

BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Newsflash – 19/6/09

This Newsflash email is funded by [Australian Wool Innovation](#) and [Department of Primary Industries](#).

The Annual FEWETURE Farming Conference was a great success with over 200 people attending - if you missed out this year don't miss next year's conference.

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[Growing More Grass - Opportunities Using Nitrogen and Giberellic Acid](#)

BWBL Next Phone Seminar - Monday 22nd June at 1.00pm

In order to grow the most grass in the season we get, nitrogen fertiliser can be a cost effective option if applied correctly. Gibberellic acid has been around for a while now, but there is less good response information to help decide where and when it may have a place. This BWBL phone conference will look at the time, place and opportunities for nitrogen and/or gibberellic acid in different environments. Tim Ekberg, consultant at Milawa, has experience in the use of nitrogen in dryland grazing and has been involved in a PIRD on this in North East Victoria. Peter Notman is a dairy farmer at Poowong and runs a seed business. He has run a number of replicated trials using gibberellic acid around Victoria as well as on his farm at Walcha, and will discuss his results and potential uses for this product.

To register for this phone seminar call 5355 0531 where you will receive the full details for the seminar OR send an email this weekend and the notes will be sent by return email.

[Grasslands Society Annual Conference](#)

Grasslands Society of Southern Australia Annual conference will be held at Costa Hall, Geelong on the 6th and 7th of August. There is also the option of a pre conference bus trip on the 5th of August.

- Pre Conference Options, 5th Aug - Melbourne Water Werribee Farm Tour - Young Graziers Summit, Technology, Training and Employment
- Conference 6th Aug - Session 1, PlantTech, Challenges, Changes, Choices - Session 2 Business and Farm Systems - Bus Tours
- Conference 7th Aug - Session 3, Evergraze, Pastures for the Future - Session 4, Feeding Systems - Session 5, Opportunities and Options

Register on line at www.grasslands.org.au

[Join the Carbon Toolkits in Agriculture Network](#) - Sarah Holland Clift, FSV

A new Carbon Toolkits in Agriculture network has been formed to help farmers and farm service providers stay informed about the range of greenhouse gas accounting tools available and to share their carbon accounting experiences.

A monthly update informs the network about the latest tools and resources available as well as upcoming events and training opportunities. By joining the network, you can learn how to use the latest tools and build your knowledge in managing on-farm emissions so you can pass these skills and information on to the farmers and other farm service providers that you work with.

The loss of greenhouse gas emissions on a farm represents a significant loss of energy from the farm system. Through understanding their on-farm greenhouse emissions, farmers can start to take positive, practical action in responding to climate change, by focussing on the current 'win-wins', rather than the future 'what ifs'.

For more information or to join the network, email Sarah.Holland-Clift@dpi.vic.gov.au.

[Dr Temple Grandin - Australian Tour](#)

Renowned livestock handling expert, Dr Temple Grandin, will be talking in Melbourne at the Airport Motel, Attwood, VIC (near the airport) on July 1.

Graziers, dairy farmers, feedlot personnel and others involved in livestock handling will benefit from listening to Dr Temple Grandin.

She is recognised as a world leader in livestock handling and animal psychology and her work has transformed stockyard design and stock handling methods world wide (see her website www.grandin.com).

Dr Grandin has a Ph.D. in Animal Science and is a professor of animal sciences at Colorado State University. The second venue is the Airport Motel, Attwood, VIC (near the airport) on July 1.

Contact Jeanette Fisher on 0428 867 551 or jfisher@heifermax.com.au for further information.

[Wimmera Mallee Pipeline Workshop](#)

Farmers keen to tap into the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline's new business opportunities may find some ideas during a workshop at Grains Innovation Park in Horsham on Friday 26th June and lamb is looking to be a key ingredient on the pipeline menu.

Research over the past two years has identified several intensive industry opportunities with lamb, which already exists in the region, one of the brightest looking contenders.

Not only do many producers already have lamb husbandry skills and infrastructure on their farms, but they also have access to an established processing sector in the region.

The Department of Primary Industries' (DPI) Sheep and Wool Specialist Gary Hallam said with the strong market outlook for grain finished lamb, the Wimmera Mallee, with a reliable water supply, suitable climate and ready access to feedstuffs, is well placed to attract investment in this industry.

- Mr Hallam will be among several speakers talking about the pipeline's agricultural opportunities at the morning workshop at Grains Innovation Park.
- Grampians Wimmera Mallee (GWM) Water research and regional development manager Paul Atherton will be discussing the water savings from the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline as well as water's availability, location and accessibility.
- Dr Imogen Schwarz from Water in Drylands Collaborative Research Program (WIDCORP) will talk about the results of her study of farmer perceptions on the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline.
- DPI Value Chain Development Specialist Brian Kearns said the workshop, from 9-11:45am, would be a useful tool to anyone considering change on their farm now or into the future.

The Wimmera Mallee catchment will soon have access to a high quality, reliable, pressurised water system which will benefit those landholders who would like to maintain the status quo on their land and to those who are looking to an alternative enterprise for the future.

People wanting to register for this free forum can contact Elyse Riethmuller on 0420 934 621 by Wednesday, June 24.

[Watch Out for Nitrate Poisoning](#)

With the welcome recent rain and flush of growth comes the risk of nitrate or nitrite poisoning of livestock.

DPI District Veterinary Officer John Ryan said when an animal is poisoned by nitrate, the ability of its blood to transport oxygen is reduced and as result an affected animal will have difficulty breathing, followed by becoming weak and staggering, before collapsing and dying.

If clinical signs are noticed early enough then veterinary treatment is often very effective.

Many weeds, crops and pasture plants have been associated with nitrate poisoning. Capeweed, variegated thistle, marshmallow and pigweed are well known accumulators.

Many of the major crop plants including maize, rape, soybean, linseed, sorghum, millet, wheat, oats and barley have also been associated with nitrate poisoning.

Factors that typically lead to nitrate poisoning include the rapid uptake of nitrogen by plants following the first rains; cold, cloudy weather and frosts; use of nitrogenous fertilisers; spraying with hormone-type herbicides such as 2,4-D; and grazing hungry stock on forages that are potentially dangerous.

Cattle and sheep can tolerate a certain amount of nitrate and will adapt if given time and introduced to the feed slowly.

It is possible to prevent nitrate poisoning by ensuring cattle and sheep are not hungry when introduced to suspect forage.

For the first few grazings livestock should be pulled off after an hour or two and observed for evidence of toxicity. If this is not desirable, for example for heavily pregnant ewes, then supplementing with palatable hay or grain while leaving them on the pasture may help reduce the risk.

Be particularly careful if stock is locked in yards where the only feed is weeds such as marshmallow, which are likely to be toxic at the moment. If nitrate poisoning is suspected animals should be removed from the suspect paddock and placed onto feed containing less toxic herbage.

For further advice contact your local veterinarian or the animal health officer at DPI.

[VFF President Addresses Rural Press Club](#)

Newly elected VFF President **Andrew Broad** will address this month's Rural Press Club of Victoria lunch to be held **next Thursday, 25th June** at the Hilton on the Park.

If you are interested in attending contact Lynda Lawson directly at lalawson@tpg.com.au

For those of you interested in identifying frogs, here's great web site that includes their calls for ID www.frogs.org.au then to Victorian Frog Group then frogs of Victoria

http://frogs.org.au/frogs/state_frogs.php?state_key=64

Have a good weekend, Annette

BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Administrator