

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. Review horti spray programs.
2. Stay ahead of weeds in spring.
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4. Plan the drenching strategy.
5. Manage livestock nutrition.

**On July 30, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) published its proposed decisions on the reconsideration of paraquat and diquat.** The proposed removal of higher rates of use are concerning and further compound the flexibility and practical options available to Australian farmers. Non-agricultural situations, including around sheds, roadways, paths and firebreaks are also to be removed along with registrations in orchards, vineyards and pasture, including spray topping for prevention of annual ryegrass toxicity.

**We encourage all clients to log in via the AVPMA web site and complete the Public Consultation Document – [Paraquat Public Consultation Document](#) before the 28<sup>th</sup> of October 2024**



Unfortunately, regular rain fronts have continued to slide south before they enter our state and the western districts of Victoria. As we head into September, all cropping regions are well and truly on a knife edge! At this time it appears that some of our winter crop areas are likely to fail but with rain this situation may turn where marginal moisture is still present.

A couple weeks back we hosted a bus load of students from the Adelaide University. There were around 50 final year students, all hoping to ultimately begin their careers in a job associated with agriculture. Agriculture encompasses a very wide scope when employment in ag is considered. Work includes everything from on farm primary production and associated support services through to laboratory research, media and marketing. I was a little surprised that only a handful of those students on the visit actually had a job sorted for next year.

Despite this, I believe there are plenty of opportunities available and most of this year's graduates will find a position in the months ahead. The current year has obviously been challenging from a farming perspective and might also lead to some of our rural community discouraging younger family members to pursue an ag career. Climate variability is always going to challenge our cropping systems and anti-livestock and farming lobbyist groups will continue to pressure consumers and governments around the world. This situation is exactly why agriculture needs good young people to be involved - the world's population needs to be fed! Automation and robotics, bio-tech and seed traits are all exciting areas in agri research. Australia's farmers have always been leaders in innovation and change. Massive changes have occurred in our lifetime, there is little doubt that this will continue into the future. We need bright, enthusiastic young people to be involved in agriculture!

**Greg Schubert**

## Quote of the Month

“You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself any direction you choose.”

- Dr. Seuss

## Viticulture

**Under vine weed control** has been a focus over the last few weeks with more conducive spraying conditions after the run of frosts in August. Glyphosate resistant ryegrass continues to be a challenge in vineyards with evidence of many surviving plants across all regions. Paraquat can be applied within 10 days of the initial glyphosate spray to clean up any surviving weeds. This “double knock” system will provide robust control on all weed species.

Residual herbicides should also be included in weed management plans and can be applied once a good knock down has reduced coverage on the soil surface beneath the vine rows. They also offer a rotation of actives away from the common knockdown glyphosate and paraquat actives.

Residual herbicides will remain active on the soil surface, eradicating additional spring germinations as well as negating later season summer weed challenges too.

There are a range of traditional residual options (ie; pendimethalin) as well as more robust products such as Chateau from Sumitomo and more recently Alion from Bayer which will provide up to 10months weed control. Contact one of our viti agro's, they can assist with additional herbicide more relevant to your situation.

**Budburst is evident** across most vineyards, spurred on by the recent run of warm and windy days.

The general consensus estimates the season might be a couple weeks earlier than average – question is: what is average?? As a result, fungicides will be sprayed in vineyards earlier ...cont page 2



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## Seasonal reminders

- Clean up the weeds around the farm yard with a new Croplands ute pack or back pack sprayer.
- Use Ficam or Coopex to thwart the spring invasion of earwigs, millipedes, spiders, flies and other nuisance pests around the house.
- Strip graze summer crops with Gallagher Electric fence systems.

- Trellis posts are readily available in most sizes – call for all quotes and orders to ensure availability.
- Check out on farm water systems before the hot weather begins in earnest – tanks, troughs, poly pipe and fittings always in stock.
- Get a pedal step feeder to stop the rats, mice and spoggies from eating the chook feed before the chooks do!

- Rev up the garden and lawn this spring with one of the tailored Neutrog organic products - Sudden Impact, Rapid Raiser, Seamungus, Popul8 and Who Flung Dung etc all in stock at FJs.
- Return all Chep pallets, 1000ltr shuttles and 110ltr Enviro's ASAP. We are looking for any empty non returnable fert and glyph shuttles.

