



Australian Fertiliser Services Association

# FERTILISER NEWS



Volume 39, No. 3  
**NOVEMBER 2018**

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# NATIONAL CHAIRMANS REPORT

Craig Swan



Welcome

Seasonally, Australia has endured the extremes in what Mother Nature can deliver to us; with widespread drought in the central east to the wet in the high rainfall zones of the south. Not unlike our farmers, the AFSA members are a resilient bunch and we will come out on the other side of our challenges even stronger. Fertiliser suppliers are also greatly affected and they too have handled the seasonal challenge very well.

We are at the pointy end of the AFSA year with the National AGM fast approaching. I am very pleased to say that your AFSA Board has continued to work hard to provide benefits to AFSA members. Your Board volunteers their time to the AFSA because they have one common trait amongst them; they have a deep passion for our industry and will do their utmost to improve it.

The Board has 2 Board Members who are retiring, namely John Harrison and Wendy Rowsell. John has been a long-standing Board Member and has provided your AFSA with a huge amount of governance guidance. To have a Board Member with the professional qualities that John provides has been a huge benefit to the AFSA so, thank you John. Wendy has been a solid performer for your Board and has been a pleasure to work with. We wish Wendy all the best and hope that we have the opportunity to welcome Wendy back on the Board in the future.

One of the activities your Board has created is the 'Business Training' module with Ali Uren of Kiikstart. South Australia was the first to host the module with 18 people participating in the training. Victoria has booked Kiikstart for October to deliver the Training. Feedback from the SA participants was very, very pleasing so I would encourage other states to take up this opportunity to host the event. I would like to give a special thanks to 2 people.

Krysteen McElroy, your Executive Officer has been with us for 2 years and is a thorough professional. Krysteen has handled all of her duties well above expectations and is a true asset to the AFSA. Donald Carter, Neil Henry and I held the interview with Krysteen in Naracoorte 2 years ago. I still recall Neil Henry's comment after the interview, he said "well Craig that was a complete waste of time", I responded with "what do you mean Neil" he said "you should have just employed Krysteen and saved me the trip over". Needless to say, Neil was right.

Neil Henry, your AFSA Company Secretary. Well what can I say about Neil; a veteran of over 30 years of service for the AFSA, a life member and a true character. I can say I have not met a person with more passion and dedication than Neil for your association.

I would like to thank both Krysteen and Neil for their efforts in making my tenure as your Chairman an enjoyable period of my life.

This is my final report for my term as Chairman. When I speak to people regarding contributing to the AFSA, I hear so many times 'I haven't got the time'. When I hear this my thoughts are simply; 'I am so sorry because you are missing an amazing opportunity'.

I truly believe that being involved in the AFSA provides you with so much more than 'just helping the Association' and those benefits include:

- Building your own personal leadership skills.
- Developing a greater industry knowledge.
- Improving your own business through greater industry connections and exposure to other ideas.
- Making lifelong friends.

I would like to thank my current Board and all the previous Board members I have worked with. It has been my pleasure.

At the AFSA Board meeting held in Canberra on 9th October, the new Board was appointed, congratulations to Brian Lund and Andrew Chivell on their appointments. Craig Swan, Amy Wyer, Shane Dellavedova, Noel Squires are continuing and I have been appointed as Chairman. Also thank you to retiring members, Wendy Rowsell and John Harrison for their considerable efforts during their Board tenure.

Thank you also to Neil Henry and Krysteen McElroy for their professional, dedicated and continuous work for AFSA and I look forward to working with them for the betterment of AFSA.

There are many challenges ahead. Your Board is conscious of the need to "value add" to your membership to AFSA through presenting training programs of real value to you and your business, developing a stronger bond with Fertiliser Australia and encouraging the State Committees to engage more frequently.

We will be encouraging greater membership participation at the State and National Conferences, with the take away messages being both educational, provoking and the need to expand industry knowledge and contacts.

I look forward to your enquiry, suggestions, participation and meeting with you during the year.

Kim Bailey  
AFSA Chairman



"Even if you are on the right track  
you will get run over if you just sit there" - Will Rogers





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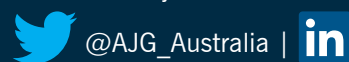
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# TASMANIAN REPORT

Bill Earley



Hi all,

Another year has passed and boy things have been busy here in Tassie!

The seasons are all outta-whack with a late spring last year that ended up turning into a good hay season. Following this was a very dry summer that went on to a longer, drier and milder autumn followed by a short, cold and wet winter. We're now coming out the other side into hopefully a good spring. Fingers crossed.

A lot of our work has been unhindered by weather so resources have been stretched in all sectors of our businesses, either within our own or down the line in the supply chain where product at times has been short. I have spoken with several operators and we're all in the same boat, but I guess we're not waking up wondering what we are going to do. It's good for the pocket but hard on the head.

Most of our agricultural sectors are very positive at present which is supporting our businesses and giving us positive growth and rewarding results going forward.

Our dairy industry has done a full turn around and milk prices are back on track where these guys and girls are making good returns. The sale of Murray Goulburn will see the new company strive hard to be competitive against its opposition and this will create much needed level competition which hopefully will return greater financial gains to our farmers in this sector.

Sheep/Beef growers have reported excellent returns over the past twelve months and although late autumn prices

decreased somewhat, they're lifting again now and it's still positive for the twelve month period.

The quiet achiever is wool. Prices are on the up and this money stream is coming back to its own, helping these producers look to a more positive outcome heading forward.

Veggie growers are looking at slightly better prices but yields have been average to above. The good dry growing season has seen growers able to monitor water onto crops helping with controlled results but water usage being up will cut returns on crops somewhat. Disease and pest issues are ever attacking crops to take some of the shine off returns.

Cereal and poppy crops enjoyed a reasonably fast harvest with minimal loss due to great harvesting conditions though returns have been just average to above.

Poppy crop area has been further reduced for the year ahead; these guys will most likely replace that area with cereals due to their ever increasing value.

The Tassie AFSA branch has been slack in its activities mainly due to my inability to dedicate the time it deserves. Workloads are becoming a bit easier and starting to catch up so I will extract a digit and get things organised for our local AGM, most likely late November once the spring rush reduces.

Nothing to report on OH&S going forward but I will say please use good practises, good common sense and keep continually striving to keep training at the forefront of all our businesses.

I had the opportunity to attend a 'Trucknology' day with Westar Trucks in Brisbane which was organised by our local Tassie sales rep Phil Salter. The day featured MAN road and off-road trucks, a crane truck and a double decker bus that could not be tipped over at any speed. The day was based around a new release on the new D38 560HP road truck, with an emphasis on the new truck sensor braking ability which brings fully laden trucks to a straight stop before hitting an obstacle as well as a vehicle ahead distance regulator which keeps trucks at a constant safe distance from vehicles ahead.

I saw a brilliant use for our spreaders when they're finished with and that was to put a camper on its back and take off with all the grey nomads. Overall, it was a very informative couple of days with a great bunch of Westar sales reps from all over AUS.

It was great to see our Fertiliser young achievers attend their first conference and the attendance by our Sara Rogers from CircularHead Spreading. No doubt this is the start of invaluable information going forward and I am looking forward to her comments and report at our AGM

Kevin Beams has resigned as Accuspread testing officer here in TAS which is a darn shame as his contribution, service and experience to AFSA over many years will be greatly missed. We're presently racking the brains for a replacement.

Until we meet again, take care and remain safe.





# VICTORIAN REPORT

Campbell Brumby

Hello Members,

Once again it has been my pleasure to hold the position of Victorian President for the Australian Fertiliser Services Association, in a year when many regions are battling well below average rainfall.

Queensland and NSW have taken the brunt of an ongoing dry period, with SA and Victoria also under strain from below average rainfall and many regions are only just scraping through on a week to week basis.

Its at these times you see the strength of the rural community with everyone banding together to help and do what they can to assist.

Whilst it may sound cliqued, tough times don't last and every day without rain is a day closer to rain.

Whilst there has been talk of a greatly reduced harvest in Victoria, I thought I would share some photos of crops around the state. We will still require good rain over Spring, but many crops are set up well to achieve at least an average yield.



Wheat @ Speed  
13/08/2018



Wheat Yarrowonga  
13/08/2018



Late sown Canola @  
Yarrowonga 13/08/2018

**Commodities:**

The below average rainfall and a cold frosty winter has pastures and crops well behind in growth compared to this time last year.

Hay reserves that in December last year had many producers wondering how long it would take to sell, have now been quickly consumed largely by demand from drought ravaged parts of NSW and QLD.

Cereal Hay that was sold in paddock in December for \$40mt is now around \$300mt plus if you can find it.

Grain prices have also spiked on the back of dry conditions with any grade of wheat or barley hovering around \$400mt + GST delivered Port, so for operations that are able to grow something this year they will be very well financially rewarded.

Lamb and mutton pricing continue on up with Ballarat Lamb market quoted at 850.5cents/kg carcass weight for lambs on 7th August

Yearling cattle prices have eased and Dairy prices continue to be on the lower end with high hay and grain prices impacting on profitability.

**Fertiliser:**

Despite the dryish edge to the season, nitrogen sales have been good, with growers wanting to capitalise on any rain fronts with an application of Urea and/or Sulphate of Ammonia.

