



# Agri Talk

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July 2021

## At a Glance...

- Cam's Update.
- Broadleaf Control in Pastures.
- Filling in the winter feed gap with Gibberellic Acid & Nitrogen Fertiliser.
- Winter cleaning in Lucerne.
- Maximize lambing.
- Are you bogged mate?



A big thank you to everyone for your support and patronage for the year. We hope your EOFY finished up well and while it is wet & cold, you get some time away with the family. We certainly have been busy after sowing and hopefully keeping ahead of your needs & expectations. A big thank you to our team, they have worked hard to make sure it happens. Should you have any feedback or ideas where we can improve please let us know.

Don't forget your great calendar shots, and the "Are you bogged mate" photo competition running until October.



### GORST RURAL

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**Derrinallum**  
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### FIELD SERVICES TEAM

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### Input Update

Ag Chem—COVID and the Chinese supply situation remain as roadblocks on crop protection products. Long lead times, intermittent shipping and environmental regulations are all affecting supply. Some points to note:

- Phenoxy Herbicides—2,4D, LVE & MCPA are tightening in the market. We have good supplies at this stage.
- Fungicides—We have most fungicides in stock now—Soprano, Opus, Radial, Veritas, Provaro, Miravis, Aviator, Opera, Amistar, Maxentis.
- Glyphosate—Picture on glyph a bit muddy with Northern hemisphere demand strong. At this stage there are some price increases but could be short term. Keep talking to us about your requirements.

### Animal Production

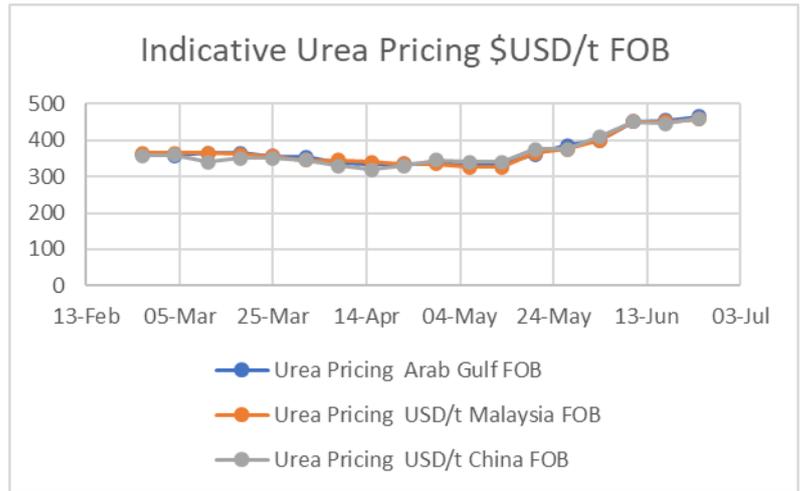
Zoetis have delayed their release of the combined Glanvac and Eryvac product (GlanEry 7in1) and pressure on vaccine production is seeing supply tight on the Glanvac 6 range. Scabiguard is also tight. Long acting eweguard & weanerguard OK with supply. Talk to us now about your vaccine requirements.

### Fertiliser

Urea is a talking point going from mid \$600 to \$800/t in rapid fashion. Chinese urea now has an export tax applied to keep product in their country, the Indian government has increased its tender and strong crop pricing and conditions has all

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added demand to nitrogen. Whilst we thought pricing may ease late July it is showing no sign of stopping over \$800/t. Talk to us about your requirements now. We have had some enquiries re Ammonium Phosphates for next year. Current pricing & offers are in the mid \$800 range but are only for immediate pickup and payment. Crystal ball out to Feb-Mar... some industry analysts are suggesting \$800-1000/t for MAP. However traditionally Oct-Dec has seen a lull in fert demand, and a corresponding dip in pricing— so watch this space.



### Broadleaf Control in Pastures

There are a few things to consider when looking at controlling broadleaf weeds in your pastures:

- Growth stage of pasture components,
- Species of weeds,
- Growth stage of weeds.

