



Welcome to our August Newsletter

We've been busy at Neutrog HQ this month. Not only have we celebrated our 30th birthday, but many of our customers have been achieving excellence and we couldn't be prouder.

In this issue:

- Happy 30th Birthday Neutrog
- International Rose Trial Garden by Dr. Uwe
- Planting and Replanting Roses by Kelvin Trimper
- Veggie Innovation: Grower of the Year National Awards
- Greenhill Living at Kindy & Schools, Inspiring the Future
- Outback Pride Fresh on Native Bush Tucker
- Orchid Passion: Edda Viskic

Please feel free to get in touch with us - we love hearing from our fellow gardening community!



Neutrog Celebrates 30 Years of Embracing the Bugs

On July 22nd 2018, Neutrog celebrated its 30th birthday – quite the feat for a company that started from humble beginnings. With this awesome milestone upon us, there's no better time to look back and reflect on what Neutrog has achieved.

When the business began in 1988, our aim was to sell directly to farmers. We had a grand vision of making a huge difference to the commercial market and dreams of being hugely successful, but things didn't start out quite according to plan.

After many years of trial and error, Neutrog has now fully established itself as a thriving biological fertiliser company. In the mid-1990's, we expanded our range to service the retail market, bringing our organic fertilisers into the gardens of homes around Australia.

With a passionate research and development unit headed by Dr Uwe Stroeher, Ph.D., we are constantly testing, trialling and developing new and existing products to provide the retail and commercial markets with a range of organic, sustainable super-fertilisers. The processes we use for composting, sourcing products, and safeguarding sustainability are all entirely unique, allowing us to uphold a premium position in the marketplace.



Today, as we celebrate our 30th birthday, the Neutrog team couldn't be happier with what we've achieved over the years. We now export our products to a number of countries and have established our retail market as the number one choice for organic biological fertilisers, dealing nationally with all garden centres and hardware chains.

The team behind Neutrog's success is proud of the way we operate. We think our products are exciting and should be celebrated, which is why our quirky names and packaging suggest fun, but underneath it all we are also very analytical, serious and scientific. Soil is rich in secrets and unearthing these secrets is a challenge and commitment that we are very passionate about.

We began this journey 30 years ago and who knows where it will end. But until such time, we'll continue to embrace the bugs and feed our curiosity... to dig, delve and uncover the secrets of bringing soil to life and life to soil.

A huge, heartfelt thanks to all our customers and supporters for helping us get to where we are today. Happy 30th birthday to us, here's to 30 more ahead!



Andy Hart, Horticultural Curator, Adelaide Botanic Gardens, spreading the dark coloured WhoFlungDung.

International Rose Trial Garden Tests WhoFlungDung

Report by Dr. Uwe Stroeher

Eight months ago at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens, approximately 500 square metres of the International Rose Trial Garden was covered with Neutrog's super mulch, [WhoFlungDung](#). Dr Uwe Stroeher worked in close consultation with Adelaide Botanic Gardens' Horticultural Curator, Andy Hart, to measure and record results. The mulch was applied in December 2017 to a depth of approximately 75mm, right next to pine bark chips in order to make an easy comparison. Even after a short amount of time the results were obvious. Andy Hart is pictured above spreading the dark coloured WhoFlungDung.

International Rose Trial Garden Before WhoFlungDung

Before WhoFlungDung was applied, the soil lacked significant levels of key nutrients, including nitrogen, potassium and several micronutrients. The original recommendation was to supplement the soil with over 60kg of nitrogen and 30 kgs of phosphate per hectare to create ideal growing conditions.



Adelaide Botanic Gardens' Horticultural Curator, Andy Hart after the 8 month Rose Garden trial. Left of Andy: weeds growing over the pine bark chips. Right of Andy: weeds suppressed by WhoFlungDung.

International Rose Trial Garden After WhoFlungDung

After the application of WhoFlungDung, the addition of nitrogen and phosphate was not required. This is likely due to a combination of the nutrients contained within WhoFlungDung and the introduction of additional microbial life into the soil.

Examination of the bacterial and fungal activity of the soil showed a two-fold increase compared to the starting activity, particularly for fungal activity which is not surprising given that WhoFlungDung contains significant levels of cellulose. The soil pH was reduced from 8.2 to 7.6, which is a remarkable reduction in soil alkalinity, especially considering that alkaline soils are particularly difficult to modify.

The level of nutrient enhancement was also remarkable, with a four-fold increase in available nitrogen and potassium and a two-fold increase in available phosphorous.