**AFSA:**

The Victorian AFSA Branch ran a 2 day business initiative at Geelong in early October which was attended by 13 Victorian members, with the program being designed to assist with formalising a strategy for business development and growth

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The AFSA Website is in the process of being updated and along with the Fertiliser News having a fresher and revamped format, we are now seeing more uniform communication from the AFSA network.

Thanks to Krysteen McElroy AFSA Executive Officer for these changes and updates.

**Summary:**

The Victorian branch has been active throughout 2018 via meetings held around the State, with membership remaining steady.

The State Branch would not be as effective or active if not for the tremendous work carried out by long time Secretary Treasurer Neil Henry and Vice President David Bentley.

Neil's knowledge and experience and Dave's strong network of contacts makes my position of President so much easier and provides great support, and I thank them for this.

As they say, behind every well organised man, is his wife keeping him in order, in my case.. Lyndall.

Thanks Lyndall for all your work and support behind the scenes.

Best Regards



## VICTORIAN BRANCH AGM & CONFERENCE







# SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REPORT

Mark Rivett

2018 has seen AFSA SA building on the progress we have made over the past few years. From a stagnant branch, to a position of stability and now a position where we can get some growth.

I've talked to many people in organisations such as footy clubs, that say "they have people on committees that don't do anything".

Our executives have all made the effort to be involved and contribute ideas, make phone calls etc. This has made it a lot easier on everyone. A big thank you to all that have put their hand up for the benefit of the fertiliser services sector.

We also have a diverse range of skills and experiences. This helps have a broader vision and approach and hopefully, will lead to a better outcome longer term for AFSA.

The South Australian farming sector, while it has some areas across the state that are certainly in trouble with the lack of rain, is overall not in the same predicament as NSW and QLD and that is something to be grateful for. Our thoughts are with the farmers, communities and in particular, AFSA members that are doing it tough.

The heavy vehicle inspection scheme is something that is going to be introduced into South Australia. The timeframe for the introduction has been pushed back and may be some time away. It is something that will affect those of us that operate vehicles with a mass of greater than 4.5 tonne. Some on the committee are trying to

work towards SPV vehicle registrations for spreader vehicles as the main job of these vehicles is in the paddock and not on the highways. This would be a big help to the fertiliser spreader operators. Good luck, many have tried and failed! It would save a lot of hassles for the industry and get us aligned with some of the other states.

We held a face to face meeting of the SA executives in Hahndorf on the 17th of August to discuss and have input into the changes happening within national and the changes to how the state branches are run, along with other general business. We had good numbers and constructive discussions.

A tour of Neutrog fertilisers followed. This was very entertaining. Our tour guide David was a bit of a comedian. Some of the product names must have come by way of 2 bottles of wine!

Planning for the 2019 state AGM and conference is well underway. It will be on the 8th of February and some of the speakers have been asked and have already accepted. They will speak on a diverse range of topics. I'm sure those attending will take some useful information away both from the speakers and at the night session that follows. We are looking at getting more numbers there so make the effort to grab any people with an interest in fertiliser and the fertiliser services sector. Bigger numbers give a more vibrant feel and more of an exchange of information, so spread the word and encourage people to come along.

The Business Building and Upskilling workshop facilitated by Ali Uren and held at the Arkaba in Adelaide was a great initiative by AFSA to help members build their skills and get us thinking about the challenges and opportunities in the fertiliser industry going forward. The sharing of information between attendees was invaluable. I put all my workforce through and I think it will help build a team and help them develop in their own lives as well. I think a team in business has got to be better than an us versus them mentality and be a better place to be around.

Well done to those people involved in putting the course together.

Some things in life aren't all that easy, but you're glad you do them. Seeing Vin Boseley in hospital, knowing that it would probably be the last time, was one of those occasions. We had a good chat about things and even then, Vin was asking how the AFSA meeting had gone. How the progress of the new truck was going. Giving me finance advice. Still taking the time to think about others. His room was full of family and friends.

That's what I love about Vin. Even when he was having challenges, he still found time to be the president of AFSA, to ask how things were going. He was the man that made me feel welcome when I started attending AFSA meetings. He cared about people. He has set a great example to follow. Love you Vin!

Best Wishes

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## WESTERN AUSTRALIAN REPORT

David Holdsworth



Hello, I am pleased to present my WA state report.

AFSA WA are low on numbers, being only 8 and not all those being active and those that are active aging as all state memberships are I expect.

A Transport Symposium I went to this week suggested the average age of a Truck Driver in WA is over 60 yrs. old, so AFSA is not alone in that area.

The Livestock Transporters and Country Bulk Carrier's Assoc. represent most road carriers as many are in livestock transport anyway.

On top of that there are organizations like, Transafe, Western Roads who also represent a broad range of interest areas within transport and present different main agenda's, but inevitably overlap each other.

Sellers of Fertiliser in WA are generally corporates, not smaller enterprises like our Eastern counterparts.

WA is also much lower in overall fertiliser business numbers. This being the case even though the state is as big as Vic, NSW and QLD I recently heard.

This leaves the AFSA representing smaller sellers and spreaders in WA.

We had our AGM on the 12th March, at Baileys Fertiliser in Kwinana and Krysteen McElroy joined us for the day.

Kim Bailey was once again endorsed as our nominee for WA Director to the AFSA board.

Kevin Spurr stood down as WA President and I was elected, Kevin in due course taking up as Vice President.

Treasurer, Larry Marchant, long standing in this position.

Secretary, Pam, our Life Member has called it quits after many years as our able, reliable secretary; we probably would have ceased to exist without her input to AFSA WA. (Still in Broome with Les as I write this).

We have opted to outsource our secretarial position for the next year.

Emma, my daughter and Richard Bailey went to Adelaide in February as part of the next generation program.

Emma also attended the July NZ conference in

Invercargill along with Sara Rogers from Tassie.

Emma reports the Kiwis are great hosts and was joined by her sister Amy with whom she spent some enjoyable time touring the Southern Island with after the conference.

I feel that is one of the great things about the AFSA. The ability to have contacts within a group of people with similar interests, and form friendships that are enduring despite the fact contact may not be regular.

The Business aside, it cannot be overstated how important those relationships are.

Larry and I have spent a number of days testing his new spreader and my old spreader on Gypsum, Lime, Urea, Potash and did try to attract other contractors to the display but they were all too busy to turn up so we have yet to do a formal Accu-spread test session even though we have the machines ready to do so.

There was also no local farmer interest at the time.

We will try again early 2019 and complete the formal testing.

John Forrest is also accredited for Accu-Spread testing so maybe he will flush out more spreader owners wishing to get their machines accredited.

WA in the last year has had some very mixed results and therefore had an effect on farmers' requirements for fertiliser, chemicals and farm contractors. Much of the northeastern wheatbelt grew little crop especially around Beacon and Mukinbudin areas, causing the financial tap to these areas being turned off quickly in August 17. This is not likely to recover until this year's crop is in the bin.

I am sure this bad patch is nothing compared to what NSW and QLD have faced over the last few years though.

Central Wheatbelt fared better, but still well down on 2016 year.

Western and Southern areas were good but pricing of Grain was disappointing unless you carried over further into the Financial Year when some better money was paid.

This year, has started well even though rains were late, Central Wheatbelt most crops were in before

it rained, but then it seemed to follow through with more rain than expected.

Northern Ag region is outstanding and is nearly home and hosed, massive crops and I hear swathers are getting ready for early action in that northern area.

Eastern wheatbelt needs a bit more rain yet, as does the central wheatbelt. Tree lines always an indicator of soil moisture, or lack of.

Great Southern, a bit too much rain so far with access an issue for farmers and contractors.

Southern Coastal, (Albany- Esperance) not great yet but should be ok with a soft finish to the season.

Lime and Gypsum sales held well and some areas up as much as 40% increase in Lime use this season.

Nitrogen saw heavy demand with all suppliers running out of Liquid N and reports of some low N level in the soil even with high rates of either liquid or urea being applied.

CBH I believe expecting 18M/Tonne for the year, but even as I write this Jack Frost is being talked about as likely to be paying many visits over the next few weeks but we will be hoping the forecasters have really got it wrong this time, and today middle of September, 26 Deg. and crops sucking hard.

We are expecting better grain prices this harvest, but the world reports of stocks seem to put a dampener on higher values of commodities. If prices do remain high it will be a very unusual year with good prices and high yield aligning rare in agriculture, lets hope it does come to pass.

The local Field Day's report good interest and a good rain in the western and central wheatbelt also out into some of the Eastern Wheatbelt gave that little bit extra boost to numbers at these events.

Thank you,





# NEW SOUTH WALES REPORT

Paul Wyer

Hi All,  
Last night I arrived home after our National Conference in Canberra. It's now Friday morning and I am still buzzing. So, I thought while all of the good bits were still fresh in my mind I would punch out some words over a coffee.

The conference was a great reminder of why I have been a member of the AFSA for almost 25 years. It comes down to the number of good friends and comradery we have in our association and when you couple this with the knowledge and experience that we and our associates have, we can say that we really do own our own industry.

Some of the comments that were passed onto me were that the speakers were very good value, the food was excellent all of the time, the evening at the museum was so relaxed, the corporates were very friendly, the trade displays were very informative, the accuspread testing was great - showing immediate graphs displayed just after testing, and that the sponsors were interactive and held many meetings with customers. One of my staff said to me "the Scania guy has just showed me a whole heap of stuff to keep our older machine running". Now that's what I like to hear.



