

# NEUTROG'S JULY 2019 COMMERCIAL NEWSLETTER

Wow, it's July already - the clouds have finally broken, and with that comes an increased level of confidence and an improved outlook. Since our last newsletter was sent out, we've lived through another federal election, left behind the heat of summer and enjoyed the Autumn change.

We hope you enjoy reading our newsletter. If you use Neutrog products and would like to promote your business in one of our future newsletters, please drop me a line at [marketing@neutrog.com.au](mailto:marketing@neutrog.com.au).

Regards,  
Erica Morgan  
Senior Marketing & Communications Co-Ordinator

## COMING UP

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- Research & Development - Trichoderma



Manufacturers of biological  fertilisers



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## A BIOLOGICAL APPROACH

### NEMATODES

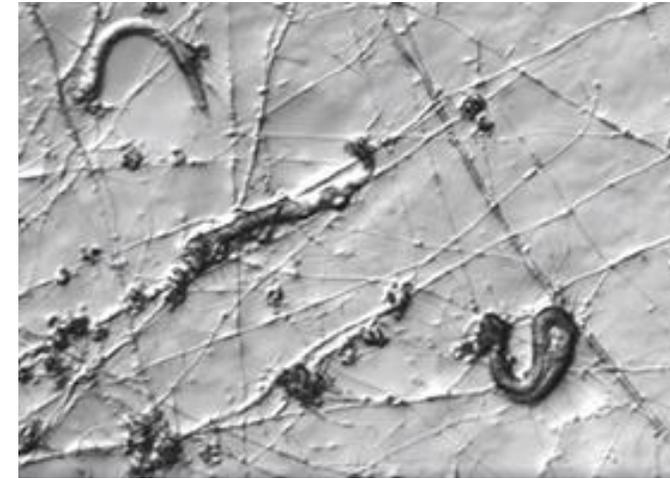


Nematode control in an agricultural and horticultural setting is an issue, so having a diverse fungal population in the soil can assist with the natural control of these pests.

There are a number of fungi which have various mechanisms by which they either kill or limit the number of nematodes. Obviously not all nematodes are problematic in the soil, however the bad nematodes (otherwise known as 'root knot' and 'pin' nematodes) can cause significant economic losses.

Some fungi will attack nematode eggs and the fungi will grow within those eggs killing the developing larvae, whilst other fungi will enter the mouth of nematodes and eat them from the inside out. Others use a system of lassos or tricky pads to entangle and trap the nematodes. The image above shows one such fungus - the thin lines represent the fungal network of hyphae which hold the nematodes in place. The sticky pads can be so strong that only a single point of connection between the nematode and fungi is necessary. The fungi then proceeds to digest the nematode growing inside its body. To fungi, the nematode is a meal of protein, and as such, is a form of nitrogen which the fungi uses for its own growth. Any excess would then be available for plants to use.

Interestingly the use of excess fertiliser high in nitrogen will cause the fungi to switch off this killing system instead, preferring to use the nitrogen provided by the fertiliser. In effect, excess use of high-nitrogen fertilisers can increase your nematode problem.



## IN THE VINEYARD

### SMIDGE WINES

After extensive vineyard development work, a few vintages and finishing an Honours Degree in Oenology at Roseworthy in the early 90's, Matt Wenk embarked on his winemaking path.

Having worked in McLaren Vale, Hunter Valley, Adelaide Hills, France and California, in mid-2002 he became the first employee as the chief winemaker at the now highly acclaimed Two Hands Wines in the Barossa Valley.



*"Over the years at Two Hands, I was extremely proud of many successes, including a distinct highlight of being the only winemaker in the world to receive 10 successive inclusions in the Wine Spectator Top 100 including entries at numbers 2, 3, 5 and 11" says Matt.*

After 11 years at Two Hands, Matt decided to hang up his boots and focus on his own small wine brand - Smidge Wines (a 5 Red Star Halliday Winery), which he also started in 2002 as a creative outlet. This allowed him to make wine that he was most passionate about.