The main pasture components for our pasture mixes are grasses and clovers. The type of grass and type of clovers can have an impact on the chemicals we are able to use to control the weeds as some species can be more sensitive. For example, in paddocks where there may be a mix of clovers using products such as Ecopar will damage White clovers more than Arrowleaf, Balansa or Persian clovers.

The growth stages of pasture are incredibly important when choosing what chemicals to use. Working out growth stages is different depending on the type of plant. Ryegrass is counted as the number of leaves (figure 1). Clover is counted on trifoliate leaves (true leaves Figure 2).

Knowing the growth stages will limit the chemicals that you may be able to use. An example would be spraying MCPA at the wrong growth stage can severely damage the clover, or slow its growth. Generally speaking when spraying pastures for broadleaves the clover must be at least 3 trifoliate leaves (figure 2).

Being able to identify the growth stages of the weeds will allow for better selection of chemicals. If capeweed was only 5cm in diameter it is likely most products would be able to kill it, however if the capeweed is 50cm in diameter then the chemicals will need to be more robust to bring down the plant. While the weeds are small they require less herbicide to control them which in turn has less effect on any clover present in the pasture.

#### Common Mixes:

MCPA + Diuron is a commonly used mix to clean up the broadleaf weeds in established pastures, with Tigrex being the safer option in newly sown pastures. Simazine will effectively control silver grass in established pastures, provided it's applied at the right time and under the right conditions. Marshmallow in general is just hard to kill in pasture and there are not many options for barley grass other than pasture topping in spring. If you need to clean up your pastures or want a mix that will be the best option for your paddock, please ask your Gorst Rural Agronomist.

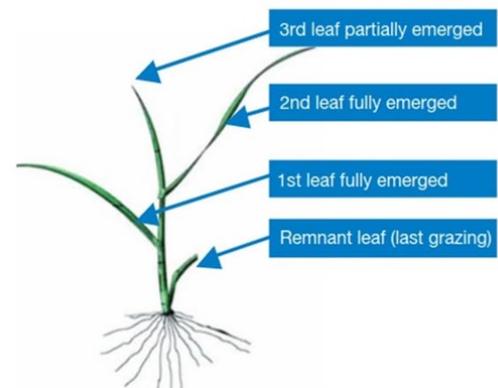


Figure 1: Ryegrass Growth Stage



Figure 2: Clover Growth Stage

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### Filling in the winter feed gap with Gibberellic Acid & Nitrogen Fertiliser

Now that the cold has set in, strategic applications of nitrogen and gibberellic acid (GA) will boost your pastures feed quality! Gibberellic acid is a naturally occurring plant hormone that is used to maximise plant growth during the cooler months. When gibberellic products such as Pro Gibb and Gibbraltrar are applied to a perennial pasture, the hormone increases dry matter accumulation by increasing the plants cell size.



*Gibberellic acid treated pasture. Photo: Nufarm*



*Gibberellic acid untreated pasture. Photo: Nufarm*

Pastures that are low in clover content or where clover is still growing thus, using its own nitrogen, will be nitrogen deficient. If deficient, the strategic use of a nitrogen fertiliser will increase productivity. Whereas grasses deficient in nitrogen will generally exhibit yellowing, starting first on the oldest leaves and spreading to the newer growth as deficiency increases. Nitrogen and GA often works best when nitrogen is included (vice versa). However, this does depend heavily on temperature and plant type! It is always best to consult your Gorst Rural agronomist before you consider applying either one or both.

### Winter cleaning in Lucerne

Now we are entering the colder months of the year, this is the perfect opportunity to get on top of the weeds in your lucerne. This will help you maximise lucerne yields in the spring and summer, by reducing competition with weeds for water and nutrients. Ideal timing to spray your lucerne is after you have grazed your lucerne very hard leaving, very little leafy material. However, if a frost is present, delay application until the frost has thawed and the weeds are actively growing.

#### Lucerne after a winter cleaning:

Also, it is ideal that once grazed a rain is preferred to remove all dirt from the surface leaf area of the weeds in order to prevent the chemical from being deactivated. The more surface area on the leaf is important especially when using chemicals such as Paraquat. This chemical will be used for winter cleaning, which works best when there is a lot of surface area present. When selecting the right chemicals to use in order to control the weeds, several factors need to be considered. These include the age of the stand, the grazing pressure it has been subjected to and the weed profile. To find out more about what chemicals to use talk to your local Gorst Rural Agronomist.



