

Farming in the Mallee

Darren and Trina Bellinger are third generation farmers from Hopetoun, in Victoria's Mallee. They grow 1500 hectares of wheat, barley, oats, vetch and canola, and run 400 ewes.



Darren Bellinger and his son Matt

In Darren's father and grandfather's day, MAP was the fertiliser of choice. Darren has always used Urea 18-12, put out at 80kg per hectare. The principle objective with the application of Urea was the need for a quick boost, which would also aid in higher protein levels.

For a number of years Darren has been questioning whether it was really possible to farm continuously using NPK products. The soil was not as healthy as it should have been and yields were gradually decreasing. His concern was that with total reliance upon a system of always using NPK products, that something would give. That "something" would possibly be soil health, lower yields and higher inputs.

As all farmers know, there is plenty of thinking time when you're on the header or tractor.

Darren says, "I started to think more about the soil and this led me to deciding that it was time to consider my options. I then started to look at the viability of other products in running my business and decided that it was time to give them a go on part of the farm. I used raw cow manure one year, and another year, liquid foliar. I certainly wasn't disadvantaged and if anything I had a slight yield increase".

Darren then took a close look at Neutrog's Rapid Raiser after reading about the range on offer. He was still looking for the benefits of a healthier soil and wanted to increase microbial activity. He felt that there had to be an efficient and economical way to do so. Darren comments, "I had a firm belief that Rapid Raiser would be able to unlock nutrients which were tied up, whilst delivering my requirements for a healthy soil. This season the barley crop is looking as good as it ever has and I am impressed with the results. If I can continue to maintain my yield and lower costs then I will be a happy man".

The Bellinger family have been considering and investigating their options over a long period. One of those options was Neutrog's "Just try it" philosophy. This has been the catalyst for them to head with confidence down a sustainable and profitable farming future.



On the GOGO

Following on the back of the impressive trial results on potatoes and parsley (see attached GOGO Juice brochure) achieved from an application of GOGO Juice on two commercial trial sites in Virginia, South Australia, shelf life tests were carried out on the parsley. Parsley that had the GOGO Juice applied lasted up to 6 days – over double that of the control parsley that didn't receive the GOGO Juice application.

In addition to the many commercial growers who are now using GOGO Juice, some of the more recognised users include **AAMI Stadium**, **Flemington Racecourse** and the **Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney**.

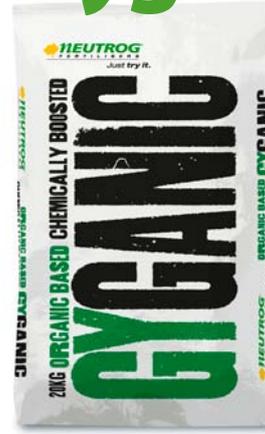
Base Manuring



Neutrog products are great alternatives for bulk manure – they are cost competitive and their pelletised form allows for uniform nutrient application and availability, whilst being weed free – resulting in improved performance.

Trials of these products have proven that they generate significantly greater levels of organic matter within the soil than their bulk manure counterparts.

Gyganic!!



A new boosted fruit and vegetable fertiliser (7:2:10+ trace elements) with humic acid and kelp.

Field trials on a variety of crops are currently underway and will be reported on in future editions of feedback.



Piña and Mick Molluso and their daughters, Caterina & Amelia.

The garden strawberry was first bred in 1740 in France via a cross of *Fragaria virginiana* from eastern North America, which was valued for its flavour, and *Fragaria chiloensis* from Chile and Argentina which was noted for its large size. Many varieties of *Fragaria* × *ananassa* are grown today – all of which are selected for a number of virtuous characteristics.

Mick and Pina Molluso certainly loved the strawberry, when over 20 years ago they decided to leave the hustle and bustle of real estate and retail and move into growing strawberries. Mick comments "Pina and I were looking for a lifestyle change and somewhere with a country atmosphere in which to raise a family. Now with two lovely girls aged 11 and 16 we've certainly achieved our goal."

Sweet Berries is their farming name and the 40 acre property is situated in the rolling hills around Silvan in the Yarra Valley. They grow two varieties – Albion and Camino Real. Commercial strawberry growing in Victoria was first set up in the Yarra Valley in the 1950's. The regions' rich, fertile soils providing ideal growing conditions.

From farm to plate there is much work in growing a strawberry. Even though strawberry plants are perennial, most strawberry farmers treat them as annuals. Plants will generally be replaced every year because the plants are most productive in the first year.