The first release in 2002 was a single vineyard Langhorne Creek Zinfandel (a variety of black-skinned wine grape). Named 'The Tardy' in honour of Matt's reputation for keeping time (or lack thereof!) Matt made the Zinfandel just for fun but says *"Once the wine was made, people told me I should sell it because it was bloody good"* so he did, and was sold out prior to its release.

Smidge is currently leasing a small winery in McLaren Vale and owns a vineyard in Willunga which provides the grapes for all the Cabernet Sauvignon releases and some of the McLaren Vale Shiraz.

The vision is to build a modern customised facility on the Willunga property in the not-too-distant future. Exports currently extend to the UK, US, Korea and China.



*"In our vineyard, we use Seamungus organic pellets, broad-spread at a rate of 1T per hectare in conjunction with GOGO Juice at a rate of 5L per hectare via fertigation. Having the ability to retain up to 70% of its own weight in moisture, Seamungus helps retain soil moisture leading to good levels of shoot length, vine health and economic yields. In particular, it was extremely helpful during the warm, dry 2019 growing season" says Matt.*

Coupled with careful irrigation management, overall water use was nearly 30% lower than expected. In 2019, many vineyards in the district had yield reductions of up to 50-60% from long term averages across a number of varieties (It should be noted that some of this reduction was due to hail damage, although a significant amount did result from the warm season).

*"This year we were fortunate, as our Cabernet Sauvignon yield was 8% above the long term average, whereas the Shiraz was approximately 10% below the long term average. I'm confident that these solid yield levels in a challenging year largely resulted from the use of the two Neutrog products - in particular Seamungus, as it helps soil structure and soil water holding capacity, while the probiotic goodies in GOGO Juice help soil health, leading to an increase in overall vine health and consistency across the block" says Matt.*



The Smidge Wines Cellar Door is open on the second weekend of every month, so if you're in McLaren Vale, go along and taste the latest vintage and learn how wine is hand-made and barrel selected.

Bookings in advance are essential for barrel tastings, so phone Matt on (08) 8272 0369 beforehand. Smidge Wines are located at 150 Tatachilla Road in McLaren Vale.

## WHAT'S BREWING

### BROOKLYN STATION TRIAL UPDATE

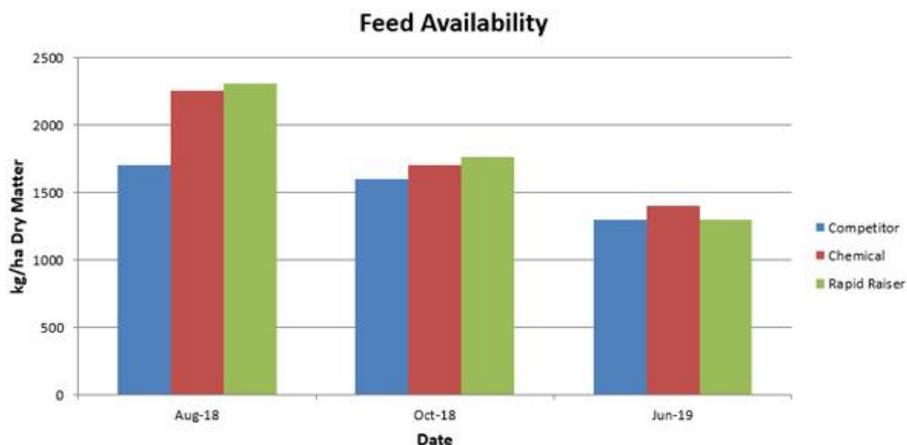
We are into the second year of our four-year pasture trial examining whether Rapid Raiser pellets are competitive on a cost-for-cost basis to chemical applications of fertilisers on sandy pasture.

The trial site encompasses a total of 30 Ha. After some good rains in May at Lucindale in the south east of South Australia, Rapid Raiser was spread at 125Kg per Ha and as a control of 4:1 super:muriate potash spread at 120kg per Ha.

