

# feedback

Seasonal update from Neutrog Australia : Winter 2001

*The winter phase of our year round fertilising program is the key to spring & summer success*

**As more gardeners become aware of the benefits of regular applications of well-balanced organic fertiliser, the response to our easy to follow year-round fertiliser program has been tremendous.**

The Neutrog year-round fertiliser program recommends treating our gardens and lawns with boosting fertiliser in spring and autumn when we require maximum sustainable growth, and with 'consolidating' fertilisers in winter and summer when we do not wish or expect a lot of new growth.

Bounce Back is used on gardens and Blade Runner on lawns in winter and summer, whereas Rapid Raiser is best used on gardens and Upsurge on lawns, in spring and autumn. Another benefit of applying organic fertiliser throughout the year is that adding organic matter of any type to the soil results in an improved soil structure and drainage, together with increased earthworm and microbial activity.

There is an old belief that many home gardeners hold true, which says that we should only feed in autumn and spring.



This is correct when applying manufactured or 'chemical fertilisers'. In winter they are leached too readily and require a high soil temperature to be taken up and utilised by the plant.

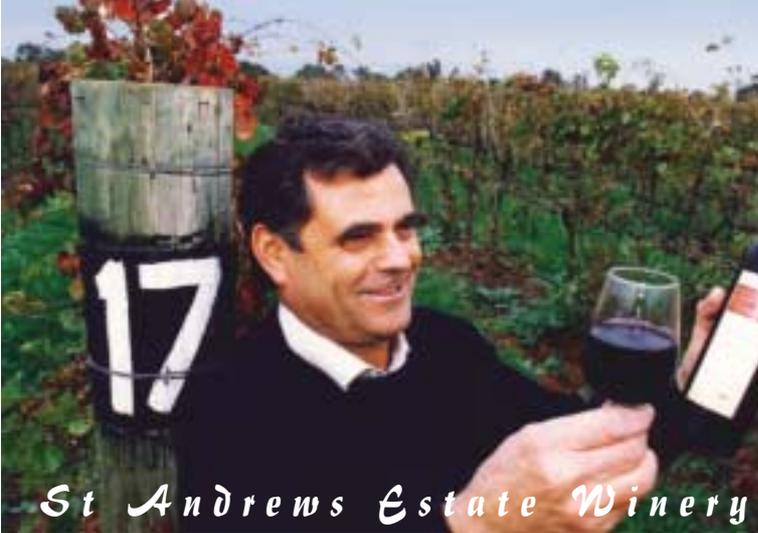
In summer these fertilisers are also ineffective, as they can promote a lot of lush new tender, growth that gets burnt in the heat of this season.

Feeding with Bounce Back in winter will not produce visible results at this time, yet

below the ground there are great benefits. Strong root growth is encouraged despite the cold conditions, translating into a more exuberant flush of spring growth as the temperature rises. Because it is a slow release product that is lower in nitrogen, Blade Runner, when used on lawns in winter, reduces the build up of thatch, as well as adding to and improving the soil structure and health.

The end result of using organic fertilisers during winter is that your plants and lawns will be more vigorous and healthy, and will have a head start in spring

**NEUTROG**  
FERTILISERS  
The Experts' Choice



*St Andrews Estate Winery*

A relatively new winery taking out prizes at the International Wine Challenge 2001, which is held in conjunction with the London International Wine Trade Fair, is quite an achievement. This year they received the highly esteemed Gold Medal for their 2000 vintage Shiraz and bronze medal for their 2000 vintage Merlot. Last year they won two bronze medals at the International Wine Challenge, for their 1999 Shiraz and 1999 Merlot. The 1999 Shiraz also received a score of 87 from the U.S. Wine Spectator Magazine and 90 from the U.K. Wine Magazine.