Mick and Pina conduct soil tests to ensure that each planting receives the correct nutrition for the season. As with all types of farming, weather will dictate plans. Ideally they will incorporate their fertiliser as closely as possible to planting time. An integral part of their programme is the incorporation of Neutro's Berry Blaster. "We've been using Berry Blaster now for over 6 years as it gives our plants a really great start. If a plant takes off strongly and doesn't become stressed, then that equates to a healthy, vigorous plant from the beginning and that's what Berry Blaster gives us. This season too, we are planning on incorporating GOGO Juice into our programme. We expect to note an even stronger root system, once the micro flora of the soil has been increased and once again, a healthier, stronger plant gives us a huge head start to our season."

After fertilisation and ploughing, the soil is mounded into hills and covered with black

plastic mulch. When the plastic is laid, drip tape irrigation is also placed in the ground. The drip tape will be used to water and fertilise the strawberry plants as they grow and produce. Every time a strawberry paddock is worked over, the irrigation will be replaced. Once all preparation is completed, the rows will be worked, holes cut into the mulch and the strawberries planted by hand.

Harvest is also by hand on a daily basis throughout the Summer and Autumn months. Sweet Berries fruit ends up on family tables throughout Melbourne and Sydney.

Strawberries... there is surely not a single person who does not love a strawberry. Fresh as a snack, mixed in a fruit salad, dipped in chocolate, or bobbing around the top of a champagne glass! Nutritious, delicious and healthy. There is something so elegantly simple about the luscious strawberry.

Photo courtesy of Bronwen Healy Photography



Looking after Legends

Better Loosen Up and Doriemus enjoying a lush retirement



Living Legends CEO Andrew Clarke with Regal Roller and their delivery of Rapid Raiser

Living Legends, located just outside Melbourne, has been established to bring retired champion horses back to the public.

Living Legends is situated at Woodlands Historic Park, a unique, picturesque location that includes a historic homestead, magnificent gardens, abundant parklands and of course some of the finest retired racehorses including Apache Cat, Better Loosen Up, Brew, Doriemus, Rogan Josh, Might and Power, and Fields of Omagh. Living Legends is modelled closely on the Home of Rest for Horses in the United Kingdom, with an aim to support equine research, education and training to benefit horses of all ages and breeds. Special emphasis however, is given to the care of older horses

Photo courtesy of Bronwen Healy Photography



Better Loosen Up smells the roses

The historic homestead located at Woodlands Historic Park near Bulla in Victoria, gives visitors a glimpse of the landscape of settlers in the 1840's. The homestead is a rare example of an early prefabricated building, and the park also contains ruins of two other 19th century homesteads, Cumberland and Dundonald.

Woodlands Homestead and its outbuildings and gardens were extensively restored in 1983

and 1984, and are surrounded by magnificent gardens which have also been extensively restored. The gardens include magnolias which are the oldest in the State.

The property has utilised Neutrog products since 2008. Initially Rapid Raiser and Sudden Impact for Roses were used in the gardens around the homestead.

Andrew Clarke, CEO of Living Legends, comments on the results "The biggest feedback we get is how good the garden looks and how much it has improved over the last couple of years. Neutrog products have been absolutely first class and one of the main reasons why the gardens are in great condition. Andrew then turned his attention towards the 12 hectares of pastures for the Living Legends themselves.

As part of a plan to improve the pastures for the horses, Andrew worked with Neutrog to develop a suitable fertilising program that started from the soil up. "Providing the horses with the freshest grass for as long as possible is our aim, and it all starts with the quality of the soil. In winter we applied Neutrog's Rapid Raiser along with an application of GOGO Juice."

"We have had a terrific response and it certainly appears to have helped breakdown the soil surface organic matter and improved moisture retention in those areas where it was applied"

STOP PRESS

George White farms 1600 hectares at Manangatang in Victoria's Mallee country and was featured in Neutrog's previous commercial newsletter (Feedback #12) which detailed his farming story – this can be found in the commercial section of Neutrog's website at www.neutrog.com.au

George carried out a trial of an application of Neutrog's Rapid Raiser versus MAP on his barley crop.

The results were as follows:

Barley	MAP	Rapid Raiser
Yield	1.9 t/ha	2.0 t/ha
Protein	9.5	10.5
Moisture	10.5	10.8
Retention	94.1	93.4
Screenings	1.1	1.0
Test Weight	67	67

GOGO Juice

About GOGO Juice

GOGO Juice is literally teeming with beneficial micro-biology and is essentially a pro-biotic for your soil and plants.