The conference attracted 185 delegate, 30 partners, 21 sponsors and 236 people at the conference dinner on Wednesday night. That must be close to a record for us. It was great to see some new people and companies attend the conference, along with our regular goers. I'd like to thank our major sponsor Incitec Pivot Fertilisers and other participating sponsors for enabling us to run such a successful event.

The field day was attended by about 80 people and supported by 17 sponsors. Thank you to our major sponsor, Daimler Huntingwood, and all other sponsors for making the day possible. If you attended, you were able to test drive machines on the 4km training track or spread some SSP on the farm. It was great to see some of the desk jockeys hope into trucks and learn how auto steer operates. I couldn't stop them from talking about it. One delegate said that he knew how it worked in principle, but he couldn't believe that when he sat in the truck and he did not have to steer it at all.

Thanks to Fertilizer Australia for their assistance in organising the event. Both Jeff Kraak and Monique Thomson put a lot of time into ensuring everything came together perfectly. Thanks must go to Nick Drew also for his ongoing support and I'd like to wish him all the best for his future endeavours

after he finishes later this year with Fertilizer Australia.

Congratulations to Vickery Bros. for taking home the Industry Chairman's Award for their long term support of the association, willingness to share information with members, and keenness to advocate the fertiliser industry. Very well deserved.

I would like to welcome Kim Bailey as the new Chairman of the AFSA Board. NSW branch is here to support the board where needed. Thanks to Craig Swan for his contribution as Chairman for the past 3 years. There is a great deal of work that goes into this position and please know that it does not go unnoticed.

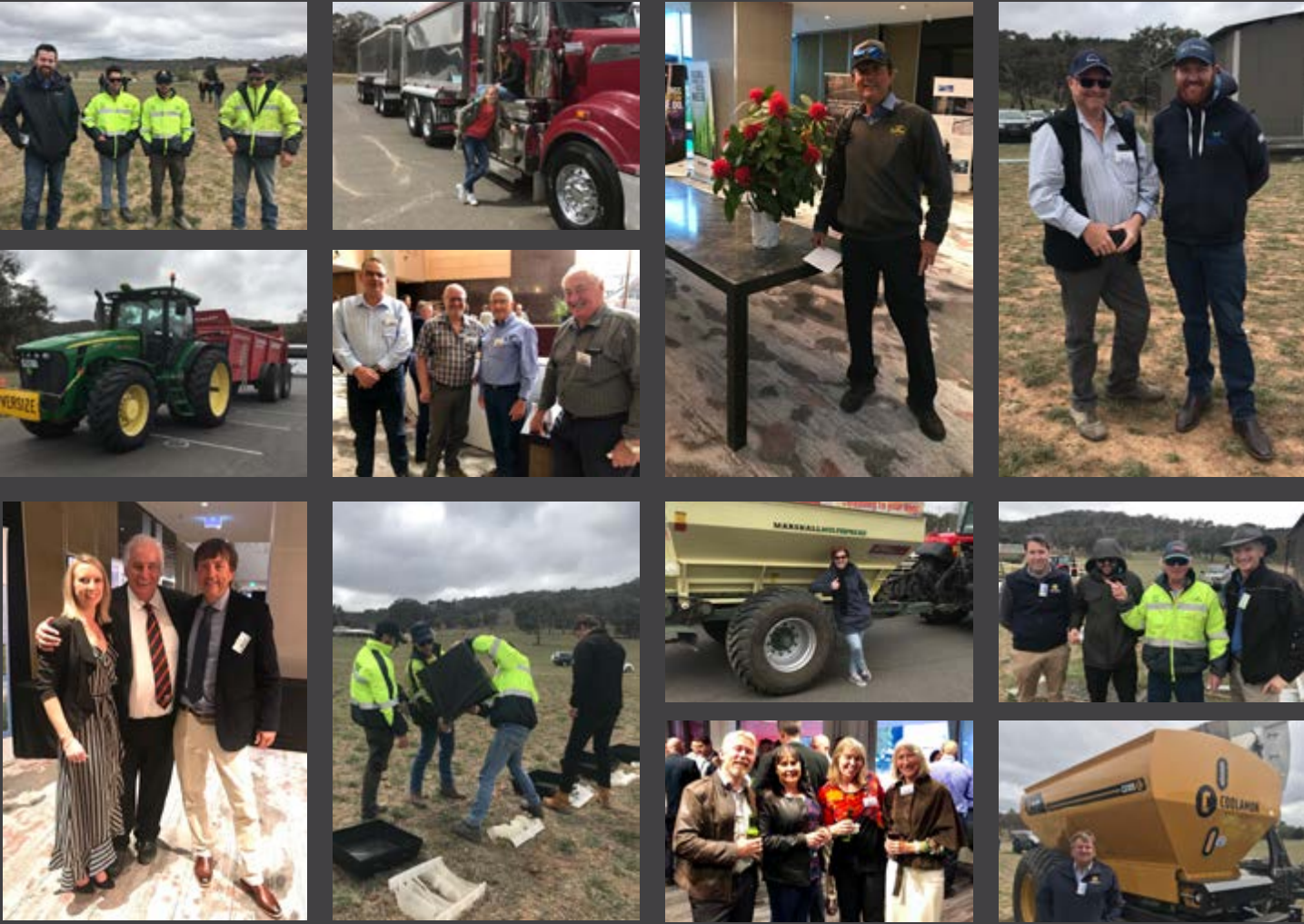
When I welcomed everyone to the conference on Monday morning, I showed off our state's national emblem, the Waratah. I explained how wonderful this flower is and noted that it represents just how lucky we are to live in such a wonderful place like NSW. We are truly lucky to be able to own and run our own business in agriculture in this state and this country.

On that note, enjoy some of the photos below. I am sure you had a great time in Canberra and if you missed it, there is always next year.

Kind regards,



# CANBERRA NATIONAL AGM & CONFERENCE



## Fertiliser News welcomes your input!

Please have all advertisements, articles, letters and photos supplied to the Editor by the following dates:

**July edition**  
Closing date (15th June)

**November edition**  
Closing date (15th October)

**March edition**  
Closing date (15th February)

Contact: **Krysteen McElroy (Editor)**  
0408 655 108 | [bkmcelroy22@outlook.com](mailto:bkmcelroy22@outlook.com)



# THE RIGHT INGREDIENTS TO A SUCCESSFUL SPREADING JOB

**Russell Nichol**  
Accu-Spread tester

Whether you're a spreading contractor or a farmer with your own machine, the ingredients to a successful spreading job are the same - a machine which is working correctly and good quality fertiliser.

If one or both of these are missing, the chance of failure is greater than the chance of success.

Many handling fertiliser are still not seeing, or choosing not to see, the correlation between the ingredients and the outcomes.

Under the independent Accu-Spread program, machines are driven over trays, placed one metre apart, twice and the data is collected and entered into the Australian Fertiliser Services Association's program.

The results then give a spread pattern width, at which a machine can drive at, to achieve a 15 per cent co-efficient of variation result.

Machines need to be well maintained, clean and up to standard to have any chance to produce an accurate spread pattern.

Testing fertiliser with a screen box before every application is also vital. The ideal screen test should have most of the product in the centre two boxes. If fertiliser is 'dusty' or has a high percentage under 2mm, such as more than 10 per cent, then spread width needs to be adjusted accordingly.

If you have a good machine and good product you will succeed.

If you have a good machine with bad product, you can adjust the distance you are driving at, so the application rate is right, eliminating the chances of an inaccurate application.

Bad machine and bad product, be prepared for bad outcomes.

## Why you should test a machine with the product you spread?

The product in figure 1 (top screen box) will spread to about 45m at a 15 per cent co-efficient of variation. Note, there is very little product under 2mm, 40 per cent between 2mm and 3.35mm, 50 per cent between 3.35mm and 4.75mm and 10 per cent above 4.75mm.

The product in figure 1 (bottom screen box) will only spread to about 35m from the same machine. Note, there is 20 per cent under 2mm, 50 per cent between 2mm and 3.35mm, 30 per cent between 3.35mm and 4.75mm and nothing above 4.75mm.

As a rule of thumb, if there is more than 10 per cent in the under 2mm box, take 10m off your spread width.



These two screen tests are super and are readily available in the marketplace. They are the same product, but have very different spreading capabilities.

This is why you need to test what you are spreading, not getting in a 'special load' for testing just to achieve a wide bout width, as was written in the original Accu-Spread protocol some 20 years ago.

I believe AFSA should be pushing for a standard of no more than 5 per cent under 2mm granule size for all granular fertiliser products.

## Making the most of urea

A typical screen test for urea is nothing in the under 2mm box, 70 per cent between 2mm and 3.35mm, 30 per cent between 3.35mm and 4.75mm and nothing in the over 4.75mm box.

This is generally what the product in the marketplace is, with some exceptions where the middle two boxes are split 50-50.

If you think you are going to spread urea to 36m accurately without changing spinners after spreading gypsum, lime, compost or manures, you better think again.