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from page 1... than last season. There is still time to review the fungicide program especially if any problems were identified after the large rain event in February and also to include new actives during the 24/25 season. Just as we do for our herbicide programs, it is also important to rotate the fungicide actives to reduce the impact of disease resistance in viticulture. A couple new products that should be considered are Seeker Duo from Syngenta for Powdery control and Verpixo Adavelt for protection against Powdery and Botrytis in grapevines. The BOM are still talking above average spring rainfall despite the current dry spell. Without being too bullish, we encourage all growers to be prepared for a wetter October and November over average. It is always easier to prevent disease infection than cure infections!

**Spray units should also undergo a pre-season health check** to make sure they are operating efficiently - e.g. nozzles, flow meters, filters and pumps etc. They should also be subject to a calibration check to ensure both applied chemical and water rates are accurate and coverage is adequately achieved for reliable disease control. Water sensitive paper or Surround are good tools to use for this initial season check. Calibrations should be ongoing over the course of the season to account for increases in the canopy size and density.

Please contact one of our viti agro's as soon as possible if you still need to review your spray program and for assistance with sprayer calibration.

Early nutrition with products such as Easy-N, Flow Phos, FJ Ca-Nitrate, Aqua-Cal and BudFeed liquid fertilisers have been on the move prior to budburst. Applications will continue during the early growth stages and also include specific elements such as ZM to maximise fruit set and early fruit development.

Petiole and tissue testing is the best way to accurately determine what vines require over the season and prepare a nutrition plan to overcome any deficiencies. Tissue tests are a useful tool if used in conjunction with soil testing as well.

**SWA required soil testing requests are on the rise.** SWA certification includes a Level C test and a general soil test to tick off submission requirements. FJs can assist growers with both the soil testing and other block information included in the certification process. Please contact any of our viti agro's for help with SWA accreditations.

A final consideration to note if sheep are grazed in vineyards over the dormant winter period. There are strict livestock grazing WHP in place to protect local consumption and for our very important meat export markets.

Care should be taken in adhering to any labelled grazing WHP on both herbicide and fungicides.

Please contact the FJs team to speak in further detail on these or any other viticultural related matter.

**Biolchim Australia** has been successfully working with Folicist, a bio stimulant to improve flowering and fruit set in wine grapes for several years now. When applied at woolly bud stage, Folicist results in more uniform shoot growth, shoot length and a reduction in apical dominance.

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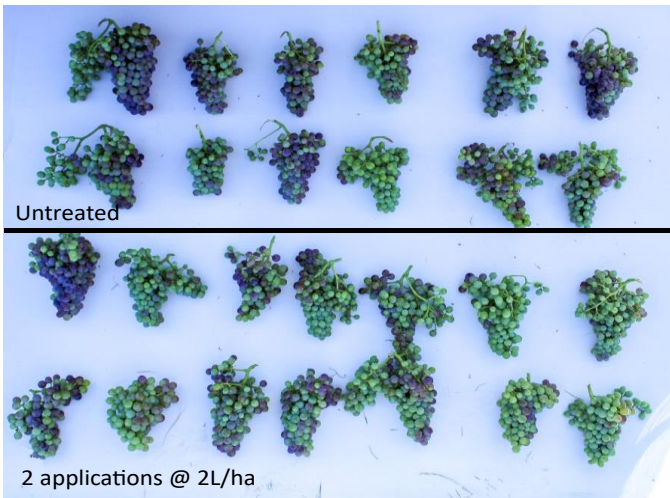


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During the 2023-2024 growing season a collaborative trial between **UPL Australia** and **Farmer Johns** was conducted in Grenache in the Nuriootpa area using **BM START**<sup>®</sup>, a Biosolution that combines UPL's unique **GOACTIV**<sup>®</sup> filtrate, N, M, S, B and Mo applied at three key timings (EL 13-15, EL 19 & EL 25-27) over the flowering period. Despite this trial only receiving two out of the three recommended applications, the trial revealed improvement compared to the untreated control. Outstandingly, applications of **BM START**<sup>®</sup> led to a reduction in variability across bunches in the treated area compared to untreated. This consistency in grape bunches is a game-changer, enabling more predictable and reliable results for growers year after year. The impact on bunch structure and weights was equally impressive. **BM START**<sup>®</sup>'s formulation helped to enhance the uniformity and density of grape clusters, resulting in improved bunch structures and increased bunch weights.



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\* Free product is the equivalent size of the product purchased and will be distributed by the participating rural retailer / agent. Eligible purchase period 1 July 2024 – 30 September 2024.