A number of us visited the site recently to do a pasture assessment. As you can see by the photos, the site itself is still being actively used as a pasture - in this way the trial does not interfere with the normal operations, and also allows us to observe grazing behaviours of the animals.

On this particular day the cows seemed to have a preference to the area on which Rapid Raiser was spread - perhaps the grass does taste better on that side, or it was simply that they came to greet us as we drove in.

Analysis of both the pasture diversity and dry feed showed that Rapid Raiser is still very competitive with the application of a chemical fertiliser. Whereas in August and October of 2018, Rapid Raiser was marginally better for dry yield than the chemical and competitor's fertilisers, this was not seen in the latest survey.



*Neutrog's R&D Manager & microbiologist Dr. Uwe Stroehler and Agronomist Tim Prance.*



## AROUND THE GROUNDS

### WHOFLUNGUNG TO FLEMINGTON RACECOURSE

Flemington Racecourse recently received a B-double truckload of Whoflungung, which equates to 100 cubic metres. There's more on order too – after all, there's only so much dung that can be flung at once. Last year they trialled Whoflungung and were delighted with the results.

The horticultural team at the world-famous racecourse follow Neutrog's feeding programme using Sudden Impact for Roses, Seamungus and GOGO Juice, so their roses are very happy and very healthy. They are also really happy with Whoflungung - *"The appearance of the rose beds with Whoflungung was fantastic – it looked great and we loved the fact that it's stable and doesn't move around in the wind."*

**About Whoflungung** - Whoflungung is a biologically activated, nutrient rich, weed free, absorbent, super mulch. It's composted, inoculated with eNcase and filled with nutrients, so that when added to soil it introduces a wide diversity of beneficial bacteria. These beneficial bacteria readily proliferate through the soil, acting as a barrier/deterrent to pathogenic bacteria, providing a safe environment for healthy plant growth.



Additionally, Whoflungung is sustainable - it is a recycled waste product, made up of straw and wood shavings screened from chicken manure. In many instances Neutrog supplies the fertiliser that grows the crop from which the straw is sourced - now that is sustainability!

Most significantly, Whoflungung reduces, if not eliminates, the nitrogen draw-down which is often reflected in plants after mulch has been applied. Apart from reducing weeds, many users also happily report that blackbirds don't like it.

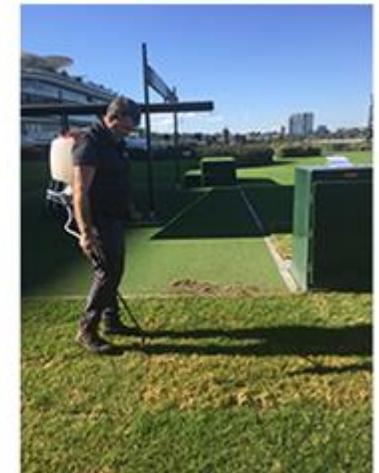
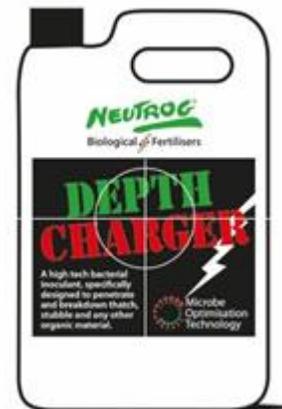


### DEPTH CHARGER TRIAL

Flemington Racecourse has also started trialling our new product 'Depth Charger'. A biologically active product, Depth Charger has been designed to break down stubble and thatch via the action of microbes.

It contains a specialised cocktail of naturally-occurring microbes which have been isolated and grown to be able to breakdown fibrous cellulose material. It also assists in surface adherence by reducing water tension.

Depth Charger will be suitable in any situation that seeks the reduction of stubble or thatch from a variety of plants including grain and canola stalks as well as in turf environments such as golf courses and turf fields where thatch reduction is desired. Applied in ideal conditions, a visible increase in thatch/stubble decomposition should be seen in between 4-6 weeks.