**The AFSA Board have recently endorsed that the minimum standard for granular fertiliser used by accuspread spreaders should be that no more than 5% of total product measures less than 2mm. It has been requested that this be adopted as a national standard in the Accu-spread protocols.**

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## FERTILIZING FOR THE NEXT CROP FOLLOWING A DROUGHT

**The International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI).**

Drought's impact on crops can be sobering, but more than yields suffer. Every nutrient cycle takes a hit in a drought, increasing the imperative to measure nutrients against the 4R nutrient stewardship goal: Apply the right nutrient source, at the right rate, at the right time and in the right place.

**Compared with the soil nitrate levels found during normal-rainfall seasons, residual soil nitrates can be higher after a drought in fields where nitrogen (N) had been applied to a cereal crop.** Higher levels arise from decreased downward movement of soil water and from reduced fertilizer N uptake by the drought-stressed plant.

**Whether or not residual N will be available for next season's crop greatly depends on the precipitation that occurs after current harvest.** In the Midwest, precipitation occurring early in the following season is associated with higher losses of nitrate in tile drainage. Soil nitrate tests are the best tool for assessing the quantity of residual soil N available to the next crop. To take up some of the residual nitrate and protect it from environmental losses, farmers can plant cover crops between current harvest and next-season planting.

In many drought-stricken areas, crops originally intended for grain harvest are cut instead for forage. The change from harvesting grain to harvesting most of the aboveground portion of the plant can change each nutrient's removal rate. If farmers harvest the grain as planned, grain nutrient concentrations of drought-stressed crops may or may not differ from unstressed plants, depending on the crop as well as the timing and severity of water deficits. Tissue testing of harvested forage cuttings in such years is essential to determine changes from planned nutrient removal. This is especially important for phosphorus (P) and potassium (K).

Very little data exists on how N credits are affected for cereals grown after legumes under drought conditions. If drought occurred during the growth of the legumes, soil scientists hypothesize that more residual nitrate will exist in the soil, since legumes often scavenge soil nitrate under normal growth. How drought affects the amount of readily mineralized N from root exudates isn't well quantified. However, since farmers regularly plant legumes in arid areas to provide N to cereal crops, it seems reasonable to take some or all of the N credit used under normal conditions.

**Soil tests after a drought may contain some unexpected variance when compared with tests from more normal years.**

The immobile nutrient most sensitive to environmental conditions during sampling is K. Lack of rainfall reduces the leaching of K from plant tissues prior to sampling, which can reduce soil test results. Additionally, soil mineralogy can either increase or decrease the amount of available K under drought conditions. Taking soil samples in a drought year and looking at the changes can provide valuable data for improved interpretation in future years when dry conditions strike again.

**The impacts of drought on crop nutrition are profound.** Soil testing and plant analysis remain our best tools to quantify these impacts to adjust nutrient management for the next crop. Discussing analytical results with a trusted and knowledgeable agronomist ensures informed strategies can be created to meet local conditions and reach the 4R nutrient stewardship goals that keep your fertilizer maintenance program sustainable no matter the weather.



# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY - HOW TO GET ACTIVE WHEN YOU ARE BUSY

## Better Health Channel

It's so easy to relegate exercise and activity to the bottom of your long to-do list. But being active is one of the most important things you can do, each day if you can, to instil good health.

While you may not be able to reduce time for other commitments, you might try to squeeze short bursts of activity into your busy life. Every bit helps.

You're likely to have more success at incorporating exercise into your life if you:

- consult an exercise professional, exercise physiologist or physiotherapist for advice on exercising safely and avoiding injury.
- choose activities that appeal to you
- track your progress (and feel good about your achievements!)
- learn an exercise or two you can do quickly and easily for days when you're feeling particularly time-poor
- devise a realistic exercise plan for your lifestyle and routine.

Remember, any exercise is better than none, and you can make it quick and easy if that's all the time you have. By making time for activity everyday you'll be setting yourself up for better long-term health.

### Benefits of getting active

Being active provides so many benefits. It can:

- improve your long-term health
- reduce your risk of heart attack

- give you more energy
- help you manage your weight
- help you improve your cholesterol
- lower your blood pressure
- make your bones and muscles stronger
- relax you and make you feel content
- help you sleep better
- improve your mood and help give you a positive outlook on life
- boost your concentration and alertness
- make you more productive at work
- reduce your risk of cognitive impairment as you age
- make you happier and healthier.

An added bonus is that being happier and healthier can save you time and money in the long run, by reducing potential medical costs and leave from work, for instance.

### How to fit activity into your life

Not everyone has a routine. Every day can be different. So while you might have a block of time on some days, on others it might only be short and intermittent, squeezed around other activities. Whatever the day brings, here are some suggestions you can try.

### Exercise in a block session

Perhaps you prefer the idea of a half-hour or hour-long exercise session rather than incidental exercise. If so, you need to be

organised, especially if you're working around family commitments and other activities. Consider these tips.

Try exercising early in the morning before you get busy. If you're a morning person, set the alarm and get yourself going. If you struggle in the mornings, allow yourself to try at least two days of early exercise. You might surprise yourself if you enjoy it, and keep it up!

Schedule your exercise session in your diary or calendar. When it's already in your diary, you're more likely to plan other things around it.

Commit to exercise with someone else. It's much harder to cancel when you feel you're letting someone down.

Most importantly, choose an exercise that you really enjoy. Don't swim if you prefer running, and don't choose a solitary sport if you prefer the fun and social aspects of a team sport like basketball.

Think about the travel time involved. You can start a walk or run from anywhere, but going to the gym will take extra time.

Do a workout at home.

### Exercise throughout the day

When scheduled exercise or block sessions are impossible to achieve, you can try these tips to squeeze in 5-30 minute blocks without messing up your day.

- Combine physical activity with something you already do, such as walking the dog, shopping or doing household chores.

- When you unload your shopping, strengthen your arms by lifting the milk bottle a few times before you put it away.
- When you go shopping, park at the far end of the carpark and walk briskly to the shops.
- Think about whether you need the car, or whether you could walk or ride your bike instead.
- Get off the bus one or two stops earlier than usual, and walk the rest of the way.
- Instead of calling or emailing a colleague at work, walk to their workstation.
- Organise to have standing or walking meetings instead of sitting down.
- Take the stairs whenever you can, instead of the lift or escalator.
- Multi-task: While waiting in line, balance on one foot for a few seconds, then the other. Gradually build up the length of time you can balance.
- While talking on the phone, stand up and do a few leg raises or toe stands to strengthen your legs.
- While waiting for the kettle to boil, do a few wall push-ups or calf stretches.
- When you brush your teeth, do 10 squats.

While watching television, do stretches and core exercises, or pedal a stationary bike. Or maybe try to do 20 crunches and 20 push-ups.

When walking, do it briskly and include a few hills if you can.

Stretch to reach items in high places and squat to look at items at floor level.

Not all tips will work for everyone, so choose a few things that you know will suit your body and your routine. If you're still not sure about what to do, you could watch some YouTube videos for inspiration!

### What kind of busy are you?

You may think your work is very sedentary, but you can change that. Try these ideas to get more active at work.

- Join a lunchtime walking or running group. No group available? Set one up!
- Depending on your building facilities, you may be able to do yoga, swim or gym workouts before or after work, or in your lunch break.
- Ask your boss if you can get a standing desk. And plan standing or walking meetings.
- Meet outside so you can walk while you talk.
- Take regular breaks from your computer. Every 30 minutes, stand up and move around.
- Walk somewhere for lunch, preferably outside.

- Rotate sitting tasks (such as emails) with standing tasks (such as photocopying or presentations).
- Stand to greet visitors or when you're on the phone (which is easier with a headset or speaker phone).
- Go and talk to colleagues at their work stations, instead of having them come to you, or talking by email or phone.
- Use the stairs instead of the lift.
- Drink more water. Going to the water cooler and bathroom will break up your sitting time.
- Move your bin away from your desk so you have to get up to use it.

Try to embrace activity. Being busy doesn't have to get in the way of good health. It might just be an excuse.

### Remember

**Being active each day is one of the most important things you can do for your health.**

Even if you are busy, you can plan physical activity in short bursts that fit around your life.

Getting active will be even easier if you choose something that you enjoy, and schedule it in to your calendar.

Source: [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/)



# SECRETS TO SULPHUR SUCCESS

## Incitec Pivot

Agronomists were asked to consider the impact of sulphur leaching in an informative session led by Dr Chris Guppy during Incitec Pivot Fertilisers' recent Agronomy Community forums.

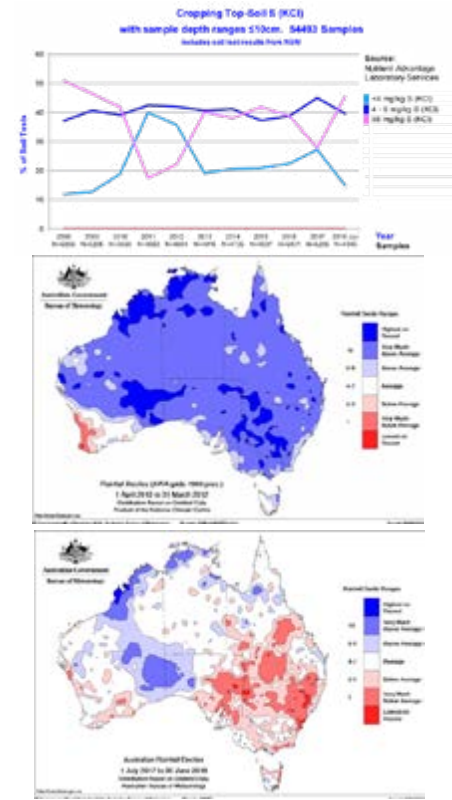
Dr Guppy, Associate Professor in soil fertility at the University of New England, reminded agronomists of the mobility of soil sulphur.

