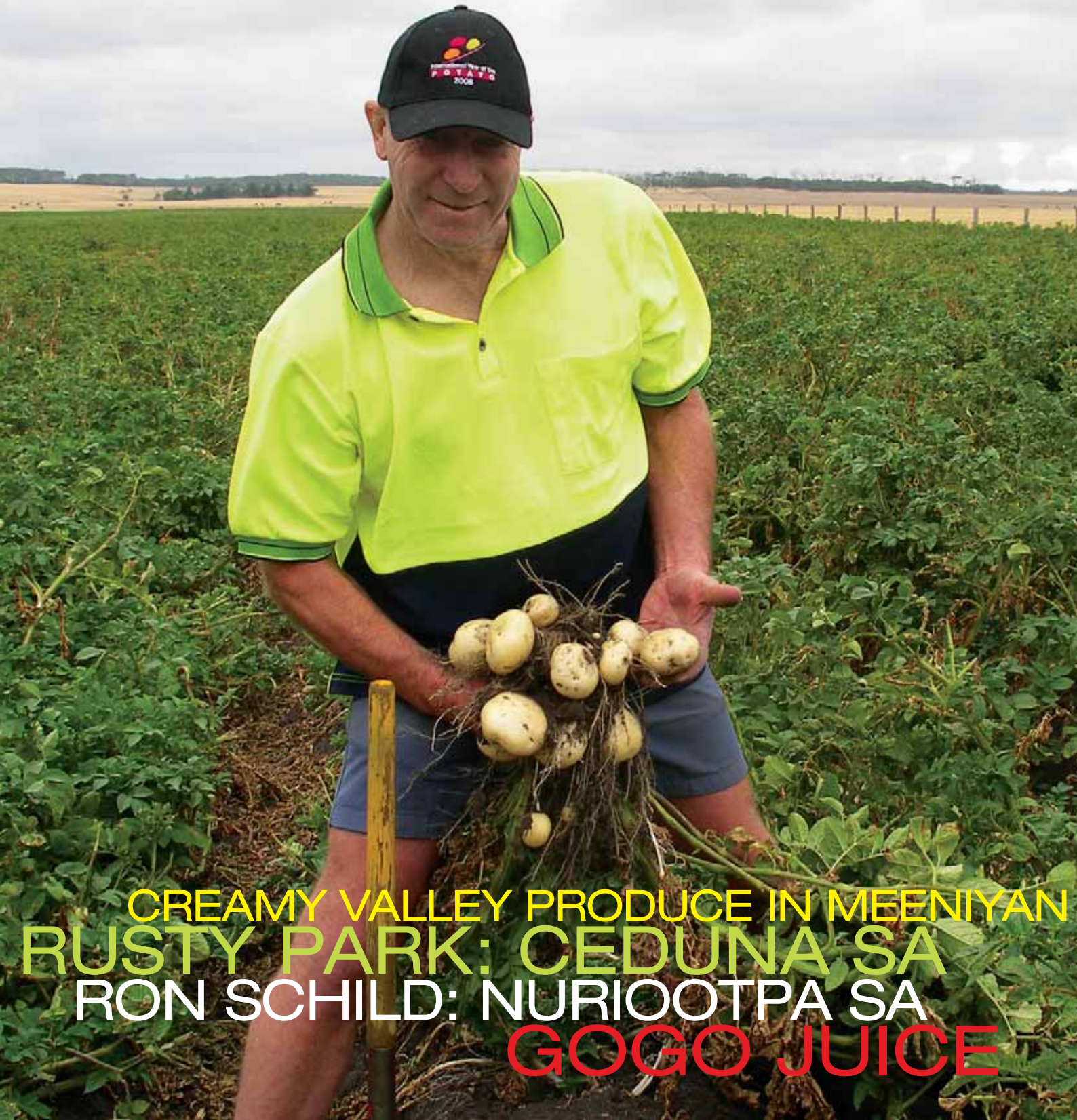


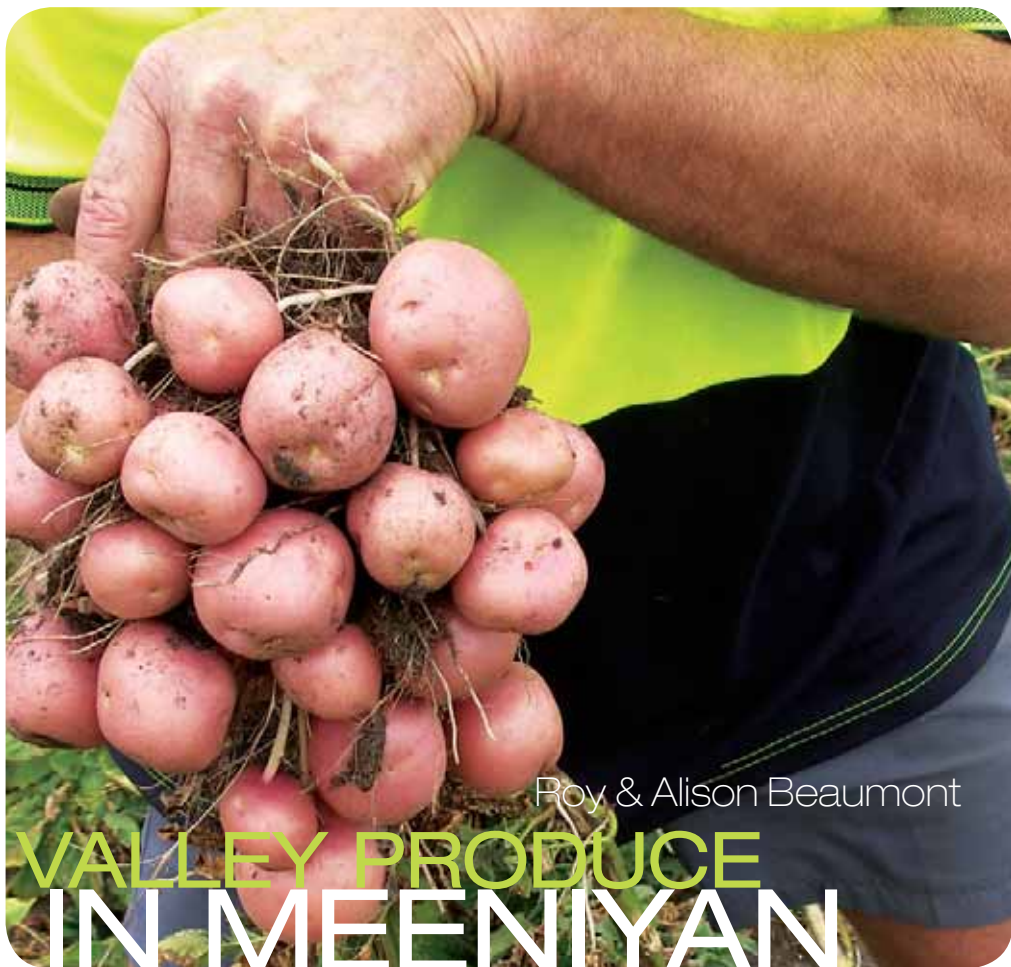
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UPDATE FROM NEUTROG #9



CREAMY VALLEY PRODUCE IN MEENIYAN
RUSTY PARK: CEDUNA SA
RON SCHILD: NURIOOTPA SA
GOGO JUICE



Roy & Alison Beaumont

CREAMY VALLEY PRODUCE IN MEENIYAN

Roy & Alison Beaumont from Creamy Valley Produce in Meeniyan, Victoria, farm dry-grown certified seed potatoes. Varieties grown include Ruby Lou, Coliban, Atlantic, Desiree and Snow Gem. The fertilising practices which Roy adheres to are strongly centred on improving his soils and as he is a seed grower, is committed to ensuring that the seed produced has sufficient nutrients for strong growth.

Roy had been relatively happy with his previous fertilising practices when a couple of years ago he heard of Neutrog and the trials that had been undertaken with potato growers in South Australia. Always on the lookout for a way to improve practices and yield, Roy's attention was captured and a trial was set up.