Ceravolo St Andrews Estate wines are produced from grapes grown on their own fifty acre vineyard on the Adelaide Plains at MacDonal Park. The winery produces three premium wines, Merlot, Shiraz and Chardonnay. Vigneron and Director of Ceravolo St Andrews estate Wines, Dr Joe Ceravolo, says that "Because we are a small family company, this allows us to be the guardians of quality from the grape to the bottle."

The planting of vines on St Andrews Estate began in 1995. The vines are grown with carefully managed row and vine spacing, dual cordon vertical trellising, and meticulous hand

pruning is done, ensuring good air circulation. As a result, and in combination with restricted drip irrigation, the vines are virtually disease free. Because it introduced beneficial insects into the vineyards, St Andrews Estate does not have to use pesticides and chemical use is minimised.

When they started this vineyard, chicken manure was used to feed the vines. This brought with it an array of weeds, not previously found on the property. Some of these weeds, such as stinging nettle were difficult to control.

Three years ago Joe started to use Neutrog fertilisers. Previously, he had believed that using these were too expensive, and that they could not afford it. After having tried them however, he discovered that the change from raw manure to Rapid Raiser and Bounce Back actually saved them money. "I like Neutrog fertilisers because they are so easy to use. We have been able to reduce the number of passes we make over the vineyard when fertilising, and the introduction of weeds is prevented" Joe says. Using a custom mix of Neutrog fertiliser allows Joe to add what the soil tests and tissue analysis show to be lacking to the soil.

The garden of plantswoman and garden designer, Alison Aplin, is an inspiration and delight to visit at any time of year. Covering three acres in the picturesque Clare Valley, 130 km north of Adelaide, this garden has been planted to withstand the harsh climate of the area and showcases plants that suit these local conditions.

The plants are a collection of exotics, blended with natives and interspersed with heritage roses. Alison has succeeded in establishing a remarkable garden, while contending with extremes of heat, drought, frost, evaporation and wind. As well as the beautiful garden, Alison and her husband David, have established a nursery specialising in the types of plants showcased in the garden - plants that suit South Australian conditions, as well as her local region.



When Alison and her husband, David, first purchased the property in 1995, it consisted of bare paddocks with only a few mature trees. The soil on the property was very infertile and included areas of slate, chalk, clay and limestone.

Alison says that "The three most important things about gardening anywhere, and especially under these conditions, are watering well, feeding regularly and constant mulching. Deep watering is essential. I aim to get the plants to develop a deep root system, which enables them to be hardier and survive the hot, dry summers". Alison feeds her garden regularly to encourage strong and healthy plant

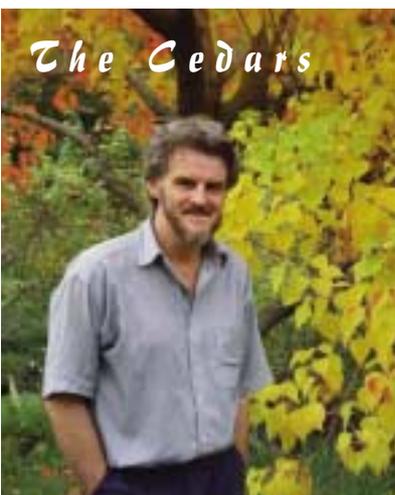
growth, and to build up the nutrients that the soil lacks. "Feeding is paramount as the soil in this area is so infertile", Alison said. She has used and recommended Neutrog fertilisers for a number of years. As well as this having a beneficial effect on the plants with noticeable improvement in vigour and lushness, Alison has noticed that there are now earthworms present in the garden, that were not there previously. Constant mulching is also essential to reduce watering dramatically and develop stronger, healthier plants.

The garden will be open in 2002, in late March and mid May, as part of Australia's Open Garden Scheme.



*fertilise all year round for explosive results*

## the experts' choice



**T**his historic 150 acre property which belonged to the famous Australian painter Hens Heysen, has been lovingly restored by the Heysen Family. The original garden, which includes numerous Himalayan Cedars and Monterey Pines, dates back to the 1870's when the residence was first built. It was greatly enhanced and developed by Hans and Sally Heysen after they purchased it in 1912. The Heysens established the garden not only to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the house and it's setting, but also to provide picking flowers for the house and painting subjects.