Gorst Rural's has a duty of care at all stores, ensuring everyone entering and exiting sites are safe. To not only comply with all regulatory obligations but, exceed them, keeping our staff and customers safe is our highest priority. With pedestrians and vehicles moving in, around and out of our yards we need everybody to be aware of high risk areas. Speed limit signage will be updated where necessary to ensure all Gorst Rural yards are limited to 5km/hr. There are loading /unloading exclusion zones by way of chain barriers, please respect these areas, and remember to always maintain a clear line of sight between yourself and the loader (forklift) and/or driver (ute/truck) whilst moving around the yards.

Secure restraints of loads on vehicles are important to us in preventing accidents and injuries. Please select suitable restraint equipment, it should be rated to capacity and ensure it's in good working order.

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### Maximize lambing

In 2020 according to MLA, Australia was the largest sheep meat producer globally, and 2nd largest beef producer. As producers there are methods to be able to maximise our production with more, and heavier lambs. According to an MLA Australia report on the cost of endemic diseases, neonatal mortality costs the Australian Sheep industry \$540m annually.

One of the first things to look at for lamb survival and growth rates is nutrition of the ewe. The better condition the ewe is in at the point of lambing (*Condition Score 3.0 for singles and 3.5 for multiples*) the less problems that can be associated with the survival of the lamb. On farm lamb survival rates were increased by 15-20% in a case study done on the condition of the ewe. The ewes with a condition score of 2-2.5 showed that their lambs were less likely to survive than ewes with a score of 3-3.5 at the point of lambing. (*According to department of prime industries and regional development, 2018*) It is also important that you don't let your ewes get too fat as it can create dystocia (*difficult birthing due to large lambs*), and birthing difficulties.

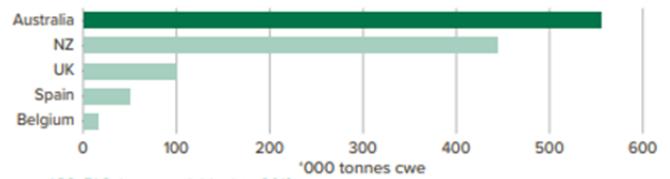
Ensuring there is sufficient feed available is important part of ewe health at lambing. This is so the ewe is able to stay closer to the point of lambing, and be able to get adequate feed, helping prevent miss mothering and malnutrition in the lambs.

Shelter is another important factor in lamb survival rates. With cold weather it is important to select paddocks with protection. You can also utilise large hay bales or straw to create weather breaks. An Evergraze experiment found that the difference is survival rates of lambs in sheltered paddocks can be up to 15% higher, than paddocks with little to no shelter.

The size of your mobs at lambing is also important. The smaller the mobs—the less likely a lamb will be miss-mothered. It also reduces competition for feed available and the likely hood of ewes to walk away from their lambs for food.

Selected breeding for maternal characteristics can also be part of a long term strategy if you are having ongoing issues with lambing survival. Please come and talk to our Animal Health team for more advice on maximising lamb survival this season.

### Top five sheepmeat producing countries



Source: ABS, FAQ, latest available data 2019

Table 1 The major causes of lamb death within 48 hours of being born. (The range includes results from four studies)

Cause of neo-natal lamb death	Percentage (%)
Starvation/mis-mothering/exposure	27-58
Difficult birth	18-33
Infection	4-5
Predation	2-7
Unidentified	2-12
Pre-natal (pregnancy)	1-3



### Are you bogged mate?

Gorst rural in partnership with "Are you bogged?" and "Let's Talk" are hosting an evening on the **29<sup>th</sup> of October** to raise awareness for mental health in rural towns. We are hosting a competition for the best photo and caption of bogged vehicles. To enter please send your photos and caption to [katie@gorstrural.com.au](mailto:katie@gorstrural.com.au). There will be more details of the event to come so stay posted!!

*Photo Caption: Rhys should have listened to the wise words of Cam Conboy—"It is always better to walk into paddock first and drive home than to drive into a paddock and walk home"*