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### Citrus & Orchards

The citrus harvest continues to progress well with Lanes Late and Midnight Valencia crops coming off in the weeks ahead. **Liquid nutrition applications** are being applied to harvested blocks and additional supplementary fertilisers and soil ameliorants spread to satisfy soil deficiencies identified through testing samples. The new Utrisha-N product from Corteva may also be worth including in the foliar applied nutrition program, ideally over the early vegetative flush during September. Please call any of the FJs team to discuss nutrition applications specific to your block. It isn't too late to undertake soil testing on underperforming blocks, we can take soil and tissue samples if time is limited over harvest. Some **insect pests have become more active** over recent weeks including Earwigs. Earwigs can be particularly destructive in younger trees and new plantations. Check in with our team if pest damage or other canopy issues are evident in your blocks. **FJs monitoring services** for the 24/25 season will begin later in September. Please contact either Shaun at Ramco or Mete Gunhan 0458 297 946, if you wish to have another "set of eyes" in your blocks this season. **On Farm Connectivity Round 2 Grant** submissions close at the end of September. These grants are available for capital items such as weather stations and moisture monitoring systems (ie CropX/Green Brain). Our staff can also assist with supply and installation on these units as well as ongoing monitoring and interpreting the subsequent information to improve efficiencies in your productions system.

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## Broadacre

SARDI Cereal Pathology have received **reports of Wheat Stripe Rust across the state** over during the last couple weeks, including outbreaks in the Lower North, Upper Yorke Peninsula, Upper Eyre Peninsula, Mallee and South East. These outbreaks of Stripe Rust are being reported later this season than in the previous two years, so the risk of the disease becoming a serious issue is much lower. Stripe Rust thrives at 8° to 15°C in damp and wet conditions. Obviously, weather conditions deeper into September will determine the rate of disease spread in our local crops.

Our agronomy team have identified some outbreaks in our local Barossa region.

The following susceptible varieties are most likely to show infections should favourable conditions persist.

- Calibre
- Rockstar
- Dozer CL Plus
- DS Bennet
- SVS variety Sherriff CL Plus
- MSS variety Scepter.

Ensure crops are thoroughly monitored for Stripe Rust and implement an appropriate fungicide regime where necessary.

Please contact any of the FJs agro's for further assistance relevant to your situation.

**Insect pest activity will increase** over the warmer days of spring including aphids, Army Worm and Heliothis. Cow Pea aphids can quickly develop to damaging numbers in vetch, Faba beans and lentils. These crops should be checked on a regular basis during the spring period and treated if pests exceed threshold levels.

Army Worm is evident in a number of cereal crops across our region. Damage from Army Worm is easily identified with chunks taken from the edge of the leaf. If left untreated, Army Worm populations can build in numbers resulting in a significant economic loss.

Our agro's are able to assist in pest identification and crop monitoring during this critical period.

**Despite the drier than ideal conditions, crops are quickly moving through their growth stages.** Cereals may in fact be more advanced than they appear "over the fence". Hormone herbicides such as Amicide Advance 700 or Polo 570 LVE applied past booting (GS43) is not recommended and may result in yield loss. **Ensure cereal crops are checked to determine their actual growth stage prior to applying any Group 4 herbicides** over the remainder of the season.

Summer horticulture crops are a couple weeks ahead of "normal". A number of broadacre actives have restricted use over spring as they can seriously impact susceptible summer crops. Any broadleaf weed herbicide applications going forward will have to consider summer horticulture crops that may be susceptible to drift or damage from inversion risks.

Contact our agro's to discuss your individual situation and to identify the products within this portfolio.

Recent conditions have prompted some weed species to rapidly mature. While all paddock cover has been considered as valuable feed over the tough winter season some **weeds need to be cleaned up before they set seed**.

Barley & Broome Grass should be hay frozen on time every season to at least minimise carry over populations but ideally eliminate these stands going forward. Hay freezing problem grasses preserves their dry matter bulk just as would take place by cutting for hay. Nutrients are also preserved within the plant allowing paddocks to remain as a viable grazing option over the months ahead – at least as long as this supply of "standing hay" is available for stock. Unfortunately, given our season there are also sown cereal crops across all of Southern Australia that might provide the best return on investment by being hay frozen as well.

Our agronomy team can offer their experience and advice in the assessment of these questionable crops. They are always available to assist with all other broadacre crop related matters.

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**Pasture**

Spring treatments of Red Legged Earth mite are the most beneficial in reducing the populations of these voracious pests and preventing damaging hatchings at the break of the season next autumn. The **Timerite** date calculator will determine the most appropriate date based on the actual paddock location.