The Cedars today is still famous for the stately gum trees that featured in so many of Heysen's paintings. The gardens are planted with perennials and annuals favoured by the artist. These include delphiniums, penstemons, foxgloves, Canterbury bells, stocks and poppies. Heysen also had a passion for roses, and many of the roses in this garden are the original specimens planted sixty to eighty years ago.

The Curator, Alan Campbell, says "To get good results from the old roses is no easy task. Good performance requires regular applications of fertiliser, and the best product to provide this is Neutrog. When I first started at The Cedars seven years ago we tried many different fertilisers. We started to use Neutrog about five years ago and the results have been great. We have had consistent healthy growth in our perennials and our roses. We also find that this product is so convenient and easy to use."

As well as being part of Australia's Open Garden Scheme, The Cedars is open every day, except for Saturdays.

### The Victorian State Rose Garden Update

The autumn flush of blooms is excellent this year. A combination of frequent deadheading, the control of weeds, pests and diseases, recent rain and regular applications of Rapid Raiser have done the trick. All take a bow!

### Our new rose fertiliser is sure to have a big impact!

A new dedicated rose formula, the result of 3 years research and testing is about to be released by Neutrog as part of their Monera range. Recommended by the Rose Society of South Australia and supplied in new convenient, reusable packaging it will be called *Sudden Impact for Roses*.

Watch the shelves!

**S**ituated in the Adelaide suburb of Marleston, Fred's Nursery was proud to be one of the first retail nurseries in South Australia to stock Neutrog fertilisers. Since then they have continued to use and recommend Neutrog products as their number one choice.

As well as a large range of plants and general nursery lines, Fred's Nursery sells a lot of bare rooted roses. Once the winter season has ended, these roses are then potted for sale throughout the rest of the year. Neutrog fertiliser is added to the potting mix for all these

potted roses and it works well. Fred recommends that his customers feed their garden every 8 to 9 weeks with Neutrog fertiliser to ensure great results.

After 10 years at a nearby location, Fred and Afrula moved their nursery to its current location 3.5 years ago. The new 4000 square metre premises were purpose built as a retail nursery and the move has proved to be extremely successful.

The secret to the success of Fred's nursery is making the customer happy. In Fred's words, "That's our number one!"



**E**stablished in 1959, Din San Nursery at Dingley supplies an extensive range of plants to the horticultural and landscaping industries. They have a retail and wholesale nursery, specialising in the production of advanced trees. They also offer a contract growing service, on site consultations, plant schedule collation and stock sourcing.



The retail nursery has sold Neutrog fertilisers for the last ten years and the feedback they receive from their customers is very positive.

The wholesale nursery, on over 68 acres at Dingley and a site at Emerald, is one of the largest in metropolitan Melbourne. They have been using Neutrog fertiliser on their nursery stock for several years with great results. Sam Astorino, the Operations Manager, at the Wholesale Nursery says that they used to use blood and bone to fertilise their stock, but have found that Rapid Raiser provides more nutrients and acts as a more complete feed. "Initially we trialed several sections in the nursery, some with blood and bone, and some with Rapid Raiser. Plants fed with Rapid Raiser were much better and of higher quality - they looked lusher, healthier and stronger". Containerised nursery stock is given four applications of fertiliser each year.

## Burrell Garden



Situated in the Adelaide suburb of Leabrook, the Burrell garden evokes images of the walled gardens in cities such as Edinburgh, and the famous English garden at Sissinghurst. These were the source of inspiration that caused Margaret Burrell to transform a small back yard into a delightful walled garden, where the

tranquil water centrepiece is a formal swimming pool. There is a lush border of lawn around the pool, surrounded by garden beds of luxurious roses and perennials. The old red brick wall, which was constructed to frame this setting, is smothered with luscious climbing roses. It recently won the *ABC Award for Innovations in Developing a Garden for South Australia's Low Rainfall Environment*.