CVP had a different plan for the use of Seamungus, which was to use it as a side dress, but followed the recommendation and used it as a complement to existing base fertiliser at the rate of 1 tonne per hectare at planting. CVP soil test all of their paddocks prior to planting and they all had a PH of 4.3 and were quite deficient in a number of nutrients.

Two trial sites were set up with the first planting commencing in late October 2007, followed by the second site in mid-November and a third planting on the second site in late December. Seamungus was added across rows giving the broadest possible range of soil conditions within each paddock. Seasonal conditions made it difficult to obtain a true result with the first planting, as excessive

rainfall occurred not long after planting making for erratic germination. Better conditions were experienced between November-December, however a little more rain in January – February would've been of huge benefit.

Roy was keen to see a little more potassium in Seamungus and to that end extra K was added to part of the batch. This meant that within the trials were Seamungus/control, Seamungus with added K/control. During harvest, various positions on each site were dug with ten plants of Seamungus, and/or Seamungus + K and control. Each plant was counted for oversize, seed and undersize tubers, graded and weighed. There was not any visible difference in the appearance of the plants, but they did "hang on" longer, ensuring a better finish. Overall there were less over and undersized potatoes with the Seamungus and tubers had a more consistent, even size. Should conditions have prevailed favourably then rain would have filled out the undersize tubers. All but two of the 30 areas counted showed number and weight increase in favour of Seamungus. Interestingly there was little or no improvement in the areas with the

added 'K', however improved keeping quality and improved performance in the next generation of seed potatoes will result.

CVP are using Seamungus again this year and will certainly use again the following year – perhaps even dropping off the amount of conventional fertiliser used and bumping up the Seamungus application.

Roy acknowledged that the results are not just from Seamungus, but also from the way in which it has allowed the plants to access the nutrients which have previously been unavailable. The last two years have been particularly difficult growing conditions due to excessive heat and lack of rain. Roy says "the trial results were not earth shattering, but the most positive part of the entire trial was a considerable increase in numbers of tubers under each plant. The very positive benefits of using Seamungus are really showing through now". "With the rising cost of fertilisers, all farmers are looking at a return for every dollar they spend, as well as caring for the environment in which they are working and Seamungus provides both of these". **n**

Murray Watkinson and his brother Leigh are 3rd generation farmers, taking over their 3600 hectare family property from their father in 1988. Now known as “Rusty Park”, a further 1000 hectares were purchased in 2002 to bring it to its current size of 4600 hectares.



“Rusty Park” which is located 49km east of Ceduna, is also home to Murray’s wife, Karen and their two daughters.

Some 2000 hectares are cropped each year, primarily wheat, with some oats sown for sheep feed. Sheep are run on the remainder of the property.

Like most generational farmers, Murray and Leigh practiced traditional farming methods, regularly applying chemical fertilisers such as MAP for their cereal cropping. Over the years, whilst carrying out this practice they have noticed their soils health diminishing.

Last year, with this in mind and with the prices of chemical fertilisers escalating out of control, Murray and Leigh searched for alternative fertilisers to use within their cropping program.

They decided upon Neutrog’s “Undercover” product, on the basis that it was organic based with the full range of naturally occurring micro nutrients and boosted with 20% DAP along with increased levels of zinc and manganese. They felt that this product would help improve their soil, whilst at the same time the inclusion of some DAP made them less nervous (apprehensive) than changing over to a totally organic product.

“Undercover” was applied through a flexicoil air seeder with 32mm hoses at 80kg per hectare across 1875 hectares and some left over MAP was applied to the remainder of their wheat crop.

Murray commented “last year the area to which we applied MAP did not appear nearly as healthy as where the Undercover was applied. Our crops did not burn off like they normally do when chemical fertilisers were used, screenings were lower, protein was higher and yield was up on the previous year – despite receiving less rain”.

