

# CB Farming News

NOVEMBER 2012

PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES

ISSUE FOUR



*Left; 45Y82 Dryland Canola, southern NSW.  
Right; Emu Rock wheat, southern NSW.*

## CB Farming News 2012 - 4th edition

Welcome to the final edition of CB Farming News for 2012. It has been quite an eventful year to date, with a full range of emotions and conditions experienced along the way. The year started off with wet conditions and low grain prices.

Despite experiencing a decade one rainfall winter, most growers have come out the other end looking quite good, particularly those who have put the work into improving their soil structure and their farming system. A well-timed spring rain in combination with mild spring weather, the majority of crops have filled well, looking to have grown to perfectly to this season's potential.

However, in terms of our dairy clients, high grain prices are not so promising, especially in combination with a fall in milk price. This has just underlined the importance of having a well-structured pasture system in place, where they can maximize every hectare of

land, therefore growing as much of your own feed as possible.

The three biggest costs on a dairy farm are grain, hay, and grass. If you can become more efficient with your land area, it can allow you to reduce brought-in costs, improving your overall profit margin and long-term viability.

### Emu Rock - a new low rainfall, short season hard wheat.

With our growing season rainfall becoming more and more unpredictable, we need to start looking at new varieties that have worked with the late break, low rainfall year; this new variety from Intergrain looks to fit the bill perfectly.

With the late break and low rainfall season, it has stood up extremely well, and is looking to yield accordingly.

Further more, it fits into our preferred system better than other short season wheats currently available, touch

With high grain prices and timely late rain, 2012 looks to be a relatively successful season for most growers.

wood, it stood up better to stripe rust better as opposed to other short season varieties like mace, which generally require at least 2-3 applications of fungicide.

We can see Emu rock becoming a must-have variety for growers in marginal areas, only problem I can see it having is the CCN resistance.



**Straight shaftal ready to be over sown with millet at Womboota, Southern NSW.**



**Discussing summer cropping options and stubble management at our Southern NSW field walk.**

## **Spring field walk at Bernard James - Creating a farming system that works for you.**

On the 24th of October we met at Bernard James property in Womboota, Southern NSW, to highlight the various successful farming systems that Bernard has employed.

We have been working with Bernard for some years now, and thought that his property was an excellent way to demonstrate to those interested, the things that can be achieved when you put in the effort. Bernard's property is a real credit to himself and goes to show what you can achieve when you put a system in place and have the discipline to stick by it.

Highlights of the day.

- Spray topping barley grass in perennial pasture with out damaging the ryegrass.

- Growing the right pasture species to ensure quality over the longest period of time.

- What benefits deep ripping can provide when used in the right circumstances.

- The importance of soil structure and the resultant plant growth and productivity.

- Having Lucerne as a feed base to eliminate feed gaps in early summer and autumn.

- Establishing dry land pastures in heavy traffic paddocks to avoid animal health issues.

- Establishing under-sown legumes in cereal crops as a break crop the following year.

Bernard's farm is an excellent example of how putting a strong, well planned out farming system in place can benefit not only feed quantity and quality, but overall sustainability as a true value add system.

A big thank you for all those who came along and a special thank you to Bernard to allowing us on to his property for the day. We hope you found it as enjoyable as we did and were able to take something value out of the day.

## **Spring cropping field walks - Temora, Echuca, W.A and Piangil.**

Over the last couple of months, we have held a number of other field walks in the various regions that we work in, including Temora on the 29th of Aug, Echuca-Moama 5th Sept, Western Australia 19th Sept and Pinagil 25th Sept.

All the field walks that we held over the period were quite well attended, with some very good and interesting results

observed. The most encouraging things to come out of the various walks was the gradual improvement in soil health and structure occurring across the different places we visited.

Whether it was in the better rain fall areas or the drier areas, majority of crops looked like they had grown to the season quite suitably, particularly the ones that experienced quite a low rainfall winter. It was quite obvious driving around to pick the difference in crops that had been pushed too hard early, as opposed to the crops that had been nursed through accordingly, to suit the season.

A quick thank you to all those who let us on too their properties to look at their crops and discuss the various methods and systems that they had put in place. We hope that all those who attended enjoyed the days and were able to take something out of it.

If you were unable to make any of them, we encourage you to get to one next year, they are an enjoyable day out and a good chance to see how other farmers are setting up their farming systems.

## **Production Wise - reducing risk.**

As some of you may be aware, we have been looking into the Production Wise system to help further improve the services we can offer our growers.

The production wise system is essentially a planning and monitoring

program that enables you to keep an on going Gross Margin for individual paddocks, while also having the ability to monitor crop growth, performance and rainfall through satellite imagery.

It also offers various other benefits such as benchmarking farm profitability with in your region, as well as rainfall and yield estimates. All these tools that they offer can provide us with more information when making planning and in crop decisions. The more information we have at hand before making decisions, the more we can lower the risk profile of your business.

We are quite keen for our growers to take full advantage of the Production Wise system, and they will be running a free introductory session on the 23rd of January, as Micheal Pengilley from grain growers has agreed to come down to Echuca and run a session to teach us all the ins and outs of the program. We will be sending out emails to our growers in the coming weeks regarding those who are willing to attend. If your are interested in coming along, please get in touch with one of us to let us know. In the mean time, have a look at there website to get a quick idea of what are some of the advantages that the production wise system can offer you. [www.productionwise.com.au](http://www.productionwise.com.au).