Using soil test data for New South Wales from the Nutrient Advantage® laboratory over the past 10 years, he showed clear links between topsoil sulphur levels from cropping soil tests and rainfall.

"If we look at 2011, we can see that rainfall leached the sulphate out of the topsoil of the cropping country, so you've got that dip in the trend line where the percentage of high sulphur results drops and the percentage of low sulphur results rises," he explained.

"Compare that with the recent drought in New South Wales, and it looks quite clear that the laboratory is picking up the surface moisture conditions, which is the key driver of sulphur mobility in the landscape.

"Sulphur leaches. You can see it here across the whole of New South Wales."



Caption: Top soil sulphur levels from cropping soil tests match up with moisture conditions – showing that sulphur leaches.

In cropping, Dr Guppy said there were only a few recorded responses to sulphur fertilisers in trials, because crops usually had access to enough sulphur at depth to buffer against any problems caused by low sulphur levels in the topsoil.

Incitec Pivot Fertilisers' agronomist, Craig Farlow, agrees and suggests a better approach is to sample and test for sulphur in segments down to rooting depth.

"Segmenting soil samples between shallow and deep layers, as with nitrogen, can better define how much sulphur is in the profile and where it lies," he said.

This was demonstrated in an Incitec Pivot Fertilisers' canola nutrition trial near Sherwood in South Australia last season. Soil samples were taken at increments of 0-10 cm, 10-40 cm and 40-70 cm, showing low sulphur levels at the surface and large reserves at depth, but the reverse with nitrogen.

"This is typical of many soils and shows the value of segmented sampling," he said.

The canola crop was quick to falter where there was a lack of applied nitrogen, but was able to utilise the subsoil sulphur to good effect.

"Knowing how much nitrogen and sulphur is in the profile and how readily accessible they will be at early and later growth stages allows better decisions around the right rate, timing and fertiliser source," said Mr Farlow.

Dr Guppy said sulphur fertilisers were critical to the productivity of pasture systems and responses to sulphur in pasture trials were much more common.

He showed trial results from the New England comparing the clover yields achieved from a range of fertilisers.

Fertilisers with a higher available sulphur content, including single superphosphate and a Granulock® product outperformed MAP.

In his review of sulphur fertilisers, Dr Guppy suggested agronomists consider the form of sulphur in the fertiliser, not just the overall concentration.

While sulphate sulphur is immediately available to plants, he said the value of elemental sulphur was that it was slow release.

"How quickly it oxidises to sulphate sulphur depends on particle size and product structure," he said.

"The smaller the size of the elemental sulphur particles, the more rapidly it releases."

Dr Guppy said recent research had shown that the half-life of pure elemental sulphur (when about half of it is released under ideal conditions) was around 35 days, but when elemental sulphur is mixed into a multi-nutrient granular product, the half-life moved out to 140 days.

"The reason it takes longer is because we've got to wait for the nitrogen and phosphorus to dissolve and move away from the granule before the elemental sulphur can come into contact with the soil," he explained.

Based on his review of currently available sulphur fertilisers, he said Granulock SS was a good product for agronomists to recommend. Granulock SS contains 10% nitrogen, 17.5% phosphorus and 12% sulphur. This includes 4% sulphate sulphur and 8% ultra-fine elemental sulphur.

Dr Guppy suggested that with regular use, the elemental sulphur in Granulock SS would become available in a cycle that would supply a relatively constant amount of sulphur.

At the other extreme, he said some sources of sulphur bentonite pastilles could remain intact even after a decade on the ground, meaning that the sulphur stayed unavailable to plants.

He also suggested farmers and agronomists steer clear of any elemental sulphur coated fertilisers, as the friction and dust could prove explosive.



Dr Chris Guppy spoke about sulphur at Incitec Pivot Fertilisers' Agronomy Community forums in Melbourne and Brisbane. He is pictured with Dr Ross Brennan (left) and Bede O'Mara from Incitec Pivot Fertilisers.



Dr Chris Guppy, Associate Professor in soil fertility at the University of New England, spoke about the implications of the mobility of soil sulphur at Incitec Pivot Fertilisers' Agronomy Community forums.



# Innovation that starts from the ground up.

Nathan Bennett  
Birregurra, VIC

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# INVERCARGILL NZGFA CONFERENCE 2018

Sara Rogers (TAS) and Emma Holdsworth (WA)

Our first night in Invercargill was a breeze. We must have been walking around with a big sign saying 'We're the Aussies', because it didn't take long for people to come over for a chat. Everyone we met was extremely friendly and we were made to feel very welcome.

On arrival at the conference everyone received a welcome pack of bluff oysters, chocolates, bags of treats, and a lovely NZGFA compendium.

The conference speakers were excellent and the guest speakers inspirational.

It opened on Sunday night with a welcome from Gary Tong, Mayor of the Southland District Council, followed by a casual dinner sponsored by Mercedes Benz Trucks.

Tony Laker of Laker House of Travel in Invercargill, spoke of his life journey. Born into a fishing family, Tony worked in a bank, travelled to the United Kingdom with only a few hundred dollars in his pocket and then started his own travel agency with no idea what being a travel agent entailed. The business is now the largest in the Southland and one of the largest in New Zealand with an annual turnover in excess of \$19mil. The business has also won a number of awards including 'New

Zealand Retail Travel Agency of the Year' in 2013, and 'Best House of Travel Office in New Zealand' in 2017.

Dean Rattray covered the importance of self-care and ensuring yourself and employees are fit for duty. He spoke of his journey to health from being 220kg at 42 years old, suffering from severe sleep apnoea and falling asleep at red lights, to dropping a whopping 125kg through a combination of hard work and a gastric sleeve operation. Dean is now a personal trainer and aims to educate people on healthier choices for their life. Sara discovered after the conference that it really is a small world as Dean is her Aunt's neighbour in Ashburton.

A major focus of the NZGFA conference was Biosecurity and specifically, *Mycoplasma Bovis* (M. Bovus). M. Bovus has had a devastating effect on the South Island's dairy and beef industries since being detected in July 2017. A huge amount of work is being done by a number of organisations in collaboration to try and eradicate the disease from New Zealand.

There was significant discussion regarding the risk of spreading the disease from farm to farm on

spreader trucks through mud or manure stuck to the truck. Although the risk of the disease being spread this way is low it is still a big concern for spreaders in NZ, and many already had clean on/off farm processes in place to eliminate any potential to transfer the infection between farms. Several contractors indicated they maintain cleaning kits on trucks with a disinfectant containing Citric Acid which is effective against the bacteria.

Another issue discussed at length was Data Management. There were discussions on who has access to recorded data when spreading, who should access that data, what they should be allowed to do with it & what should be supplied to the client. There was concern that companies providing the programs for tracking spreading and recording data may be accessing the data without the knowledge of contractors.

The formal dinner was a blast with one of our delegates staying until the wee hours of the morning causing them to be somewhat worse for wear on the field trip the following day, not helped by the coach trip.

Our guest speaker for the night was Lloyd



Matheson, Operations Manager at Southern Lakes Helicopters, and Te Anau Crew Chief for Lakes District Air Rescue Trust. Lloyd was scheduled to speak at the opening dinner however was called out on a search & rescue.

Lloyd shared his background starting in the Police Force, and the important work the Trust does throughout the region.

On the final day of the conference we were treated to an excursion to showcase what Southland had to offer. After leaving Invercargill, we travelled approximately 30 minutes South to a town called Bluff, the southernmost town in mainland New Zealand.

We were lucky enough to be taken on a tour through Bluff's Port, South Port, which is New Zealand's southernmost commercial deep-water port. Based on a 40ha man-made island harbour, the port operates year-round, 24 hours a day and handles over 3 million tonnes of cargo in a normal trading year. Most of their imports are alumina, petroleum products, fertiliser, acid, stock food and

cement, and they export aluminium, timber, logs, dairy, meat by-products, fish and woodchips.

After touring the port, we were able to look through the Bluff Maritime Museum and could explore an old oyster boat on display outside.

Lunch was held at the Bluff Rugby Club and an employee of Sanford, a local fishing company, gave us a presentation on their salmon farming operation, explained their processes and played a video showing the full cycle of the salmon's life.

For the final dinner everyone got gussied up in their finest Western Hoedown attire and headed down to the Invercargill Workingmen's Club. It was an excellent night, a local band entertained us, and the food was delicious. During the night 'fines' were given out to those in attendance for 'transgressions' during the conference, including to one of our lovely delegates for her early morning partying antics! Everything was in good fun and all proceeds from the fines were given to charity.

Following the conference both Sara and Emma spent some time travelling New Zealand.

Sara spent an additional 5 weeks in the country, driving from Invercargill to the North Island, visiting family, friends and then spending the remaining time on her partners dairy farm. During her time on the North Island, Sara also had the chance to fly an aeroplane and helicopter at work spreading fertiliser. They are very effective at spreading steep hills and can spread a large quantity of fertiliser.

Emma spent almost 3 weeks in NZ in total, joined by her sister after the conference they travelled around the South Island before flying home.