The garden contains more than 200 roses, both heritage and modern varieties, as well as complimentary shrubs, perennials and groundcovers. The planting is intensive, and yet the plants

thrive and grow with lushness and vigour. To achieve this healthy growth and mass of colour in a relatively small area, where plants are all competing for water and nutrients, care must be given to the ongoing maintenance of the garden. Margaret says that "The secret is feeding and mulching well." Margaret has always used organic fertilisers, and has used Rapid Raiser in more recent years. She feeds regularly from late winter and early spring through till the end of autumn.

The Burrell Garden has been open to the public as part of Australia's Open Garden Scheme.

Established in 1960, Altona Memorial Park incorporates a crematorium, two chapels, a Floral Lawn Cemetery and Memorial Gardens. Covering 100 acres, it includes substantial rose gardens, serenely landscaped rock pools, memorial trees and a tranquil lily pond.

The Rose Gardens contains more than 3000 roses, many with exquisite fragrances. Recent additions to Altona Memorial Park include 140 standard weeping roses, many of which are in shades of red. These 2 metre high specimen roses are very popular for people wishing to have a bronze plaque positioned around the base.

The gardeners have used Neutrog fertilisers for the last 4 years, and applying it four times a year with great results. In the rose garden it is applied to each individual rose prior to the soil being cultivated. The ground is then covered by a layer of fine pine mulch. The Grounds Foreman, Aaron Howell, says that "We have noticed that since starting to use Neutrog fertilisers, our roses have had a longer flowering season".



Rural Funds Management Ltd. is an Australian agricultural investment company that is currently developing over 270 hectares of prime vineyard in the Barossa Valley. Their interest in this viticulture portfolio is to establish and develop best management practice for vineyards. In the last few years, their vineyard development practices have been changed from using raw manure to using Neutrog fertiliser.

Matt Bawden, the Vineyard Manager, says that "This change, from using chicken litter in our young vine development, to using Neutrog Rapid Raiser, has produced both cost and time savings. The bulk delivery of their fertiliser, the balanced nutrient content, when combined with the ease of application of the Rapid Raiser pellets, has

reduced the number of passes around the vineyards from two to one."

The chicken litter previously used brought with it a weed burden, as it was not sterilised. The raw manure also caused problems in application, with the uneven size of the manure components making the calibration of machines for even spreading difficult.

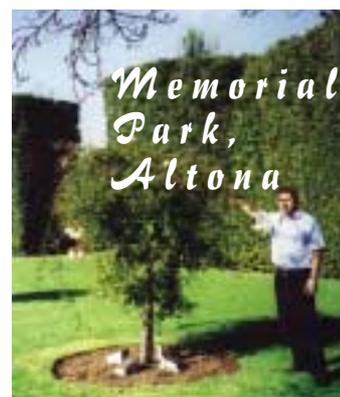
After the application of the raw chicken manure, several repeat applications were necessary in order to supply missing trace elements. The change to Rapid Raiser has meant that only one application needed to be applied, with the fertiliser pellets already having the essential trace elements in them.

The uniformity of the pellets allowed easy calibration of machinery and the spread of the fertiliser is now more accurate and economical.

One application of Rapid Raiser is made just prior to planting, and the fertiliser is then incorporated into the soil. This allows the vines to take up the nutrients as they establish themselves and gives them the best head start.

Rural Funds Management are clients of Neutrog's commercial distributor in the local area, Farmer Johns. Clark Skinner, Farmer Johns Horticulturist Agronomist, says that the feedback from their valued clients who use Neutrog fertiliser has been excellent.

"Neutrog organic fertiliser offers a great alternative to mineral fertilisers, and its slow release nature results in much more consistent and even plant growth. We recommend using Neutrog fertiliser on both existing vines and in the establishment of new vineyards."



## feedback

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