

feedback

commercial update from Neutrog Australia

commercial

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Discover the benefits of Neutrog's cost-effective alternatives

So we can better understand what may be the appropriate Neutrog product for your requirements, and to supply you with more information on the 'Neutrog cost-effective alternatives', please fill in the reply-paid coupon, post or fax to Neutrog or return to your nearest Neutrog distributor.

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The Experts' Choice

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Discover the benefits of Neutrog's cost-effective alternatives

Distributor

Name		
Address		
Town		
State	Post Code	Phone ()
Cropping Enterprise	Use	Hectares (approx)
Viticulture <input type="checkbox"/>	(eg. new, established)	
Horticulture <input type="checkbox"/>	(eg. potatoes, carrots)	
Broadacre <input type="checkbox"/>	(eg. cropping, pasture)	
Turf, Parks & Gardens <input type="checkbox"/>	(eg. oval, golfcourse)	

Steve Marks has been farming Caurnamount Farms, a 2000 hectare property at Purnong, in the Murraylands, since 1975.



CAURNAMOUNT FARMS STEVE MARKS

Currently growing 80 hectares of onions and 160 hectares of potatoes, Steve continues to get great results using Rapid Raiser. The soil on his family farm was light and sandy with very little organic matter. After using Neutrog's Rapid Raiser on his onions and potatoes since 1993, he has seen a significant increase in the soil's organic matter, something that conventional manufactured chemical fertilisers cannot do. This has resulted in less wind drift of the fine soil, an improvement in the soil's water holding capacity and a slower, more controlled release of nutrients for the plants – ultimately all these factors contribute to better crops. The most positive visible sign of this improvement in the soil is the increase in earthworm activity.

"Previously the wind would sweep up our onion rows, disturbing the light sandy soil, and resulting in crop damage", Steve said. "When we apply Rapid Raiser to the rows, the pellets swell up when wet and have

a mulching effect, keeping the soil in place, and reducing damage. Also, repeated use of this organic based fertiliser continues to add more and more organic matter to our deficient soils. The steady increase of organic matter in our soil since using Rapid Raiser is helping to hold the nutrients in the soil, rather than them being washed away."

"As well as improving the organic levels of our soil, the slow release properties of Rapid Raiser allow slower, controlled and constant feeding. This in turn means that application is more effective and has to be less frequent than with manufactured chemical fertilisers. This all helps our bottom line!"

Steve said that he now has more control over his fertilising regime. Rapid Raiser's defined nutrient composition means that he knows exactly how much to apply to get a controlled and consistent amount of fertiliser per hectare.

"With onions, I can successfully estimate the amount of fertiliser

I need to apply based on soil tests, apply the fertiliser after emergence, and then apply water to produce the desired size", Steve said. By adding extra water he can increase the size of his onions, and by reducing the amount of water applied he can limit the size of his onions. Because of this, Steve can produce a more marketable size range and his crop can meet the demand of a constantly changing market.

With potatoes, Steve applies Rapid Raiser both before and after planting, with both the first and second bankings. Steve said, "This year we used Rapid Raiser on a new patch of ground where the soil was very poor and sandy and following this fertiliser regime, we have been able to produce 90% plus premium Spuds".

The nutrients in fowl manure tend to evaporate once wet, whereas after being treated with zeolite, the nitrogen in Rapid Raiser leaches directly into the soil, not the atmosphere. There is also the problem of the raw manure being polluted with garbage and fillers, like wood dust and weed seeds", Steve continued. "Weeds suck up the nutrients from fertilisers meant for our crops, and they cost money to remove or control. After a number of years, I have only just got a weed called Bedstraw under control. This was introduced to our property in some raw manure and it has been very costly to eradicate. At the end of the day, the less money spent on killing weeds the better!"

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The firm commitment of Beerenberg to flavour, quality and family tradition are the reasons why its products are now enjoyed by hotel guests and airline passengers around the world.

Their jams, condiments, pickles and sauces stand out from the competition by sheer intensity of flavour – real, natural flavour from the produce of a family farm.

Since 1839, six generations of the Paech family have been working the Beerenberg farm at Hahndorf in the picturesque Mt Lofty Ranges, some 25 kilometres from Adelaide. Grant Paech, Managing Director, and his wife Carol took over the family dairy in 1970 and developed rounds to sell milk directly to the public. They also commenced growing strawberries as a source of additional income to offset inheritance tax.

Neutrog fertilisers provide the plants with a good slow release feed, which results in good growth and cropping. This, together with careful harvesting and meticulous preparation techniques help preserve the fullness of the farm fresh taste and the wonderful flavours."

The first batch of strawberry jam was made in 1971. A range of other varieties of jams, pickles, sauces and chutneys followed, to the point where in 1983 the farm had become a market gardening and food processing operation, the dairy herd having been sold off in 1975.