We were very sad to say goodbye to our new friends from across the pond, we both felt so privileged to have been asked to represent AFSA at the NZGFA 2018 Conference and would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity. We would also like to thank NZGFA for making us feel so welcome and creating such an enjoyable conference for everyone in attendance, no doubt we will be in touch in the future.

Thank you







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"We put the lime down just prior to canola in the cropping phase and then rotate the paddock to wheat."

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Tristram Rodham, Uranquinty, NSW

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# STAFF MANAGEMENT

A series of articles developed from the Upskilling & Business Building workshops delivered by Ali Uren from KiikStart and AFSA

Staff Management can be overwhelming for those who are running small businesses and for this reason we have put together some information that may assist AFSA members with this process.

Firstly, it is important when employing staff that you look at the person and not just their skills. Initially, you will need to make sure that your interview questions can determine how people interact with others. This will be an important attribute for you to be aware of when they begin working with other staff and clients.

## What resources do you need to make sure you are getting the right staff?

You cannot expect your staff to perform to the best of their ability, or to meet your requirements, if you are not providing the resources and information for them to do so.

## Job Descriptions

- Show potential staff that you are organised and professional
- Make sure each team member is aware of their role and the purpose of that role – essentially, how they fit in the business

- Provide accountability by allowing performance and outcomes to be reviewed regularly
- Should focus on behaviour and manner as much as technical skills – they should look at not only the task but also the manner that the task will be undertaken
- Need to be updated every 12-18 months to keep in line with the business growth/changing

## Staff Induction

Induction should be undertaken through a learning and development approach. This may be done by using a flowchart or timeline that gives key milestones to be met before moving onto the next action/role.

The induction process should include:

- Identification and explanation of key services and products that the business provides
- Identification of suppliers and industry partners that are important to the business
- Identification of key clients and their business/expectations

- Brief outline of business history
- How the service/product is delivered from start to finish (what processes and systems do you have in place?)
- Introduction to other team members and expected standard of conduct and way of working together
- Safety and wellbeing expectations
- Explanation of policies of business – mobile phones, alcohol and drugs, private use of vehicles etc

## Staff Training and Development

It will be important for you to meet with each staff member to

- Assess any skill gaps against the current business plan and their job description.
- Understand what they want to achieve in the next 12 months – what is their motivation?

Proformas available for AFSA members to adapt for their own business  
Contact Krysteen McElroy



**398 MPT**

# NEW HIGH SPEED TYRES FOR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

Up to 100km/hr on-road & low soil compaction off-road



**Alliance 398 MPT**  
is a high-speed  
**100 km/hr**  
flotation radial tyre  
for multiple applications.

Perfect for spreaders.

**5 YEAR  
WARRANTY**

**NEW  
LAUNCH**

Stock arriving December 2018



- **HIGH TRACTION**
- **ALL STEEL CONSTRUCTION**

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Australia's leading independent tyre distributor. Available for OEM & Replacement tyre sales.



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Free Call Tyres4U  
**1800 788 688**



## ALLIANCE 398 MPT -THE FIRST 100KPH ON/OFF ROAD FLOTATION TYRE

**Alliance**

Alliance Tire Group, owned by Yokohama has launched their new High Speed Flotation 398 MPT Multi-Purpose Tyre, the first D.O.T. 100kph speed rated directional radial flotation tyre, for use on field & on road.

This innovation increases productivity significantly compared to all competitors and the previous Alliance tyre pattern which are limited to 90kph.

Alliance 398 MPT tyres are perfect for fertiliser spreaders, tanks and feed trucks that require a combination of high flotation & high-speed road performance. They are an outstanding replacement for standard dual truck tyres.

By replacing standard truck duals with the Alliance 398 MPT you will experience less rutting and lower soil compaction all without sacrificing performance on the road.

Alliance 398 MPT is an all-steel radial construction for durability in the field & maximum heat dissipation on the road.

Aggressive lugs with sharp shoulders enhance traction in mud & soft soil, while a dense centre rib block pattern adds stability for enhanced road performance and steering.

Alliance has been a leader in radial flotation tyre technology for decades and is applying its expertise to providing farmers, Fertiliser contractors and custom applicators with high-flotation, low-compaction tyres for a growing range of farm machinery.

This new innovation is the next step in Alliance's commitment to reducing soil

compaction and preserving the natural state of the soil by offering a low-pressure tyre solution for every piece of equipment that touches the field.

Tyres4U is the Australian and NZ agent for Alliance agricultural tyres from Israel & India, with an extensive network of tyre service centre customers, including Tyreright. Tyres4U also supply & support Original Equipment Manufacturers.

Farmers are encouraged to support their local tyre dealer for local service. However, farmers can call Tyres4U for no obligation advice on 1800 788 688 or visit [www.tyres4u.com.au](http://www.tyres4u.com.au) or [www.alliancetyres.com.au](http://www.alliancetyres.com.au).

Alliance tyres provide a 5 year warranty, supported with after sales service in Australasia by Tyres4U's 600 employees and stock in 15 distribution centres.

Alliance 398 MPT 100kph flotation tyres are available in 4 sizes. *Other sizes are in development to be released soon.*

**Tyres4U Code:** 39800025

**Tyre Size:** 445/65R22.5

**Load & Speed Rating:** 160J (Steer)

**Tyres4U Code:** 39810020

**Tyre Size:** 600/50R22.5

**Load & Speed Rating:** 164J (Drive)

**Tyres4U Code:** 39800075

**Tyre Size:** 495/70R24

**Load & Speed Rating:** 155J (All Position)

**Tyres4U Code:** 39800060

**Tyre Size:** 445/70R24

**Load & Speed Rating:** 151J (All Position)



All Steel High Speed Flotation Radial for Agricultural Applications.

### Features

- All Steel construction
- Unique 'S' shaped centre block
- Steep angled lugs on the shoulder
- Large footprint area

### Benefits

- High loading capacity and puncture resistance plus high carcass durability
- Stable, smooth ride even at high speeds (up to 100KPH)
- Greater traction in the field, even under muddy and wet conditions
- Low rolling resistance, high self-cleaning ability & smooth driving at high speeds
- Low ground pressure, hence low soil compaction, even with high loads



# FERTILISER INDUSTRY FOCUSES ON THE FUTURE

Jeff Kraak

Australia’s leading fertiliser suppliers and service providers met in Canberra last month for the industry’s national conference and machinery field day, Fertilizer 2018.

Fertilizer Australia and the NSW branch of the Australian Fertiliser Services Association hosted more than 200 delegates at the conference from major fertiliser wholesalers, retailers and independent business owners.

With Incitec Pivot Fertilisers the major sponsor, the conference covered everything from global markets, the future of fertiliser manufacturing, transport regulation changes, the latest plant nutrition research and business management.

The hands-on machinery field day was a new addition to the event this year, thanks to Daimler Huntingdale Trucks. The field day gave attendees the opportunity to inspect a range of trucks, spreaders and handling equipment, as well as the latest precision ag technology.

Jeff Kraak from Fertilizer Australia said the conference gave delegates food for thought about the future and a wider view of the fertiliser industry’s challenges and opportunities.

First up was a global fertiliser market outlook from Carl Roache, Asian Fertilizer Editor for CRU Fertilizers, based in Singapore.

“Carl covered recent developments in supply and demand for each of the key nutrients and the potential implications for Australian fertiliser buyers,” said Mr Kraak.

“We also heard from Yara about their work to investigate the feasibility of producing ammonia from a solar powered system, rather than using natural gas as a feedstock,” he said.

Vinod Patel, who is leading the project for Yara Pilbara, said that the system

uses solar power to electrolyse water, producing hydrogen which could be fed into the existing processing facility to create ‘green ammonia’.

Other speakers at the conference included Rod Abbot from Korumburra Lime and Spreading, who detailed the roles Fertcare®, AFSA and Fertilizer Australia play in interacting with regulators and the courts when accidents occur.

“This was a valuable and insightful presentation, as Rod pulled no punches in telling participants what really happens when things go wrong,” said Mr Kraak.

Tim Ross from Grain Trade Australia highlighted an important market access issue for the industry – managing fungicide treated fertiliser in the supply chain to prevent cross contamination of grain.

Later that day, participants heard the latest in nutrition research from four perspectives.

Dr Richard Simpson from CSIRO talked about best practice phosphorus management through working towards the critical soil test phosphorus values, dealing with any other potential constraints to production and using soil tests to monitor and adjust the fertiliser program.

Fiona Leech from South East Local Land Services presented her research project on the influences of alternative fertilisers on pasture production and soil microbial communities.

“While alternative fertilisers are commonly promoted in pastures to improve productivity and support a healthy microbial environment, Fiona’s field research is showing there is little measurable difference in microbial diversity after the use of superphosphate and alternative products such as manures,” said

Mr Kraak. “In terms of productivity, available phosphorus was the key factor in whether products performed.”

Dr Helen Suter provided an insight into a current nitrogen trial in a dairy system in south-western Victoria, which is focusing on the potential role of soil mineralisation in supplying nitrogen to dairy pastures.

Dr Graeme Schwenke from NSW Department of Primary Industries explored the 4R’s (product, rate, timing and placement) from the perspective of managing nitrogen in irrigated cotton. This included assessments of some emerging inhibitor technologies for managing nitrogen applied as BIG N® (anhydrous ammonia).