There were also significant increases in the levels of zinc, iron, manganese, molybdenum and boron.

WhoFlungDung held up well over the trial period. There was some breakdown of the material, but although applied on a slope, the material remained very stable and was not blown around by the wind or washed away by rain. It retained its natural dark brown colour, with no bleaching even after the hot, dry summer. Andy Hart noted the most remarkable effect was there were virtually no weeds growing on or through the mulch, which meant no weed control was required in this area for over eight months! Other areas that were covered with pine bark chips required frequent spraying and pulling out of weeds.



Planting Bare Rooted Roses or Shifting a Rose

By Kelvin Trimper

(Past President, World Federation of Rose Societies and Life Member of the Rose Society of SA Inc.)

Winter is the best time to plant bare rooted roses or relocate a rose in your garden.

Roses have a short dormancy period in Australia. June, July and early August is certainly the period when both planting new roses or relocating existing roses should occur. It is recommended that you plant roses in full sun and away from root competition, particularly tree roots. At a minimum, roses need at least 6 hours of full sun per day. Roses planted in shady areas will not thrive. Roses prefer a rich, loamy soil.

Planting Bare Rooted Roses

The nurseries have great stocks of bare rooted roses in June and early July. If you wait longer to purchase these roses, you may be restricted in the cultivars you can purchase as the more popular and newer cultivars will have been already bought by keen enthusiasts.

I prefer planting bare rooted roses as they quickly settle into their new homes and soils. This compares with potted roses whose potting medium may be very different to the soil profile in your garden bed. In addition, bare rooted roses are generally less expensive than potted roses.

When selecting your bare rooted rose, pick those that have a solid healthy bud union (where the rose was grafted onto the root stock producing a small, woody knob) and have not already produced strong growth (i.e. young shoots longer than 1 to 2 cms),

or show evidence of die-back (black stems starting from the tip of the stem). Once growing well, sturdy new canes will grow from this bud union area.

Once the plant is home, remove it from its plastic bag, shake off any sawdust or other product that has prevented it from drying out and soak it in a full bucket of water for at least one hour. This enables the young plant to have a good “drink” prior to planting and it also wets any roots that may have accidentally dried out in the wrapping.



While the rose is soaking, dig a square hole approximately 30cm x 30cm and 25cm (a spade) depth. To assist the new rose, place a small handful of [NeutroG Seamungus](#) in the base of the hole and cover with 2 cms of soil.

Remove the rose from the bucket of water and trim or remove any broken or damaged roots with sharp secateurs. Damaged or broken roots can result in the production of suckers (root stock) which can rapidly over-take and dominate your plant. Position your rose in the hole so that the bud union (woody knob in stem where the branches emerge) is approximately 1 to 2 cm above the natural soil level. Observe where the roots fan out from the base of the plant. At this stage, I always remove the plant label from the plant. The label's tie can quickly strangle a young plant as it rapidly grows.

Remove the plant and create a mound (an inverted cone of soil) in the base of the hole such that when you place the rose back into the hole (at the correct depth) the base of the rose stem rests on top of the mound and its roots can be “fanned out” as evenly as possible from the shank of the plant down the sides of the mound. Back fill the hole to approximately half full and fill the hole with a bucket of water. You can gently wriggle the rose to remove any air pockets around the rose roots.

Wait until the water drains away, then backfill the hole to the natural soil level. The height at which the rose is planted is very important. The bud union should be only slightly (1 to 2 cm) above the level of the soil. Finally, you can mulch the rose with a high quality product and at completion; the bud union should be resting on top of the mulch.

You should not need to irrigate the rose until mid-Spring, assuming average Winter and Spring rainfall.



Replanting or Relocation of an Existing Rose

Winter is also time to relocate an existing rose. Roses can be easily relocated up to 5 years of age, and still relocated up to 10 years of age. Roses older than 10 years are harder to relocate and unless it is a very special rose, I would generally start with a new rose.

To relocate a rose, take a sharp spade and push it down to full depth (25cm) at least 30cm from the base of the plant until you have completed a full circle of the plant.

The rose should then be able to be readily removed, with minimal leverage.

Wash all soil from the roots, trim broken or torn roots and reduce the diameter of the root growth to approximately 25cm. The top of the rose should be cut back significantly – by approximately 75% leaving 3 to 5 strong, healthy stems around 30 to 40cm in length. At this stage, I place the rose in a bucket of water for 2 to 3 hours before replanting.

