whats up...

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Pursehouse Rural Newsletter

Irrigation Management in Sorghum

There is no fixed amount of water required to obtain maximum yield in sorghum crop. Temperature, humidity, wind, soil moisture, evaporation and transpiration are all driving factors in determining yield. Water requirements will vary from season to season. Some years it can be as low as 400mm and in hotter drier environments it can exceed 800mm.

There are various ways to determine irrigation scheduling – soil moisture instruments, soil samples, growth stage of the crop. It's a good practice to use more than one of these tools, but realistically the most common method is to irrigate at a particular growth stage.

In years of limited irrigation supply, with a lack of sowing rain the pre-plant irrigation should be followed by a further irrigation at the start of booting. If rainfall is favourable at this stage, the irrigation should be delayed as to assist in carrying the crop well into grain fill.

If you should have enough water for three irrigations (pre-plant, plus a further two), the first irrigation should be scheduled prior to boot, the second a few days into flowering. Once again if significant rainfall has occurred the second watering should be delayed.

In years in which you have enough water for four irrigations (pre-plant, plus a further three) the first irrigation should be timed a week before boot, the second at boot, and the third at grain fill.

For maximum yields the available stored water should not drop below 50% in the top 60cm during boot to dough stage.

Table 1. Summary of Irrigation Management

Limited Irrigation	Full Irrigation
Irrigation Scheduling	***Irrigation Scheduling***
Vegetation Stage (6-8 leaves)	Vegetation Stage (4-6 leaves)
Pre-flowering/Late boot	Vegetation Stage (8-10 leaves)
Early grain fill	Late boot/Pre-flowering
	Early grain fill
	Mid grain fill

Source Pacific Seeds

Preventing Theft of Anhydrous Ammonia

Theft of anhydrous ammonia fertiliser for production of the illegal drug methamphetamine in Australia is inevitable and has reached alarming proportions in the USA. This powerful, highly addictive nerve stimulant can be found throughout Australia and in virtually every metropolitan area of the country. Also know as "speed", "crank", chalk" and "zip" meth can be smoked, injected, snorted or taken orally. It produces an initial "high" which is difficult if not impossible for the user to repeat on subsequent occasions. Meth is imported by drug traffickers or manufactured in small, clandestine laboratories using recipes involving precursor chemicals derived from various consumer products, including cold medicines, drain cleaners, battery acid and matches.

The problem is magnified by the ease with which these materials can be purchased in retail stores. In one common technique called the "Nazi method", lithium extracted from batteries and anhydrous ammonia are used to convert ephedrine from over-the –counter cold remedies to make methamphetamine.

Curbing the Spread

Communities everywhere are attempting to curb the spread of this dangerous substance through increased law enforcement efforts, education and addiction treatment programs.

Incitec Pivot are concerned at the devasting impact this illegal drug has on the moral fibre of our nations communities and for this reason, they are working diligently to prevent theft of anhydrous ammonia.

Actions for Farmers

Farmers can help to keep anhydrous ammonia on the land, where it belongs, by taking these simple steps: -

- Be alert. Keep an eye out for unfamiliar or suspicious persons attempting to purchase anhydrous ammonia from you or your neighbours;
- Don't leave tanks unattended for long periods of time;
- Immediately report releases to local police and/or your local Incitec Pivot presentative;
- Return tanks immediately after use;
- Do not store tanks and toolbars inside buildings, close to livestock containment areas or near the farm house;
- Inspect and record the condition of nurse tanks upon delivery, again, after use and upon return to the local Big N depot.

See next months newsletter for further advice.

BRASSICA'S FILLING THE GAP

Pursehouse Rural, Muswellbrook conducted a Brassica Trial Mix to assist in filling the feed gap between annual pastures and summer forages with the mix doing exactly want we predicted.

Pictured below is a mix of and old Lucerne Chicory Pasture, which was lightly cultivated and had 3 Trial mixes in the one paddock with Forage Sorghum/Winfred, Forage Sorghum/Leafmore and Forage Sorghum/Hunter. The paddock is just under 4ha and there is approximately 20 Days grazing using a 4m x 200m feed strip with a crop expectancy of 2-3 grazing intervals every 30-35days after recovery with 70 head of Angus and Limousin cows and calves which has filled the gap from annual winter crops to annual summer crops. The crop below is measuring 4.5T/ha in 56 Days after sowing.

Key points using Forage Brassica's

- Only feed a percentage of daily diet intake for Beef 70%, Dairy Holstein 33% and lambs 100%.
- Fertility with Nitrogen and Phosphrous.
- Grazing management between each variety.
- Sowing Depths
- Crops Maturity
- Crop Nutrition Aspects

Source PGG Brassicas and Herbs Bulletin.2006

Crop	Crude Protein (%)	Digestibility (%)	Metabolisable Energy (MJME/kgDM
Green Pasture	22	82	12
Dry Pasture	10	53	7
Forage Brassica	16	85	12
Turnips	12	88	13
Corn	8	71	10
Millet	10	65	9
Forage Sorghum	11	65	9

Erik's Humour...

- **A chicken crossing the road - poultry in motion...**
- **Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses...**

Management and Staff of Pursehouse Rural
would like to thank you for your support during the past year and
wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year

Quirindi Monthly Specials

* Coopers Magnum 20litre - $400.00 (ex GST)

* Cropcare Atrazine 500 20litre - $95.00 (ex GST)

October Weather Summary

visit http://www.pursehouserural.com.au/services/weather_station.html

Location	Average Temp (°C)	High Temp (°C)	Low Temp (°C)	Number of Days > 35°C	Rain mm	Average Wind Speed Km/h	High Wind Speed Km/h	Dominant Wind Direction
Cattle Lane, Willow Tree	20.4	39.5	3.2	6	37.8	11.9	74.0	SSE
"Murlow", Quirindi	20.4	37.6	2.8	4	34.0	10.7	74.0	SSE
"Dow Site", Breeza	21.7	39.7	4.6	8	54.0	9.9	74.0	SSE