During dinner, guests were entertained by controversial Australian personality and ‘lambassador’ Sam Kekovich and had their expectations of the future challenged by Charlie Walker from Incitec Pivot Fertilisers.



Paul Wyer, chairman of AFSA, NSW branch, greets Sam Kekovich at the Fertilizer 2018 conference dinner. I hope lamb was on the menu!

Highlighting Incitec Pivot Fertilisers’ increased focus on innovation and technology, he outlined a futuristic vision of agriculture and the fertiliser industry set in 2050.

His hypothetical future was a time when hemp could be the main crop grown in Australia, with farmers claiming carbon credits and selling their produce to make clothing, building materials and energy.

“Any nitrogen fertiliser applied in recognised wet seasons will have to be treated with a nitrification inhibitor, while any surface applied urea will have to be treated with a urease inhibitor,” he said.

“And thanks to economic solar and tidal driven desalination plants, Australia will have unlimited water resources, with aspirations to feed 600 million people – ten times that of 2018.”

Mr Walker speculated that artificial intelligence could replace agronomists, with on-the-go sensors mounted on every implement that crosses the paddock.

“Farmers will send autonomous trucks to semi-autonomous fertiliser depots, where they will collect fertilisers, all supplied within a strict three to four millimetre size range to allow for accurate application,” he said.



Getting together at the Fertilizer 2018 conference dinner were Rob Squires from Landmark, Peter Miell, Incitec Pivot Fertilisers, Jonathon Morris, Landmark and Corey Lynch, Incitec Pivot Fertilisers.



Representing Impact Fertilisers at the conference were Wayne Newitt, Conal Wills and Geoff Pelizzo, speaking with Wayne Hiller from Decipher.

Mr Walker finished by suggesting everyone who worked in the fertiliser industry would be Fertcare accredited and every application device would have Accu-Spread® accreditation.

The conference dinner was also an opportunity to recognise the contribution of outgoing Fertilizer Australia Executive Manager, Nick Drew, who was recognised for his significant contribution to the fertiliser industry over many years.

Outgoing AFSA National Chairman, Craig Swan, presented the annual chairman’s award to Vickery Bros from Victoria.



The team from Fertilizer Australia enjoying the conference: Monique Thompson, customer services manager, Nick Drew, executive manager, Jim Mole, chairman and Jeff Kraak, Fertcare program manager.



The fertiliser industry pondered the future during the dinner presentation, which considered what Australian agriculture and the fertiliser industry could look like in 2050.



Trucks and spreaders galore were on display at the fertiliser machinery field day, as part of Fertilizer 2018.

The following day’s machinery field day included demonstrations of the Accu-Spread testing process using SuPerfect fertiliser and a discussion of the impact of fertiliser quality on application rates and evenness of spreading.

Dr Rowan Rainbow from the Society of Precision Agriculture Australia was on hand to talk about the use of digital agriculture and automation technology in fertiliser management.

The day also looked into the use of remote and proximal sensing technologies to support precision ag systems and potentially improve nitrogen use efficiency.

“This provided a new and interesting aspect to our annual conference and was well received with more than 60 people visiting the field day site to consider the latest in fertiliser specific machinery for their businesses,” said Mr Kraak.

“We hope everyone enjoyed the conference and gained some new insights they can use in their fertiliser businesses for future success.”



Generations of women in fertiliser attended Fertilizer 2018 from the Wyer family, including Patsy Wyer and her granddaughter Jackie Wyer.



The latest soil testing equipment was on display at the fertiliser machinery field day.



# RURAL COMMODITIES WRAP

SEPTEMBER 2018

### KEY POINTS

Agricultural prices and production continues to be very region and commodity specific. While most of New South Wales and parts of Queensland are in severe drought, the wheatbelt of Western Australia looks on track for a good season, notwithstanding widespread late frosts. Conditions in Victoria and South Australia are varied, although a dry spring and late frosts will be a challenge and cutting for hay is ramping up.

Livestock is mixed, with lamb receding somewhat from dizzying highs but cattle back above 500c, although this could be brief given the outlook.

### PRICE UPDATE

The NAB Rural Commodities Index was up 0.7% in August, with grain, lamb and wool prices on the rise, but cattle and dairy lower. Continued drought conditions in the east is likely to see elevated grain prices but lower cattle prices.

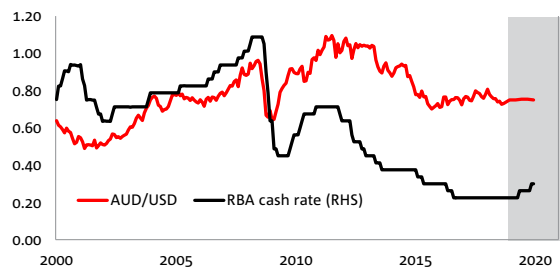
This month, grain prices have continued to surge, with ASX wheat futures reaching a record \$450/t last week. Meanwhile, cattle prices have been resilient – back above 500c – but lamb is back below 800c.

### MONTHLY PRICE CHANGES

AUD Prices

	June	July	August
Wheat	▲ 1.2%	▲ 3.3%	▲ 5.9%
Beef	▼ 0.4%	▲ 4.0%	▼ 6.9%
Dairy	▼ 2.2%	▼ 5.7%	▼ 2.6%
Lamb	▲ 8.0%	▲ 13.9%	▲ 8.0%
Wool	▲ 6.3%	▼ 2.2%	▲ 2.4%
Sugar	▲ 2.2%	▼ 6.2%	▼ 5.5%
Cotton	▲ 3.8%	▼ 0.2%	▼ 0.9%

### EXCHANGE AND INTEREST RATES INC. QUARTERLY FORECASTS



### NAB FX STRATEGY TARGETS

	2018Q4	2019Q1	2019Q2	2019Q3
AUD/USD	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75
NZD/USD	0.68	0.68	0.69	0.69
USD/JPY	110	108	106	104
EUR/USD	1.18	1.22	1.22	1.25
USD/CNY	6.75	6.70	6.65	6.50

Source: NAB

The Bureau of Meteorology remains on El Nino watch – pointing to a 50% chance of El Nino developing in 2018. The three month outlook is generally drier than average.

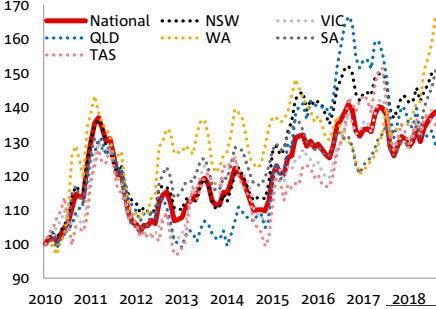
The NAB Rural Commodities Index was up 0.7% in August, with grain, lamb and wool prices on the rise, but cattle and dairy lower. Continued drought conditions in the east is likely to see elevated grain prices but lower cattle prices.

On a state-by-state basis, grain-dependent Western Australia saw (unsurprisingly) the biggest gains, up 5.2%. Queensland was the weakest performer, down 3.1%. New South Wales was up 0.2%, Victoria up 0.6%, South Australia up 3.4% and Tasmania was down 0.1%.

The index tracks 28 commodities weighted by the relative size of each commodity in the Australian agricultural sector.

### NAB RURAL COMMODITIES INDEX

January 2010 = 100



Source: NAB Group Economics, ABARES, Meat and Livestock Australia, Australian Pork, Ausmarket Consultants, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Bloomberg and Profarmer.

### EXCHANGE RATES AND INTEREST RATES

Our 0.75 ‘flat-line’ profile for 2019 disguises expectations for a fair amount of volatility. In truth, we’re more comfortable in thinking of the currency as now more firmly ensconced inside a 0.70-0.75 range. This is in the context of:

- 1: EM pressures which are not going to disappear even if President Trump does no more than impose tariffs on an additional \$200bn of Chinese goods at 10% (as per latest ‘source’ stories) not the previously threatened 25%).
- 2: Potential additional USD strength from the ongoing rising US interest rate environment amid very strong incoming economic data. Hence 0.75 is for now seen more as a probable ‘best case’ range top.

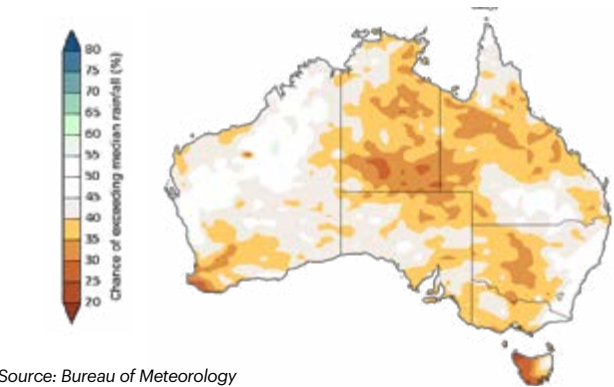
We’ll see how trade issues look to be developing in coming weeks before making a call on possible revisions to end 2018 and 2019 forecasts.

