

What's New at Browns

All systems go! Our agronomists are busy soil testing and nutrient budgeting for the year. Trucks are out spreading lime and super-potash, getting ready for the winter rain.

Melissa Burton, a senior agronomist at the Koo Wee Rup depot has returned part time after having some time off on maternity leave. Susan Venten will also be returning from maternity leave, working part time as Sales Support Officer. We look forward to having both back in action.

Topdressing for Autumn

Autumn is the ideal time to be thinking about topdressing pastures. With fertiliser prices remaining relatively low, it is a great time to capitalise and boost soil fertility. Pasture requires access to readily available nutrients prior to the autumn break to help promote strong growth heading into winter, when pasture growth naturally slows down. Phosphorus is important to promote root growth and winter hardiness to sustain high levels of production. Sulphur is not easily retained in soils, and therefore may need topping up annually. It is vital in the atmospheric nitrogen fixing process of legumes and protein building in grasses.

Super-potash can be applied without rainfall, with no concerns to animal health and is a cost effective method to boost phosphorus, potassium and sulphur. Morning dews can often provide sufficient moisture for the granule to dissolve.

Choosing the Correct Lime for your Soil

When selecting the most effective agricultural lime for your soil type there are many things to consider. Agricultural limes can vary greatly in their neutralising value (NV), calcium and magnesium content and parent material.

Make sure to compare the physical properties of liming materials. While some limes may have a similar chemical analysis, particle size and softness can make a large difference in reaction time. Some limes are mined from fossilised coral and others from limestone, both are calcium carbonate based but coral lime will dissolve a lot quicker in soil.

When correcting pH on lighter textured soils it could be beneficial to apply a dolomitic lime with high magnesium content. Magnesium is easily leached from sandy soils and also plays a role in soil strength and structure. Soil testing will determine if dolomitic lime is suitable for your soil.

When applying lime to soils with a pH below 5.8 (water test), lime is readily soluble and will correct pH as well as act as gypsum by supplying calcium. Once pH rises above 5.8, gypsum is the best source of calcium if calcium deficiency or sodicity remains an issue.



Koo Wee Rup

150 Sybella Avenue

Koo Wee Rup

Ph: 03 5997 2203

Leongatha

96-102 Horn St

Leongatha

Ph: 5667 300

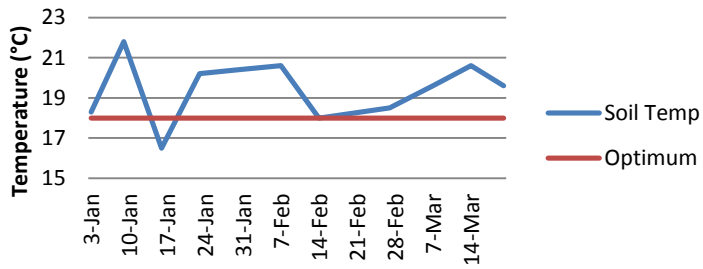
Maffra

620 Heyfield Upper Maffra Ra

Tinamba West

Ph: 0400 868 376

Leongath Soil Temperature (January - March)



Understanding soil temperature

Ryegrass growth rates are highest when soil temperatures are around 18°C. Although rye grass will continue to grow at soil temperatures as low as 4°C growth rates will decrease dramatically.

Soil temperature plays a large role in seed germination and therefore sowing times.

Weed Profile: Capeweed (*Arctotheca calendula*)

Capeweed germinates in autumn and flowers in late winter/early spring. Capeweed will encroach on bare patches and can grow almost anywhere, but is most commonly seen in disturbed areas with high phosphorus, such as stock camps, around troughs and in gateways. Capeweed will taint milk in dairy cattle and can also accumulate high levels of nitrates, causing animal health issues. Accumulation of nitrates is caused by the plant not converting the nitrates into proteins, hence moisture stress, cloudy days and short day length are big factors. Using nitrogen based fertilisers will also increase the build-up of nitrates in the plants and should be avoided for capeweed dense pasture.

Capeweed is easily spread via its seeds, which can survive in the guts of some animals. It will rapidly invade overgrazed pastures and will take advantage of the access to sunlight after heavy grazing of a paddock, shading surrounding plants.

Getting on top of capeweed in its early stages (2-4 leaf stage) is important as it will save both time and money, as less chemical will be required for a small actively growing plant, compared to that of a mature plant. Using an MCPA based product such as Tigrex® on newly established pastures will be effective in removing much of the capeweed burden, allowing new plants to thrive. Broadstrike™ plus Bromoxynil would be ideal for new pastures containing clovers, as this will not harm the clovers growth.

In established pastures, not containing legumes, a spray graze technique could be used. Any 2, 4 – D based herbicide such as, Amicide Advance 700®, sprayed around 6 weeks after the autumn rains will be effective. Stock should then be introduced 7-10 days after spraying and paddock grazed heavily.

****Important: Always refer to chemical labels before use****



Staff Profile – Sally Pate

Agronomist – Leongatha

Time at Brown's: 5 years

Job highlight: Her awesome customers

Claim to fame: Being able to talk to anyone willing to listen

History: Born and bred on dairy farms, milk is in her blood!



Our Team of Agronomists



Melissa Burton

B. Agr. Sci (Hons)
Dip. Agr. (Com Horticulture)
Koo Wee Rup



Laura Hammond

B. Agr. Sci
0418 783 099
Koo Wee Rup



Alexander Mapleson

B. Agr. Sci
0409 406 234
Koo Wee Rup



Ashley Burgess

B. Agr. Sci (Hons)
B. Int. Dev.
0408 082 036
Koo Wee Rup



Stu McNaughton

B.App.Sci (Ag)
0407 301 380
Leongatha



Sally Pate

B. Agr. Sci. (Hons)
0400 879 818
Leongatha



Corey Welch

Dip. Agriculture
0400 868 376
Maffra