**Website - [www.cbfarmingsystem.com.au](http://www.cbfarmingsystem.com.au) is now up and running!**

While we're on the subject of websites, our very own website is now up running. You can now find our newsletters on there which in time will require a member log in which all clients will receive, as well various other interesting things, such as some of the photos of different crops and changes we have been able to achieve. While it is still a work in progress, we hope to continue to develop the page further to the point where it will be another tool for our growers to use to further enhance the service that we are able to offer our growers.

## **Crop topping - reducing the seed bank**

Reducing the seed bank in your paddocks is absolutely vital when it comes to improving your overall profitability and productivity. The key to growing the most productive crops or pastures is to be only growing what you are trying to grow.

Every different species of grass or broadleaf plant that is growing along side your desired species is competing for moisture and nutrients, and ultimately robbing your plants of growth, resulting sub optimal performance.

The last month has been the perfect time to start planning for your next crop and if you know that you have high weed populations in your paddocks, you need to be/already have sprayed out the weeds before they seed. The benefits of stopping your weeds from setting seed well and truly out way the very minor cost of spraying a small amount of glyphosate, Diquat or paraquat to stop weeds from setting seed. Crop registration should be checked before spraying any of the chemicals.

If you don't get on top of weeds now, it means you will need to be doing it in the autumn, when you should be focusing on getting crops established in the lovely autumn weather.

## **Summer Crops - taking advantage of high grain prices and low water prices.**

With the current grain and water prices the way they are, there has never been a better opportunity to try your hand at summer crops. Many of our growers are all ready taking advantage of the opportunity, with our growers growing a number of different summer crops including; Sorghum, both grain and hay, Soy Beans, Maize, Sun Flowers and Lucerne to mention a few.

There are some very exciting and profitable options for growing various summer crops, so if you've ever thought about having a go a summer crops, now

is the perfect time while water is cheap and abundant, and grain prices are high.

## **Organic Carbon - the key to improving your cropping system.**

Organic Carbon is very much a buzz word in farming at the moment, and for good reason, it is the key behind growing healthy, viable crops.

Organic Carbon is the catalyst behind healthy soil function and ultimately crop/pasture performance. Soil carbon is directly related to higher levels of nutrient cycling with in the soil, particularly Nitrogen and Phosphorus, but the majority of macro and micro nutrients in general. High levels of soil organic carbon is also crucial to buffering out high level of unwanted nutrients such as Aluminum. While you can't really lower such nutrients, by improving the levels of organic carbon in your soil, you can improve soil productivity by minimizing the effects of soil restraints through improved organic carbon levels.

The other reason why improving organic carbon levels in your soils will be so valuable is carbon farming and sequestration possibly could be a very real industry, which could effectively result in dollars in your pockets. All you have to do is continue what we are currently trying to do, which is grow healthier, more profitable crops through better farming practices.



*Grazing canola showing significant root development, the key in producing more soil organic carbon.*

## **A u t o m a t e d irrigation - improving your water use efficiency while reducing labour costs.**

Have you ever considered automating your irrigation system? You could not only become more water efficient, you could be saving yourself a lot of extra stress and time by automating your system. Although it does seem quite expensive to set up and install an automated system, when you take into account the savings made in terms of labour hours, its not an expensive as you think.

Once you have a automated system that is set up correctly, you can essentially irrigate your farm from any where in the world, all you need is an internet connection. No more running around in the middle of the night checking if bays are finished, you simply place your order, and when the water arrives, your bay outlets will open and shut based on set times.

We did go to a field walk with Wisa on the 21st of November along with some interested growers. Where we looked at a fully automated open channel system and pipes and rises. If anyone is interested in taking a look that could get to the walk due to short notice and busy time of the year, Craig should be able to organize a visit to the farms if their is interest.

### **Mark's Mumble - New employee.**

We would like to welcome Mark's new trainee Nutritionist, Dan Hoch to the office. Dan is originally from Churchill in the latrobe valley and studied Agricultural at the University of Melbourne.

Dan started with Mark in early October and had been a welcome addition to the office.

Milk prices starting off much lower this season, this makes even more important that your herd reaches its peak production.

If you have any questions or concerns about your animals, feel free to ring or email Mark or Dan to discuss it.

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## **CB Farming client enjoys success in regional grower group.**

We were recently informed that one of our clients in central NSW has enjoyed considerable success in his regional grower group.

Duncan Lander, who's farm is just north of Grenfell, was judged to have produced the 2nd best wheat crop and best canola crop in his grower group. This is a marvelous achievement for Dunc, considering he is only a relatively new client who has sown with our program for the first time this year, making substantial GM savings along the way. It speaks volume for Dunc as a farmer and how well he has adopted to the CB farming system. Keep up the good work Dunc!

## **The annual CB Farming fishing trip - where to next?**

With the year quickly coming to an end and christmas fast approaching, will be into next seasons winter crops before we know it, and most importantly, next years fishing trip!

If you have any idea's for next years fishing trip, feel free to tell one of us where and when your suggestion is. So far suggestions have been thrown up including Far north QLD and Indonesia in the June/July period.

Last years trip was well and truly enjoyed by all those who went and there has already been a number of new people indicate that they would love to come along.

*Regards,*

*Craig Emmett  
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