Prior to spraying ensure populations of pests are actually present. Paddocks that will be sown with a sub clover-based pasture, legume or canola next season should be prioritised for treatment. Any paddocks that have higher populations of broad leaf weeds ie: Capeweed, are also likely to host higher RLEM populations. **Based on the poor winter and dry spring year to date, hay cuts will be well below earlier expectations. Summer fodder options** could be considered as a more important opportunity to fill the looming feed void over the summer months. Many clients within our service areas are already planning to utilise any rainfall events over the coming months to grow an opportunistic spring/summer **dryland** fodder crop. Given the continued bullish spring rainfall forecast from the BOM, it is quite likely our region will cop some late spring rains (to rub a bit of salt into our winter crop wounds!) The resulting forage stands can ultimately be grazed, hay freezed or cut for hay or silage production.

Summer forage crops can go a long way in assisting to meet livestock fodder requirements on the farm.

**Sorghum** has been a traditional long-term summer forage favourite. Sown at low rates after a reasonable rain event it will produce good volumes of fodder. In addition, "winter active" varieties can even be established on rainfall events during February or March and grow into the autumn and early winter months.

**Although certainly** not widely used previously in our region there are a number of forage options within the Clearfield Technology space. These varieties would be ideal to sow into paddocks that have had a recent winter application of an IMI herbicide.

Livestock producers that have **irrigation available routinely supplement fodder production** over the warmer months. This year will be no exception and is certainly the season to maximise returns by selecting the most productive options available. Any feed produced surplus to that required on the farm will be easily sold on as fodder demand will remain strong.

There have been a number of new improved forage options released over recent years. The FJs team have produced a localised flyer - **FJ's Summer Production Guide** - with information relevant to the region that we service. Please ask for a copy of the guide next time you are visiting one of our stores. As always, our agro team are available to assist you in developing a productive summer fodder program suited to your individual requirements, please do not hesitate in requesting a visit to have an on-farm chat and paddock inspection.

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## Animal Production & General Merchandise

**Sheep worm burdens** have been under scrutiny over the last few weeks. Recent tests that have been undertaken have indicated a broad range of internal parasite activity from extremely high to moderate and even low populations. It might be prudent to take faecal samples while sheep are mustered for crutching and shearing. Taking samples at this time doesn't add any additional pressure to the work load and is a quick & painless exercise. A subsequent "plan of attack" can be determined once these test results have been reviewed. Results are generally returned within the week with additional investigation available if parasite populations are determined to be extreme. If worm populations in fact extreme, a further step may include culturing eggs to hatching. Species identification can then be made, in turn allowing an even more targeted worm management plan. The FJs team can assist in collecting and mailing samples and then analysing and recommending an appropriate drench plan.

**Vaccinations on spring lambing ewes** should be in hand. Annual boosters should be given to ewe's 4-8 weeks pre lambing (ie crutching time). Lambs receive initial immunity from their mothers as a result of the pre-lambing vaccination. Lambs should be given their first primer shots at marking and then the booster at weaning, providing a sound base for lifelong protection provided they then get their annual booster shot. We have stocks of Glanvac and GlanEry in our stores as well as suitable products for cattle.

The **shearing season** has kicked off a bit more earnestly over the last few weeks. We have a wide range of shed requisites and shearing gear to assist with your wool harvest. Give our stores a call with your shearing shed shopping list.

Robust lice control should also be a focus over the shearing season as we regularly field enquiries about lice outbreaks across all regions. There are a range of very effective products available including Viper and Extinosad from Elanco. These pour-on products are easy to apply post shearing. The shearing muster also ensures a full property muster of all sheep and therefore the best opportunity to treat all sheep without compromise. Off shears lice control is also more economical than trying to manage lice in long wool situations.

Please check in with our team and discuss the best option for your flock this season.

**Most farms have a few chooks running around the yard.** They are generally taken for granted and might only get a feed of screenings or other similar down-graded grain for their base diet. However, this grain and other forage they might find around the farm yard probably won't meet their nutritional requirement. Just as we bang on about supplementing sheep and cattle to improve their performance, a reliable source of additional nutrient should be provided for laying chooks.

It is well known that chickens achieve very high feed conversion. In order to grow chickens into a healthy, productive flock it is very important to satisfy their nutritional requirements from hatching and then through the weeks as they grow from chickens to the pullet stage and then on to becoming productive laying birds. We have a full range of products available for all these phases of growth and recommend products such as Red Hen from Laucke as an ideal adult layer feed to maximise home grown egg production.

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### Farmer Johns

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#### General Sales for Blyth

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### Murray Bridge

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### Nuriootpa

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