuss the best solution for your on farm grain store.

We certainly see **the benefits of good summer weed control** in drier seasons such as the current one. Stored soil moisture provides a massive benefit when conditions deteriorate compared to those crops that have had no summer weed management take place. Summer weeds may be viewed as stock feed and left to grow on for that purpose or simply disregarded as being a nuisance at the time. Either way, the moisture drawn from the soil over the summer will no longer be available for any beneficial plants down the track – such as now! Summer weeds should therefore be knocked out in a timely manner subsequent to any germination following weather events.

Global fertiliser prices currently have a stable to soft outlook. The main concern across all of our domestic fertiliser market is the weakening Aussie Dollar. While a softening AUD should help Australian exports, including grain, it would typically have a negative impact on the landed price of fertiliser prices in our domestic market. Every one cent fall in the exchange rate equates to an approximate \$15 tonne rise on phosphates into our market.

We have received some initial offers for fertiliser orders placed now for a February and March 24 collection. If the AUD continues to fall, these offers might be an attractive option to move on prior to Christmas. Let us know if you are at all interested in considering this opportunity.

Pasture

Most pastures in our region have run out of legs as moisture limits an ideal spring flush. Unless we receive a serious rain event in the next few weeks the focus will turn to those graziers with the capacity to irrigate.

Our agro's are working with a range of clients in this fortunate situation utilising a range of new and exciting species. Some of these look likely to provide favourable long term advantages.

Please give them a call and explore Sorghum, traditional Millets, Brassica's and summer ryegrass blends.

Our experienced staff will work closely with your livestock nutritionist to achieve your targeted fodder objectives.

We also have an alternate summer crop option grown under irrigation that is used as an ingredient in a sustainable building product. Call Steve Hein for more info.



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Animal Health & General Merchandise

Check out the new **Waratah Flex Rail and 10/90/5 StocksafeT** products, ideal for containing horses and other valuable animals. The small fabrication design offers superior safety and will also exclude most predator species. We have a display at the Nuri store that provides a visual demonstration of the physical barrier that the fence provides when erected.

Recent warm weather coupled with the reduced value sheep may also generate less enthusiasm in managing sheep flocks over the summer time. Despite these factors, **flies will still be a problem at some stage over the coming months.** Flocks should be treated with a robust fly protection product such as Extinosad or Clik prior to harvest commencing. Both these products will provide long term fly protection for all classes of sheep. They are simply applied down the backline as a pour-on. We have gas powered applicators to make the job even easier – they are free to use when you purchase the product from us! Call any of the FJs stores to order your supplies and book a gas gun.

The rapid close to spring pastures in some areas of our market has also seen a drop off in feed value over a very short time. It may be prudent to offer dry feed loose licks earlier than normal to young stock, assisting them to have the best chance of achieving target weights in a short season.

We have a full range of supplements in stock for all livestock classes, talk to our store staff for assistance in choosing the most appropriate product for your situation.

We also have Performance Feeds in store at Nuri during the morning of the 17th October (see ad on page one). This may be an ideal opportunity to chat about your specific situation and determine a tailored summer feeding program for your stock.

Multimin from Virbac is a unique 3-in-1 trace mineral injection that makes your stock 'performance ready' by improving fertility and immunity. It is rapidly absorbed and readily-utilised, providing prolonged antioxidant action to cover 'high demand' periods such as over the annual mating period. It is administered by subcutaneous injection to both sheep and cattle. Call our staff for further info.

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