Many Beerenberg products are made using old family recipes. In 1985, they added first the 40 gram and later the 28 gram mini jars to their jam manufacturing range. They were immediately successful in selling these to airlines and many five star hotels. This success was the catalyst for them to successfully enter the export market in 1986.

In 1993 a range of 14.2 gram foil packs were launched aimed at the 4 Star hotel and tourism travel markets, both in Australia and overseas. Beerenberg now have 70% of this part of the market in Australia. More recently, they have released a new 14 gram standard individual serve plastic portion pack range of jams and condiments. This is aimed at the tourist or economy end of the airline and tourist market, complementing Beerenberg's existing foil and glass packs and extending its portfolio of products for this new market.



Over the years, Beerenberg's processed food operation has increased its turnover manyfold, with export accounting for about 20% of total sales revenue. Beerenberg now exports to 23 Asian countries, and their jams are now in over 300 major 4/5 star hotels throughout the Asia Pacific region.

During this time the Paechs have won many awards during their business' development. These include Tourism, Farm Management and Small Business Awards. More recently, they were inaugural winners of the Premier's Food and Fabric Award for Excellence.

The Beerenberg farm now covers approximately 200 acres and employs a total of 35 people. Crops grown on the farm include strawberries, chillies, gherkins, sweetcorn, plums, cherries, quinces and roses (for rose petal jam). Part of the farm provides grazing land for their beef cattle stud.

Beerenberg recognises that premium fruit requires premium growing conditions, especially when it comes to producing strawberries with full, rich flavour. Robert Paech, Grant's son and Farm Manager, said that "We have around 1.7 hectares under strawberries. Each year we replace half of these plants, about 80 – 90,000 plants, with new runners. This ensures that our strawberry plants are healthy, productive and virus free." For the last four years, Robert has used Neutrog fertilisers when planting these strawberries. He changed from using the inorganic fertiliser blends, in an effort to improve the organic matter content of the soil. "The results have been great. Neutrog provides the plants with a good slow release feed, which results in good growth and cropping. This, together with careful harvesting and

meticulous preparation techniques help preserve the fullness of the farm fresh taste and wonderful flavours."

The Paech family have a vision – for Beerenberg to be the most respected jam and condiments company in the world. They are well on the way to achieving their goal.

Beerenberg is open to the public daily, and has a special tourist strawberry picking area open between October and May. You can also stroll through the beautiful rose covered walkway and enjoy the perfume of red roses that are harvested for the production of their famous rose petal jam.



TURFGRASS ADELAIDE DIK MURPHY

Turfgrass Adelaide, formerly known as Horley Turf, is a family owned and operated company with over 15 years experience in the turf industry.

They are South Australia's largest producer of instant turf sod for both the retail and wholesale markets, and have also branched out into consultancy, sports ground construction and contract growing of specified varieties. The consultancy includes work in China helping to establish turf farms as part of the Chinese Government's \$20 billion Greening China project.

Perhaps their most interesting project to date is the installation of the new grass surface at the Morphettville Racecourse in Adelaide during January this year. The company won the contract, the largest grassing contract to ever be let in this state, in early 2001. They then began growing the 90,000sqm, or approximately 23 acres, of instant Kikuya turf. The renovation of Morphettville Racecourse was approved after the washout of the Adelaide Cup in 2000 and included major earthmoving and irrigation works. The turf will be delivered in approximately 90 semi loads, and laid by three big rolling machines operated by 12 staff, at a rate of 5000-6000sqm per day. Turfgrass Adelaide won the turf contract over other interstate contractors because of their local knowledge and proven ability and experience in the field of large-scale turf production and installation.

The company has previously completed many high profile contracts including the South Australia Day celebrations, where it twice covered North Terrace in lawn for a day, the Anzac Highway refurbishment from Keswick to Holdfast Shores and the Mawson Lakes housing development. It also covered Wakefield St in Victoria

Square in lawn for the Adelaide Festival celebrations.

When it comes to feeding their turf, whether at the production farm at Murray Bridge or at Morphettville Racecourse, Turfgrass Adelaide have been using Neutrog's organic lawn fertilisers with great success. Dik Murphy, their Managing Director, said "We use Neutrog products both in the establishment, and the maintenance of all our sod. As you can imagine, nearly 400 acres of lawn sod requires some serious amounts of fertiliser, which has to be fast working, long lasting and economical."

"Turfgrass Adelaide have built a solid reputation for supplying a high quality product and outstanding service", Dik said. "As part of our customer service we supply all our clients with a complimentary bag of fertiliser when they purchase our instant lawn. We find that Neutrog's fertiliser, when incorporated in the ground underneath the new turf, is a great booster as it helps it to establish itself quickly into its new environment. Being an organic product, it does not burn the roots as would manufactured or chemical products. Any organic matter applied to the soil before establishing a new lawn is beneficial, but we have found that Neutrog fertilisers gives our turf a great start"

"As far as ongoing maintenance of our turf once it has been laid, Neutrog's Year Round Fertiliser Program is brilliant", Dik said.