Replant using the same process as for new roses.

If the above process is adopted you should have healthy, flowering roses in Spring.

Product of the Month

Our product of the month this August goes to Sudden Impact for Roses, a seriously special fertiliser carefully designed by Neutrog scientists in conjunction with the Rose Society of SA to

increase the quality, quantity
and health of roses and
other flowering and fruiting
plants.

[Read More](#)



(Photo by Andrew Beveridge/AUSVEG. Luke Samwell, Scott Samwell and Deborah Samwell)

Veggie Innovation Leads to Grower of the Year in National Awards

If you think brussels sprouts are one of the more unglamorous veggies, it may be time to re-think your opinion. One Adelaide Hills farmer is putting this nutritious superfood back on the map, and his hard work is paying off.

Last month, Scott Samwell of [Eastbrook Farms](#) took out the prestigious title of Grower of the Year at the horticultural industry's National Awards for Excellence in

Brisbane. The award is designed to celebrate an innovative grower who is outstanding across all aspects of production and actively contributing to the broader industry. Scott, who is a third generation vegetable grower for his family business, couldn't fit this description more perfectly.

Eastbrook Farms was established in 1949 and remains family run to this day. Today, the farm focuses purely on the humble brussel sprout, which has allowed the team to experiment with many different varieties. As a result of ongoing trials, Scott developed the kalette, a brand new hybrid vegetable that combines the best flavours of brussels sprouts and kale.



Eastbrook Farms' Kalettes (Photos by Andrew Beveridge/AUSVEG)

Scott's kalettes took 16 years in the making and became the first new vegetable to be developed within Australia in over a decade. This exciting new veggie was developed using traditional hybridisation techniques from seeds developed by British company, Tozer Seeds, and delivers a great taste that's less intense than traditional brussels sprouts and not as bitter as kale.

Scott was delighted by the win, and hopes this recognition will help spread the word about Eastbrook's kalettes and another new product, Red Darling Sprouts, to a wider audience. These products have already been featured on popular TV shows like MasterChef, Landline and Everyday Gourmet with Justine Schofield, and Scott hopes to keep the market growing to make all Australians aware of these delicious and versatile new veggies.

Eastbrook Farms' major focus is on cementing themselves as producers of consistently high quality, sustainable produce year in, year out. Scott said, "Reducing waste, improving production, and keeping quality consistent throughout the whole season – that's what we aim for."



School & Kindergarten Food Gardens Inspiring Future Young Farmers

In this modern age, it's more important than ever to educate our children on the importance of healthy eating and sustainability. One of the most effective ways to do this is to provide kids with an understanding of where their food comes from – which is exactly what Rebecca Mumford from [Greenhill Living](#) is doing.

Greenhill Living is an organisation focused on the basic necessities of human survival. It was established by Rebecca in 2010, after she left a career in the finance industry to pursue her passion of giving back to the community. Rebecca established a popular and educational food garden at her daughter's kindergarten. It was so successful that Rebecca now travels around to various kindergartens and primary schools in South Australia teaching the origins of our food and how nature works to grow the food we eat.

Rebecca said, "These days, it's too easy to believe food comes wrapped in plastic from our supermarket shelves, therefore we don't value the cost, time, skill and effort taken by our farmers to grow it."



Greenhill Living Bush Tucker Garden

As part of the Greenhill Living Food Garden Program, Rebecca creates a food garden at the selected schools and kindergartens which she uses to educate children in conjunction with her inspiring series of books, [The Garden Gang Collection](#).

Rebecca wrote the books to introduce students to different gardening concepts, including how different seasons impact garden growth, the importance of getting the soil just right, the lifecycle of different plants and insects, and more. The contents of each book are then used to help students apply what they've learned to their food garden to keep it alive during the changing seasons of the year.