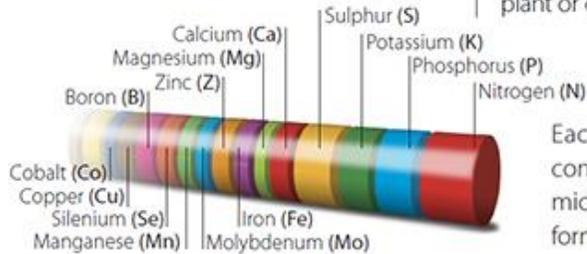
*Depth Charger being applied at Flemington Racecourse.*

# Liebig's theory

**Liebig's Law of the Minimum**, a principle developed in agricultural science, is what sits at the core of Neutrog's philosophy.

Liebig's Law states that growth is controlled not by the total amount of resources available, but by the scarcest resource or limiting factor.

This concept was originally applied to plant and crop growth, where it was found that increasing the amount of plentiful nutrients did not increase plant growth. Only by increasing the amount of the limiting nutrient (the one most scarce in relation to "need") was the growth of a plant or crop improved.



Each pellet of Neutrog Fertiliser contains a full range of macro and micro plant nutrients and its pellet form allows for uniform application.

*By using Neutrog fertiliser you reduce your risk and increase your potential by covering more bases.*

**Do you have questions about Liebig's theory? Have a chat to us today!**

## Did you know?

Neutrog can create prescription mixed products to suit your specific requirements.

Look no further when it comes to creating the right balance for your plants and soil - enquire about creating your own prescription mix today.



## OUT & ABOUT

FABEL WINES, BELVIDERE, SA

Neutrog's in-house microbiologist and R&D Manager Dr. Uwe Stroehler was asked by Landmark to speak to a group of growers at Fabel Wines in Belvidere recently, where approximately 40 local growers attended.

Amongst other speakers, Uwe talked about soil microbiology, Oli Madgett from Platfarm demonstrated the Platfarm system which programs differing feed rates to different parts of the vineyard using GPS settings and soil tests, Craig Hole from Landmark discussed improving soil sustainability and James Arnold from Provis Vineyard demonstrated the Bogballe base spreader.



L to R: The Bogballe base spreader, and Dr. Uwe speaking to the group

## LANDMARK AGRONOMY CONFERENCE, QLD

Dr. Uwe Stroehler was invited to speak at the North East Landmark Agronomy conference in Brisbane, which represented a fantastic opportunity to get the message out on how good soil management and soil biology can help with preserving soil vitality and to help increase yield and disease resistance in plants.

The meeting was attended by approximately 90 agronomists who had varying interests from broadacre farming to horticulture. Uwe spoke for about 45 minutes on soil health and what roles soil microbes play in this.

The talk was very well received with a number of interesting and insightful questions asked after the talk. More in depth discussions were then had over dinner and few beers.



*Dr. Uwe Stroehler presenting at the North East Landmark Agronomy Conference in Brisbane.*

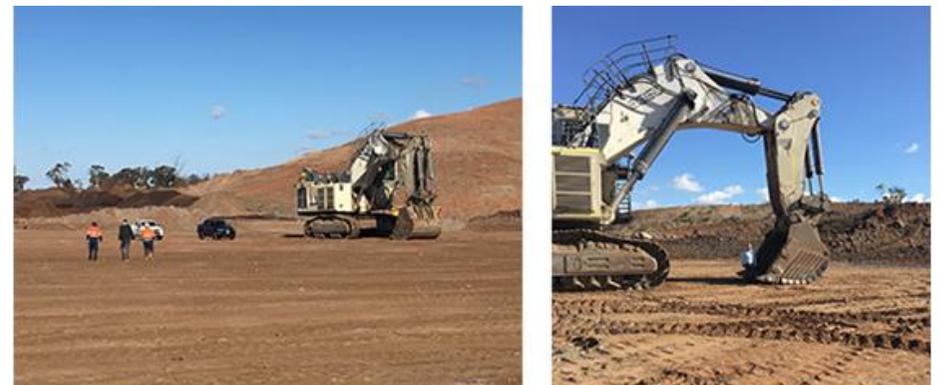
## NEUTROG SITE EXPANSION

- 100,000 LITRE LIQUID STORAGE
- 1000 EXTRA PALLET SPACES
- 37,000 SQ/M IN RAW MATERIAL STORAGE & COMPOSTING SITE

The site at Kanmantoo HQ has been cleared and cordoned off in preparation of our new 2000 square metre warehouse. Preliminary work has already commenced, and the warehouse should be finished by July.

