

Newsletter

EDITION 46, FEBRUARY 2016



CONSUMPTION CONTROL – WHAT ARE YOUR GRAIN FEEDERS COSTING YOU?

Control over the level of grain consumption for sheep, whether it be in a feedlot or supplementary, is crucial to a successful feeding period. Growth rates, mortalities, grain utilisation, and ultimately profit, can be negatively impacted by the quality and specifications of your feeders.

High energy grains, such as barley and wheat, are quickly becoming a popular choice for feeding by producers thanks to high growth rates and quicker finishing times. However, these grains come with a much higher level of risk than lower energy grains (such as oats).

Many traditional grain feeders have a typical open/close system, giving very little control over consumption. This can lead to gorging, mortalities from over-feeding, and grain wastage – particularly with high energy grains.

Luckily, there is a new generation of advanced grain feeders that are designed to increase the control over the amount of grain livestock can access. Bromar Engineering manufacture a high quality, durable grain lick feeder that allows for a high level of control via a dual-action feed tray – characterised by an 11-hole plastic insert and sliding metal covers. The size of the hole is adjusted depending on the amount of grain required. These feeders are a great accompaniment to a grain feeding program and are suitable for either feedlotting or supplementary feeding.

Bromar feeders make sheep rely on their wet tongue to 'grab' the grain. Once the saliva on the tongue dries up, sheep are encouraged to graze/drink away from the feeder. This allows for a good rotation of stock to the feeder, evening

out intake across a mob – resulting in a smaller tail, higher growth rates, and reduced time to finish. Restricted feeding also reduces wastage, and mortalities, as it is difficult for stock to gorge – particularly on high energy grains such as barley and wheat.

Bromar feeders are a smart addition to any grain feeding program, quickly returning investment through increased efficiency of grain consumption.

If you would like more information, or would like to see our range of Bromar feeders, please contact your local AgriWest store.



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COMBINATION DRENCHES — CHOOSING WHAT WORKS

What is a combination drench?

A combination drench is a drench that contains two or more active ingredients that each target the same worms.

Why use a combination drench?

Combining actives can substantially slow the development of drench resistance to those actives on your farm, allowing you more drench choices for more years. On many farms a combination is likely to be more effective than using the individual actives. This will give a better kill of the worms in your sheep. However, don't assume that any combination drench will be fully effective on your property.

How do combination drenches work?

Let's consider 3 single drench actives (all from different drench groups) and call them A, B and C.

- A is 90% effective (i.e. the drench kills 90% of the worms present)
- B is 80% effective
- C is 70% effective

If A, B and C are in a combination drench you can think of the combination working this way:

If the sheep being drenched had 10,000 worms in it,

- Active A kills 90% (9,000 worms) and leaves 1,000 worms
- Active B then kills 80% of the 1,000 worms, leaving 200 worms
- Active C then kills 70% of the 200 worms, leaving 60 worms

The actives don't really take turns, they are acting on the worms simultaneously, but this example helps us to understand. The combination drench has killed 9,940 worms from the original 10,000 worms, meaning it was 99.4% effective.

In this example, only 60 worms from this sheep survive, reproduce and spread resistant worm eggs onto the pasture. Using only one of the individual drenches would allow between 1,000 and 3,000 resistant worms in the one sheep to survive.

Note that some drench products have more than one active, but are not combinations. These drenches have actives that target different types of worms and are known as mixtures, not combinations.

Slowing drench resistance

Using combinations prolongs the life of the individual actives within them. The chance of a worm having resistant genes to a number of drench groups is much lower than being resistant to just one drench group. This leaves fewer resistant worms to reproduce and therefore further development of the resistance is slower than with single active drenches.

Speak to your AgriWest animal health specialist today for more information.



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MATCHING DESIRED AGRONOMIC OUTCOMES WITH YOUR CROP NUTRITION PLAN

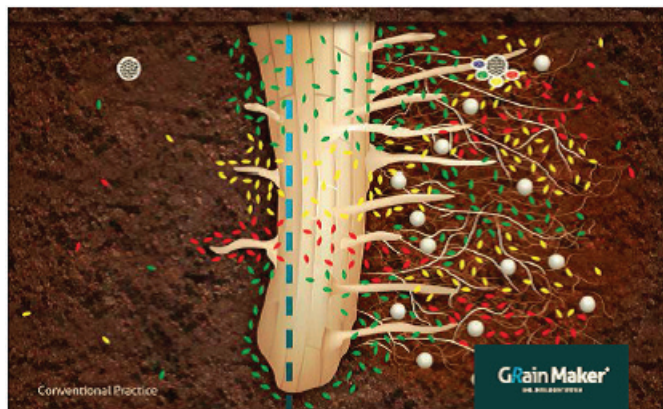
Yields in rain-fed crops in our district are driven by two fundamental agronomic factors:

1. Availability of essential nutrients
2. Availability of moisture.

This then directs us to ask two simple but important questions:

1. What drives nutrient-use-efficiency?
2. What drives water-use-efficiency?

The answer to both these questions are encompassed by the overall management of a paddock through seasons and includes crop rotations, weed management, stubble management, stock management where relevant and machinery choices.