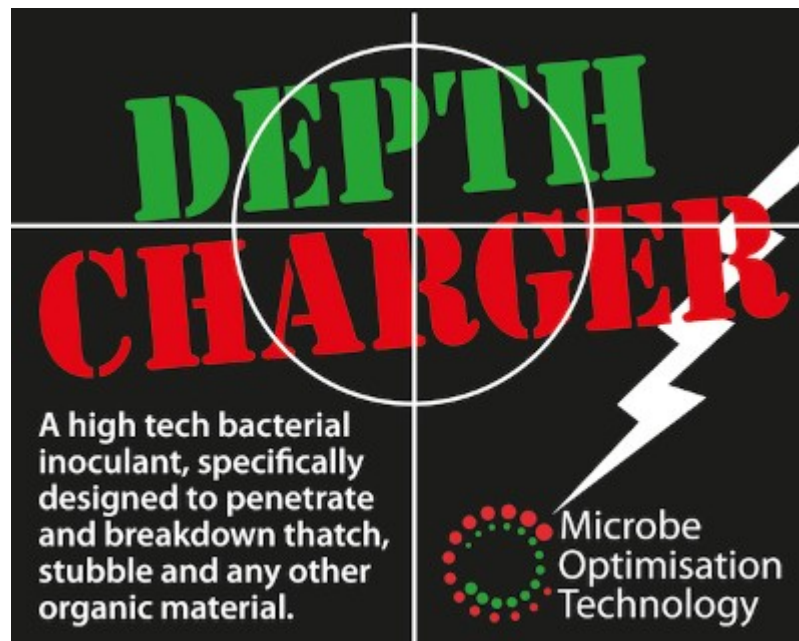
Rebecca said, "Each time I planted something in the food garden, I wanted my books to help illustrate the lifecycle of the plants, so the children understood how long the plants would take to grow and what they could expect to see in the process."

Her latest book, [Bill the Bush Tucker Boy](#), aims to raise awareness and encourage the journey to discover more about our edible Australian native food plants. It was launched at Burnside Primary in May, where a sample of the plants mentioned in the book were planted in a new Bush Tucker garden to celebrate the launch.

The inspiration for *Bill the Bush Tucker Boy* arose after many teachers showed interest in learning more about native foods. Rebecca set out on her own journey of discovery, using augmented reality to help readers understand the habit of these plants while providing some added entertainment.

Rebecca used Neutrol's [Bush Tucker](#) fertiliser when planting the garden and has seen positive results in the growth of the plants already. "In just over 2 months, the plants have grown rapidly and look very healthy. It certainly is a very healthy sample of plants from the book growing in this garden."

Rebecca is also establishing a community Bush Tucker Garden out the front of Lady George Kindergarten at Highgate, where she hopes to inspire the wider community to plant edible Australian native food plants in their own gardens. We look forward to sharing the results of the garden in our next newsletter.



New Product Currently Under Development

At Neutrog HQ, we've been busy working on a brand new product. Depth Charger is a biologically active product designed to breakdown stubble and thatch via the action of microbes. It contains a specialised cocktail of naturally occurring microbes which have been isolated and grown to breakdown fibrous cellulose material. This exciting new product is currently being trialled by our commercial growers, so stay tuned for more info in the near future!



The Aussie Couple Helping Put Native Bush Tucker in the Spotlight

If you think native Australian food is all about witchetty grubs and kangaroo, Mike and Gayle Quarmby (pictured here) from [Outback Pride Fresh](#) and [Reedy Creek Nursery](#) will quickly prove you wrong. By working closely with remote indigenous communities, this Aussie couple is pioneering modern cultivation of Australian native foods while revolutionising the Australian food industry, bringing pride and growth to disadvantaged communities.

Mike and Gayle created The Outback Pride Project in 2001, sparked from the desire to make a difference in the lives of young people. They felt the most at need were the indigenous youth on remote communities, so they combined Mike's horticultural skills and Gayle's family involvement with traditional communities to begin the development of a bush food industry.

Their journey has since been a long and fascinating one. At first, they spent a lot of time in the outback learning about the different bush food species and researching which ones held the most commercial potential. They narrowed it down to about 64 different species and figured out the best processes for propagation and cultivation, putting them to the test in various sites around South Australia and the Northern Territory. [Neutrog's Rapid Raiser](#) is regularly used to help improve the condition of the soil and boost nutrients for the growing vegetables.



Kutjera bush tomato harvesting at Clara Hart Community 100km north of Bourke NSW

What started out as a passion project has now helped contribute towards the exciting growth of a thriving bush food industry. Produce is in high demand with some of Australia's leading chefs and restaurants. Mike and Gayle now work closely with

various government departments to keep the project going, while mentoring and helping remote communities to establish their own bush food crops for consumption and commercial sale.

The bush food movement is proving that remote communities can thrive when given the resources to do so. Most importantly, it's reviving old traditions that have been lost along the way and passing them back into the local community. The communities take great pride in their involvement and achievements, with the growth of the bush food industry presenting some exciting opportunities. Not only does the sale of bush food boost money into the local economy, the foods are also incredibly rich in nutrients, which is important in towns where it's difficult to source fresh fruit and vegetables.