GOGO Juice combines the "catalytic" power of billions of beneficial bacteria with the well documented benefits of applying kelp, seaweed, fish, coal and lucerne.

Commencing nearly 10 years ago in a small 20 litre anaerobic beer brewing vessel, it has since developed into a series of commercial stainless steel vats, utilising an aerobic brewing system where oxygen and heat are controlled to optimise bacterial activity throughout the 6-8 week brewing period.

The carefully selected microbes have been proliferated utilising complex carbohydrates and sugars through a unique aerobic brewing system in which kelp, seaweed, fish, coal and lucerne have been digested by these bacteria.

Hence, GOGO Juice not only contains a wide variety of bacteria that perform many beneficial functions within the soil, but it also contains numerous other beneficial elements such as natural growth hormones, humic and fulvic acid, amino acids, vitamins and alginates etc (derived from those digested organic compounds), all of which also serve to enhance soil and plant performance.

The resultant product provides a huge boost of the living micro-biology necessary for your soil and plants to perform at their optimum level, increasing their ability to resist pest and disease and to withstand heat stress and frost.

"Just try it" and judge its performance for yourself!



GOGO Juice trial results on parsley at Virginia in South Australia.

GOGO JUICE includes:

Beneficial Bacteria:

Including but not limited to:

- **Pseudomonas** – aid in breaking down organic materials including crop, stubbles and thatch.
- **Bacillus** – aid in unlocking phosphorus.
- **Azotobacter** – aid in nitrogen fixation.

Alginates:

Aid in moisture retention, and consequently in the plant's ability to withstand heat stress and frost.

Humic/Fulvic Acid:

Humic Acid increases nutrient uptake, drought tolerance and seed germination, and Fulvic Acid is in essence, the principal 'active' ingredient in Humic Acid.

Amino Acids:

Building blocks for proteins; important in the metabolic process.

Vitamins:

B1, B2, B3, B6, C, E, Choline, Pantotene, Carotene.

Natural Growth Regulators:

- **Cytokinins** – promote cell division in plant roots and shoots.
- **Auxins** – essential for plant body development. Also co-ordinate many growth and behavioural processes in a plant's life cycle.
- **Triacontanol** – these growth regulators are responsible for promoting root growth and bud production.

Applications

Apply 5-10 litres per hectare in a minimum dilution of 1:100 (the higher the dilution the better). Lower dilution rates can be utilised if applying to moist soil in the cool of the day. If you have any queries please contact your Neutrog representative.

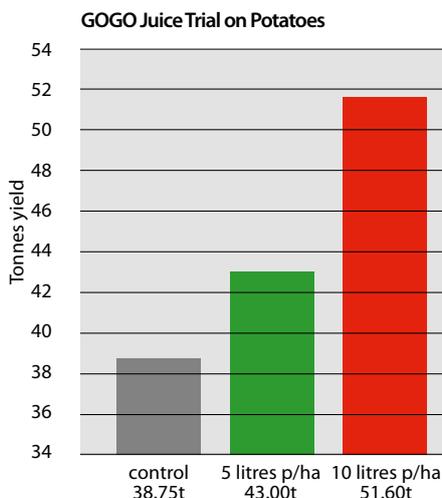
Apply monthly or as required.

Filtered to 120 microns

Storage and use

GOGO Juice contains live organisms – do not mix with fungicides or bactericides. Store in a cool place, away from direct sunlight below 30 C. Gloves should be worn at all times when handling microbial products. Use diluted product within one (1) week of dilution.

Analysis		%W/W
Nitrogen (N)	as organic	1.00
Phosphorus (P)	as citrate soluble	0.05
Potassium (K)	as organic	0.15
Calcium (Ca)	as organic	0.15
Magnesium (Mg)	as organic	0.07
Sodium (Na)	as organic	0.19
Sulphur (S)	as organic	0.04
Boron (B)	as organic	1.00
Copper (Cu)	as organic	2.00
Zinc (Zn)	as organic	1.00
Humic Acid	as organic	3.50
		mg/L
Manganese (Mn)	as organic	12.00
Iron (Fe)	as organic	29.00
Cobalt (Co)	as organic	0.04
Molybdenum (Mo)	as organic	0.50



NEUTROG
FERTILISERS

Just try it.



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