Given these above factors are managed as well as possible, we can now look at how we can better influence our crops water and nutrient use efficiency through our planting and in-crop fertiliser inputs.

Below are some basic nutritional principles that influence the ability of the plant to make the most of its available resources.

- **Phosphorus (P):** Phosphorus drives root mass. Supply a minimum of crop-replacement (~3kg of P per tonne of grain). Increase the longevity of available P by coating MAP with a chelation agent. Employ P bacteria.
- **Calcium (Ca):** Supply a readily available source of Ca to the root zone – improved calcium levels in the root zone help improve rooting depth (roots use calcium to strengthen root tips, allowing far greater soil penetration ability). Increased rooting depth means greater access to sub soil moisture and deeper nitrogen reserves when filling in Spring.
- **Trace elements:** Particularly zinc, copper, boron and molybdenum in local soils, support and promote a range of key plant functions such as increased nutrient and water-use-efficiency as well as disease resistance.
- **Zinc (Zn):** Involved in hormones production responsible for root growth, branching and root hair density. Addressing Zn levels increases plant access to nutrient and moisture.
- **Copper (Cu):** Involved in efficient water transport in the plant as well as acting as a fungicide for the plant. Improved plant copper increases drought resistance.
- **Boron (B):** Responsible for effective plant calcium function, plant defense mechanisms and flowering/grain set.
- **Molybdenum (Mo):** Only required in tiny amounts, however punches above its weight. Mo is essential for the conversion of nitrate into plant proteins. This element is also the key mineral used by nitrogen fixing bacteria to fix nitrogen in the soil. Bolstering Mo levels in the root zone has the effect of increasing nitrogen use efficiency in the plants and increasing available nitrogen in the soil.
- **Nitrogen (N):** The nitrogen program is based on starting soil levels, in-season mineralization contributions, physical inputs of granular and liquid nitrogen options and nitrogen fixing bacteria. Nitrogen fixing bacteria can help supplement the nitrogen program, capable of supplying between 20 to 30 units per season. The bacteria do not supply a 'slug dose'; but rather a trickle feed of N through the season. These bacteria also produce a range of root growth hormones, further stimulating root biomass, branching and root hair density. These specialised inoculated bacteria increase nitrogen supply and efficiency as well as improve access to soil moisture and nutrient reserves.

LOOKING TO IMPROVE YOUR YEILD?

The GRainMaker System is an optimised nutrition system that employs technologies focused on manipulating crops to become more stress resilient, whilst developing the capacity to better take advantage of the growing conditions available.

The emphasis is on root and root zone health and efficiency, coupled with a more comprehensive nutritional package to meet plant requirements and thus build plant strength and productivity. Through this emphasis, the system aims to improve plant nutrient water use efficiency – turning more rain into grain.

Speak to an AgriWest agronomist about the GrainMaker System today.



2013 GRainMaker crop of Gregory wheat (ASC crop competition winner).

PARKES FLOCK EWE COMP

The annual Parkes Flock Ewe Comp will be held on the 26th of February showcasing some of the regions best merino flock ewes.

It will be an all day event with the bus leaving from the Town Bowling Club in the morning.

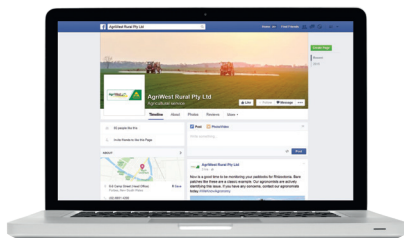
To register or for more information please call:

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FACEBOOK: MONTHLY RECAP



Looking for more insights?
 Our Facebook page is a great way to stay informed. Regular product information and specials, seasonal insights, community events and branch updates – it's all there at your fingertips!



Last month alone we posted profiles about some of our staff members including Ryan Thornberry, Brett Rout and Greg Rout, provided updates on the Burrumbuttock Hay Runners initiative, launched the new Agfarm March 4 grain marketing pool and looked at how you can achieve more from your crops this season with Intelli-MAP and soil testing. Check us out today!



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HAVE YOU SORTED YOUR SEED AND FERTILISER REQUIREMENTS?

Now that the dust has settled on the 2015 season, most growers should have a clearer picture of their plans for the 2016 season.

Seed Lines

In years gone by some seed lines, especially some Canola varieties, have been very tight in supply so we would encourage you to discuss your seed requirements with the AgriWest agronomy team as soon as possible to help ensure supply and avoid disappointment.

Liming

Anyone considering liming their country this year should also give us a call as lead times are reasonably lengthy and orders will be prioritised on a first in basis.

Soil Tests

If you are looking to have soil tests done to assist with determining your starter fertiliser requirements please contact our team. Undertaking these tests early ensures we can get the results back to you in a timely manner and assist with identifying the right fertiliser to suit your circumstances.

Bulk and Custom Blend Fertiliser

Did you know AgriWest can supply bulk and custom blend fertiliser? We can assist in working out custom blends to match the nutritional needs of your crops, factoring in local soil types. This helps avoid the under or over application of certain nutrients and helps ensure you are making a fertiliser investment that will deliver you better yields and value for money.

Speak to your local AgriWest store today for more information.



Contact an AgriWest specialist today for more information.

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