Mike Quarmby showing off a range of incredible native bush foods

Mike and Gayle's aim has always been to create an identifiable Australian cuisine that Australians can be proud of, while bringing pride to the culture and traditions of indigenous people. Together with the communities involved, they produce 50 tonnes of native veggie leaves every year along with several varieties of bush tomatoes and other native species, which are supplied to over 800 restaurants and top chefs.

The rising popularity of bush foods is testament to the changing attitudes of Australians, who are now starting to value locally sourced, sustainable ingredients over imported foods.

Gayle said, "There has certainly been an 'eek' factor that the native food industry has had to overcome, with misconceptions that it's all about eating witchetty grubs. Also, for many generations Australians have looked up to European influences, but now

Aussies are gradually building a sense of cultural pride. Part of this is acknowledging 'place' and food culture is a huge part of this."

Mike and Gayle encourage the wider Australian community to embrace native foods, as they are testament to the incredible land we live on. Growing native bush foods requires one tenth of the water of western produce, with less soil disturbance and greater adaptation to the unique extremes of our climate.



Passion for Orchids Sparks Global Journey for SA Resident

At 71 years young, orchid lover Edda Viskic (pictured here) has taken her passion for the exquisite species of flower and used it to inspire trips across the globe.

Edda first fell in love with orchids during a trip to Malaysia and Singapore, where she became fascinated by the uniqueness of the moth orchids. It was love at first sight, and since then Edda has travelled to exotic and faraway places including Peru, Hawaii, Ecuador, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Borneo and Madagascar, discovering one beautiful orchid after the next. Most recently Edda ventured to Yunnan, a mountain province in north-west China on the edge of the Himalayas.

Edda trekked for hours in China with a local guide, venturing to altitudes of 5000 metres before catching a glimpse of several local species, including the rare and endangered *Cypripedium margaritaceum*.

Closer to home, Edda grows hundreds of orchids on her Forest Range property in the Adelaide Hills.

“I grow orchids for their beauty and fragrance,” Edda said. “There’s an ancient Chinese wisdom that says the fragrance of orchids is like the company of good friends. It’s my passion to increase awareness of the importance of biodiversity and environmental conservation of the space we share with orchids.”



Edda in the Kunming Forestry Institute during her recent trip to China

Edda is secretary of the [Orchid Club of South Australia](#). Her role includes assisting the committee to organise monthly meetings, shows, workshops and demonstrations. She’s deeply involved with seasonal shows, including the Festival of Flowers in April, the Winter Show in July, the Royal Adelaide Show and the Orchid Club’s Spring Show in September. She writes reviews and reports of events for inclusion in the club’s monthly bulletin magazine and within the national publication, *Orchids Australia*.

The Orchid Club of South Australia proudly endorses Neutrog’s [Strike Back for Orchids](#) product, and was instrumental in the development trials and testing of its liquid form. Edda uses Strike Back for Orchids in particular when feeding epiphytic orchids that grow aerial roots.

With so many incredible and unique varieties of orchids, it may seem impossible to pick a favourite, but there’s a couple of species that have stood out to Edda.

“Over many years, my favourite, most beautiful orchid has been Vanda Sansai Blue for the deep blue-purple colour and tessellated patterns of the petals and sepals. It’s a hybrid of Wild Blue Thai Vandas that look like pieces of sky growing on mossy trunks way up in the tropical treetops. My favourite fragrant orchid is the weird and wonderful *Stanhopea tigrina* that flowers from the bottom of the plant and fills the air with a rich chocolate, vanilla exotic scent.”



Around the Garden

Our Winter Fertiliser Guide

Like humans and animals, plants require regular feeding throughout the year. Read our fertiliser guide for happy, healthy plants that are more resistant to pests, diseases, heat stress and frost.

[Read More](#)




Neutrog Radio

Listen to Dr Uwe as he dishes the dirt on gardening and soil microbiology on 2GB and FIVEaa.



Neutrog TV

Check out Neutrog's latest TV appearances and video clips.



Year round fertilising for year round health

Like humans and animals, plants require regular feeding throughout the year – at least once in each season. Happy, healthy, well nourished plants are more resistant to pests, diseases, heat stress and frost.



Our Products

Learn more about the incredible range of home gardening products available from Neutrog



Our Stockists

Find out where you can get your hands on Neutrog products