We have left out expectation for the path of monetary policy unchanged, though as in previous months, we recognise the risk that this could well be delayed. While growth has been quite strong and the labour market generally healthy, the unemployment rate until recently has remained at around 5.5% - around 0.5% above most current estimates of full employment. This has seen only a slight pick-up in wage growth and inflation to date, with the former well below the 3.5% seen as necessary for inflation in the middle of the band and the latter at the bottom of the band itself. Further, the release of Q2 national accounts confirmed that inflation pressures according to the broader national accounts measures of price inflations – the domestic final demand and consumption deflators – suggest continued meek outcomes.

### SEASONAL CONDITIONS

#### THREE MONTH RAINFALL OUTLOOK

October to December 2018



Source: Bureau of Meteorology

The Bureau of Meteorology’s latest three month is crook indeed, with almost the whole country less likely than average to exceed average rainfall, a familiar picture this year. Western Australia is likely to see a dry finish, while east coast crops that could go either way after a dry winter and frost damage won’t be helped by the outlook.

The Bureau of Meteorology’s ENSO outlook remains on El Niño watch, which means there is a roughly 50% chance of El Niño developing in spring this year. While the impacts of El Niño are varied, the phenomenon is generally associated with hotter and drier conditions in eastern and northern Australia.

### OUTLOOK FOR PRICES AND PRODUCTION

#### Prices

Dry weather continues to be the major driver of elevated grain prices, amid low eastern Australian stockpiles and no new supply on the horizon until late this year at the earliest. The dry conditions are likely to dampen cattle prices further if the latest Bureau of Meteorology outlook is borne out. Wool has reached incredible levels and these may prove difficult to sustain, although prices are likely to be elevated for some time.

US-China trade tensions have once again resurfaced, although it is too early to assess the full impact for agriculture.

#### Production

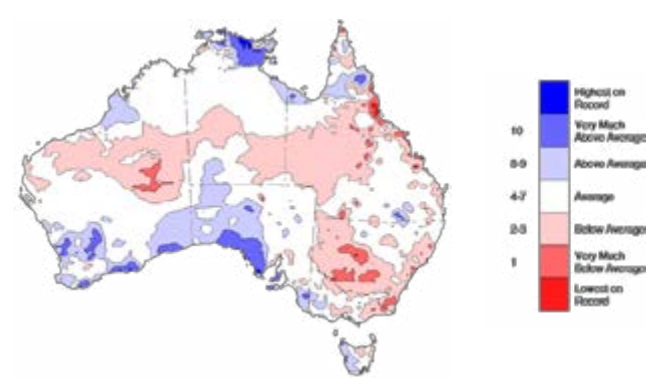
We have again lowered our forecast for Australian wheat production this season (to 18.1 million tonnes), although on a state basis Western Australia should still see above average yields, notwithstanding recent frosts. Conditions in New South Wales and Queensland are very poor and we don’t expect much in way of a winter crop from these areas. An emerging issue is whether these areas can expect much sorghum, unless conditions improve.

ABARES’ latest forecasts for cotton point to a big drop in 2018-19, reflecting lower irrigation dam levels. ABARES now also sees wool production declining this year.

NAB Group Economics, ABARES, Meat and Livestock Australia, Australian Pork, Ausmarket Consultants, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Bloomberg and Profarmer

#### RAINFALL – AUGUST 2018

Deciles

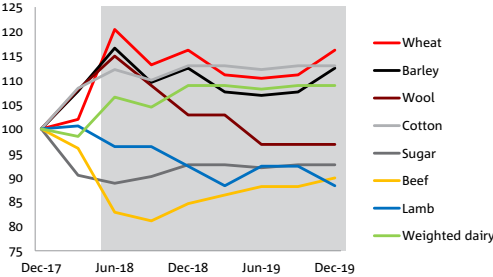


The outlook follows a dry August in the east, but better conditions in Western Australia and parts of South Australia. More recently, parts of northern New South Wales and southern Queensland enjoyed some good falls, but there has been no follow up and September to date averages are well below average. Furthermore, most of the rain fell in areas where the winter crop had essentially been written off, suggesting limited upside for grain yields.

Frost activity has been a big concern west and east, and is and will likely see a bigger share of winter cereal crop cut for hay.

### INDEX OF PRICE FORECASTS FOR RURAL COMMODITIES

AUD index value, December quarter 2017 = 100



### ABARES PRODUCTION OUTLOOK (SEPT 2018) EXCEPT WHEAT

Financial year production estimates, Australia

	2016-17	2017-18	% change
Wheat (million tonnes)	34.4	21.2	▼ 38.2%
Beef (kt)	2,069	2,227	▲ 7.6%
Dairy (milk, ML)	9,015	9,250	▲ 2.6%
Lamb and mutton (kt)	669	710	▲ 6.1%
Wool	414	424	▲ 2.4%
Sugar (kt)	4,804	4,700	▼ 2.2%
Cotton (lint, kt)	891	995	▲ 11.7%



# CHAIRMAN'S INDUSTRY AWARD

Congratulations to Geoff and the team at Vickery Brothers for taking out the AFSA Chairman's Industry Award this year. Vickery Bros. was established in 1948 when two brothers, Alan and Jack Vickery, purchased their first truck with the aim of spreading fertiliser on the rolling hills around Coleraine, Victoria. Alan Vickery's son Geoff joined the company in 1978 as a young spreader driver. In the 1990's Geoff Vickery started expanding the company geographically and has now built a network of six fertiliser depots located in Western Victoria and South Eastern South Australia.

- Some of the outstanding qualities of Vickery Bros being recognised by this award are:
- participating in, and advocating for the Fertcare/Accu-Spread program
  - willingness to train and educate staff
  - long term supporters and members of AFSA
  - Achieving a succession plan for their business
  - Being open to sharing their business practices to help others



Photo: Don Carter, Geoff Vickery and Cam Conboy at the Victorian AGM

# NICK DREW HONoured FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE FERTILIZER INDUSTRY

Nick Drew has been at the helm of Fertilizer Australia since 2002. He has skilfully steered the organisation through a range of challenges facing the industry and positioned it well for future policy engagement. Mr Drew will resign from the role at the end of the year and has been honoured by colleagues for his commitment to excellence and professionalism at the Fertilizer 2018 Conference Dinner held recently in Canberra. Fertilizer Australian Chairman Jim Mole outlined Mr Drew's achievements and presented him with a gift on behalf of the industry. "Mr Drew has overseen the implementation of a number of initiatives that have supported the responsible contribution of the fertilizer industry to the sustainable growth of Australian agriculture," he said. "Two prime examples include Fertcare® and protocols for managing quarantine risk for fertilizer imports." With a 34-year professional career in agriculture, Mr Drew worked in commercial cotton production, agricultural research and extension in the public sector and in various positions in the fertilizer industry before taking on the role of Executive Manager with Fertilizer Australia. In 2003, Mr Drew spearheaded a submission to the Great Barrier Reef Draft Water Quality Protection Plan which initiated a higher level of industry engagement in the process that continues to this day. Mr Drew has made a significant contribution to the implementation and refinement of the industry stewardship program, Fertcare, which was initiated by the Australian Fertiliser Services Association (AFSA) with the support of Natural Heritage Trust funding. Commenting on the

further development of Fertcare, Mr Donald Carter, Director of Laharum Bulk Handling and former National Chairman of AFSA said, "Mr Drew played an important role in helping to refine and implement the Fertcare joint venture arrangements between the AFSA and Fertilizer Australia." Fertcare played a critical role in assisting then WA Environment Minister Mark McGowan to rewrite a ban on the use of water soluble fertilizers in the state. Agri-Access Australia principal and former Fertilizer Australia Board Chairman Peter McEwen worked closely with Mr Drew in his early years as Executive Manager and praised Mr Drew's long-list of achievements in the role, including the development of a purchasing COP following the import of highly-contaminated zinc sulphate. "This issue also kicked off a long, slow process to work toward uniformity in state fertilizer regulation," he said. "Nick has been an outstanding contributor to the industry through his work as leader of Fertilizer Australia." Former Agrow Australia Managing Director and Fertilizer Australia Board member John Lewis said Mr Drew's successful handling of agreements around import requirements for fertilizer following the Karnal Bunt wheat disease outbreaks in the US was "a great testament" to Mr Drew. "Ground breaking agreements were worked out between the industry, our suppliers and the Australian Government which can be directly attributed to Nick's professionalism, tenacity and dedication to get the job done," he said.

"Had it not been for Nick's behind-the-scenes work and guidance to members, we would not be in remarkably close relationship with the federal government departments and enjoying a contamination-free supply for many years." KIP Consultancy Services Principal Consultant Dr Ken Peverill said Mr Drew's commitment to staying abreast of technical advancements had "lead to invaluable and lasting linkages between researchers and fertilizer agronomists." "His role in facilitating the planning, strategy and operational aspects of key national projects has left a lasting legacy for the transition and adoption of information and knowledge to agribusiness throughout Australia, particularly to the fertilizer industry," he said. Speaking on behalf of the industry at the Conference Dinner, Mr Mole thanked Mr Drew for the significant contribution he has made to the fertilizer industry over many years and wished him all the best for the future.



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- Uniform, quick drying coating to granular fertiliser.
- Enhanced dust suppression of the coated granular fertiliser.
- Ready to use liquid suspension that is easy to measure and apply.
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- Glaze **Copper**, Glaze **Zinc**, Glaze **Boron**, Glaze **Moly**, Glaze **Multi**

### Dust Control and Adhesion Coatings

- Glaze DS, Glaze Anchor

Glaze results in even distribution of micronutrients



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