"It provides a specific yet balanced fertiliser for a specific purpose at specific times of the year"



ADELAIDE HILLS VINEYARD CONTRACTORS TOM AYRES

Working throughout the Adelaide Hill in the last 10 years has given Adelaide Hills Vineyard Contractors a wealth of experience in viticulture, especially in establishing new vineyards.

Managing Director, Tom Ayres, said that this last year has seen them working on about 400 acres of new development, while they continue the ongoing management of many established vineyards. With more than thirty permanent staff, and up to another 100 casual employees during vintage, their operation has grown to be of considerable size and reputation.

"When establishing new vineyards, we look at the soil profile and nutrient levels with particular attention paid to the content of organic matter", Tom said. "As most of the land that we develop is ex-dairying or vegetable growing land, we find that this previously cleared and well watered land is generally suffering from over cultivation, poor top soil and a lack of organic matter."

After trialing a number of different fertilisers, they have found that using Neutrog's organic fertiliser is the best option. "We have a 20 acre trial vineyard in Balhannah which enables us to test our practices, in particular, different fertiliser applications. We started off using raw chicken manure, but found it to be too expensive and too difficult to handle and apply, as well as it having the obvious weed contaminants. With the quantities we required, there was also a considerable degree of variation in

composition and quality from source to source. What we wanted from a fertiliser was repeatable and reliable results, together with cost effectiveness. Neutrog fertiliser filled all these requirements. This pelletised fertiliser is very convenient, allowing for ease of application."

Adelaide Hills Vineyard Contractors have used Rapid Raiser for about four years in both the establishment of new vines and the management of existing vines.

"Planting out new vineyards with calloused cuttings can be risky at the best of times, as their tender nature leaves no margin for error. We have had the best results by using 1 tonne of Rapid Raiser to the hectare prior to planting", Tom said. In regions of the inner Adelaide Hills where the soil tends to be heavier, lacking in top soil and already leached of nutrients, they also find that a heavy application of Rapid Raiser to the vines and between the rows, in the second year, gives the perennial Rye Grass cover crops a chance to establish. In other regions of the Hills, where they find that the cover crop establishes more readily, they only need to top dress the vines themselves in the second year.

Tom's final comments were, "We have been impressed with the convenience, effectiveness and cost competitiveness of Neutrog's fertiliser."

Veitch wheat farmer, Lloyd Schmaal has used Rapid Raiser on his property for the past seven years.

Farming for the past 21 years and currently cropping around 2500 acres of wheat, rye and barley a year, Lloyd had been taught to believe that it was essential to add superphosphate to his soil for good crops. Then, after a wet season, when the conventional manufactured chemical fertilisers were only effective for eight to ten weeks of the year, he began to look at alternatives.

balanced feed rather than a quick short boost of a limited number of nutrients. "Our harvest is always one to two weeks behind everyone else, because the wheat stays greener longer. It is in these last days that the heads of wheat really thicken up, and the protein levels rise.

Over the past five to six years our wasted screenings haven't been above 2.5%, due to the consistent increase in the size of each grain." The percentage of protein in his wheat has increased considerably, so that the average is now between 13 and 14 %. During the dry spell in 1995, the protein levels soared to 18.4 %.



Lloyd said, "We once cleaned the fowl house and threw the scrapings up on part of the hill. Where we did this, the crop was 4 to 5 inches higher, with bigger heads." As a result of this he knew he had to look at organic based products for a sustainable solution. After experimenting on a larger scale with raw manure, Lloyd realised that this created its own problems such as weed and debris contamination, burn off and spreading difficulties.

After careful consideration, and in one hit, Lloyd swapped his entire fertiliser program from the conventional high analysis fertilisers to Neutrog's Rapid Raiser. Now Lloyd knows that "There is more to the soil than NPK. The soil is a living thing and it has to have a balanced diet. Rapid Raiser provides this balanced diet, and the results that we have noticed since using it on our property have been tremendous."

The results of applying Rapid Raiser to crops when planting is not as quickly visible as with the manufactured chemical fertilisers, however, the crop gets a slow

After using Rapid Raiser on his property for the past seven years, Lloyd has seen a significant improvement in the soil colour, quality and structure. The soil seems much darker and healthier with more organic matter. Areas of hard ground where the water used to run off have been transformed into friable soil where the water can now penetrate. Improvements like this in soil structure also result in improved cropping.

Another benefit from using Rapid Raiser was noticed on stubble ground. Because his wheat stubble breaks down easily and is sweeter to consume, his sheep love it and are eating more. Lloyd believes that their health has improved as a result, with deficiencies being corrected through the nutrients in the fertiliser.

"And another thing," Lloyd commented, "Our phosphorus levels are higher than when we were using superphosphate. Obviously the Rapid Raiser has released phosphorus, which was previously bound up in the soil, unavailable to our crops. So what I had been taught to believe and what actually happened were two entirely different things!"

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