This site will also house the ten stainless steel tanks to store an extra 100,000 litres of our biological liquids including GOGO Juice and Seamungus.

A massive 300-tonne excavator from the copper mine next door has been brought in to level some land, which will enable us to increase our material storage and composting site from 7000 sq/m to 45,000 sq/m.



## INTERNATIONAL UPDATE VIETNAM

May and June have been busy months for us in the export department - we've shipped over 300 tonnes to Vietnam alone. Shipments consisted of Bounce Back, Seamungus and a special blend that were either shipped in bags or blown loose into containers.



*Bounce Back being blown into a container*



*A local delivery in Vietnam*



*Unloading a container of Bounce Back bags in Vietnam*

## WELCOME TO ANDREW DUFFIELD



We are pleased to announce that Andrew Duffield joined Neutrog's commercial team in May. Andrew is looking after areas in South Australia and Victoria including the Riverland, Mildura and Sunraysia. He brings a wealth of experience, previously working for an independent commercial distributor in the Riverland. You'll have no trouble talking to Andrew about sport - in particular Aussie rules and cricket.



## RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

### TRICHODERMA

Recent research being conducted by microbiologist Dr. Uwe Stroehler has been focussed around a species of fungi called Trichoderma.

The soil is an ecosystem with limited space and nutrients, and as such various bacteria, fungi and other soil organisms (whether beneficial or destructive) compete for these resources. One species of fungi that has been under the spotlight as a biological control agent is Trichoderma.

Trichoderma work in a number of ways, and are able to compete well within various soil types to keep out undesirable fungi and bacterial plant pathogens, thereby acting as an insurance and deterrent. They also take up space which could be occupied by a pathogenic microbe - which is akin to how a healthy dense lawn keeps out weeds.

Trichoderma form a mutualistic relationship with the plant's root system, thereby keeping the pathogen away. Trichoderma may control other fungi by parasitising them (basically destroying pathogenic fungal types), as well as producing compounds which can inhibit the growth of competing organisms. There is also good evidence to show that Trichoderma can induce the plant's own defence mechanisms.



Dr. Uwe in the Neutrog lab

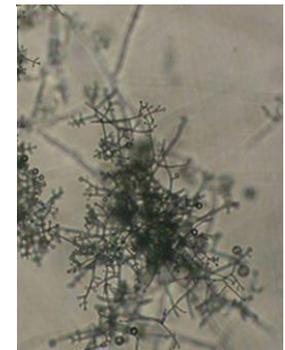
The mechanism by which Trichoderma can control pathogens and enhance the plant's survival are multi-faceted, but even with this arsenal, a single strain or species of Trichoderma will not be effective against all pathogens, or for that matter be suitable for all soil types.

As with most biological systems, a diversity of different species and strains of Trichoderma are more likely to give a broader application. Here at Neutrog HQ, Dr. Uwe is in the process of isolating and testing a range of Trichoderma species to check their ability to compete against a range of pathogens - in particular major fungal problem species such as Rhizoctonia and Sclerotinia, and the parasitic oomycote Pythium, which is a major plant pathogen.

It's early days yet, but we are well on our way to producing a biological control agent based on a number of Trichoderma strains in order to give the broadest protection possible to control pathogenic fungi and induce plant immunity in the broadacre market. It may also form part of our new up-coming hedge fertiliser, so stay tuned!



Strains of Trichoderma that Dr. Uwe has populated in the Neutrog lab.



Trichoderma species



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