He went on to say “last year we learnt that phosphorus (P), in isolation of having a balance of other nutrients, is not as crucial as we once thought it to be and as a consequence this experience has given us the confidence to apply Rapid Raiser this year – a totally organic product. We believe that the organic side of things will help us get life back into our soil”

A number of people who drove past “Rusty Park” last year commented on how healthy the crops looked & hence there are a few other farmers applying Neutrog in the district this year. *n*



Murray & Leigh Watkinson

RUSTY PARK
CEDUNA SA



RON SCHILD

NURILOOTPA SA

Ron Schild grew up on an 1150 acre sheep grazing and cereal cropping property near Lameroo. After marrying his wife Gladys, he purchased the first 80 acres of their current property at Nuriootpa in February, 1956. The original property had 30 acres of vines and 3 acres of fruit trees, with the balance of the property being used for dairy farming and grazing. It was however very run down and overrun with Cape Tulip, but with Ron planting Subterranean Clover together with his careful pasture management, things started to improve.

The property has seen many changes over the years, with the clearing of land and the moving and building of various sheds, to drilling seven bores before water was found.

While improving their vineyard as well as juggling several mixed farm enterprises, Ron and Gladys raised four children, all of whom helped out in the vineyard and with farm duties from a young age.

When their eldest son Kevin joined the partnership after leaving school, a 40 acre established vineyard was purchased and redeveloped. Some years later 40 acres of bare land at Light Pass were purchased and planted entirely with vines. Neutrog was applied using a subsoil banding method and broadcast for top dressing.

Today the Schild's property of 160 acres of vines produces several varieties of grapes including Shiraz, Semillon, Riesling, Grenache, Chardonnay, and Cabernet Sauvignon which are sold to several Barossa Valley wineries. Ron has overseen it all – the rundown dairy farm is certainly now only a distant memory.

Ron and Kevin have been avid users of Neutrog products on the vines for the past 15 years, and are firm believers that treating the soil and root zone is the most important practice for producing healthy strong vines. To this end, Ron and Kevin use Rapid Raiser as a pre-plant application for new vines and apply Bounce Back as a means of maintaining healthy consistent growth and yields in all existing vines.

"Our vines are in excellent condition with fantastic shoot growth and large dark green canopies," Ron says.

Ron and Kevin's preferred method of application for new plantings is firstly to deep-rip the soil and then work Rapid Raiser into the soil. New rootlings are planted in the well prepared soil with a planting machine. Ron stated "Laying the foundation early gives the vines the best opportunity to get away to a good start by developing strong, healthy root growth."

Ron and Kevin really appreciate the great results achieved by using Neutrog products.

Ron and Kevin Schild *n*

GOGO JUICE

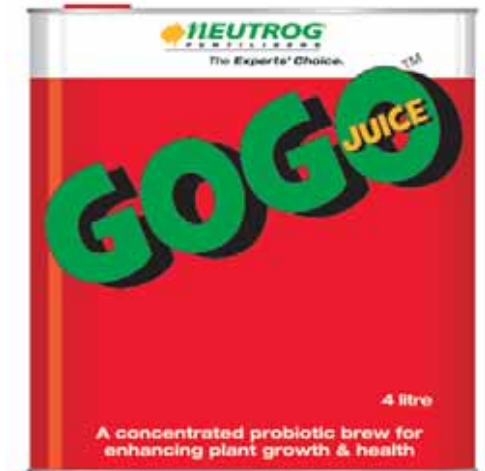
Go Go Juice has been developed over the last few years by Neutrog in conjunction with Dr Uwe Stroeher, a senior microbiologist with over 20 years national and international experience in his field.

The resultant product "Go Go Juice" is literally teeming with beneficial microbiology and is essentially a pro-biotic for soils and plants.

The carefully selected microbes have been proliferated utilising complex carbohydrates and sugars through a unique aerobic brewing system in which kelp, seaweed, fish, humic acid and manure have been broken down and digested by the beneficial bacteria.

The resultant liquid product will supply your soil and plants with a huge boost of the living microbiology necessary for them to perform at their optimum level, increasing their ability to resist pest and disease and to help withstand heat and frost stress.

Go Go Juice will be available from September this year. *n*



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