SAFE FERTILISERS

JULY/AUGUST 2010 NEWSLETTER

News and updates from SAFE Fertilisers

Message from Les and Patti

SAFE founders

With the decline of the environment, it is now more timely than ever to choose sustainability. This 'new generation' newsletter is the first of a tri-annual publication, bringing you up to date with sustainable agricultural inputs and cutting edge information to help us play a part in improving food quality and the environment. The resurgence of SAFE Fertilisers and ALROC is being embraced by the wider community, particularly by farmers. SAFE Fertilisers is keen to partner with farmers in order to improve soils, production and viability. We are being given a wake-up call, which we ignore at our own peril. If we persist with chemical use, our grandchildren and their children may only hear about the Great Barrier Reef as folklore stories told by our generation and see it only as virtual reality on screens.

When Panic is Good

Neville Janke checks on the seed of a 'green panic' pasture before it is harvested for the grass seed market. This seed returned the farmer approximately $17/kg. The soil is now ready to be remineralised after being harvested and fed off.

Alroc ExtraPhos is an excellent blend for pasture at 120kg/ha. At around $60/ha, it is a cost-effective and potent choice.

Neville Janke's Story

To those of you who have not yet dealt with Neville Janke, we are pleased to let him introduce himself:

"I grew up on Queensland's Darling Downs on a mixed farming operation specialising in dairy, beef and grain. I remember riding on tractors with my father, and being told that we must clean the cultivator tyres. What was on them? Worms, doing their job breaking down the stubble.

When the first load of Super came onto the farm, everyone was excited that things would really start to grow and expand. However, over time, weeds started to dominate, weed sprays of every type began to proliferate, and chisel ploughs had to be bought as the soil began to get harder. This is where my career in agronomy began, studying the use of chemical fertiliser and applying it to our own operation.

At the time, there was minimum tillage occurring - conserving water was vital. The dairy cows were producing lots of milk from our chemically fertilised paddocks. However, it looked more like 'white water' - on top of which, our cows were very susceptible to mastitis, buffalo fly, foot rot and calving difficulties.

By this stage in life, it was my responsibility to pay the bills, and things would not add up. Vet bills were increasing year by year. Wear and tear on equipment was getting worse. Fertiliser and weed spray accounts were getting bigger each season as we searched for any answer to our problem.

Feed specialists were called in to work out rations for quality milk, but instead we ended up with more quantity - a further expense as more milk vats were needed. No one had looked at the cause of our problem until a mineral fertiliser rep called one day and made a comment in passing, saying, "You have no minerals in your feed". This comment stuck and I decided I must begin to learn more about minerals.

We started by using minerals in our feed ration - carbon, basalt, decomposed granite, dolomite, rock phosphate, zeolite and many more blended together in a fine powder. Within 14 days milk quality increased! Over six months, foot rot disappeared and mastitis cleared up.

We also began to use minerals on our paddocks, balancing up soil reports with the correct minerals required. Grain quality improved and there were less weeds. The soil was softer, the cattle more contented (requiring less feed), paddocks were cleaned out and there was less wastage.

All these learning experiences and many more over the last 35 years have brought me to the place of promoting blended minerals to the chemical fertiliser world. I began further study into Horticulture at Gatton, and managing companies dedicated to soil nutrition. The passion for nutrition followed with a contract into the turf industry and more study resulting in the horticultural landscaping arena. Turf, landscaping, gardens and city council applications all put the finishing touches on the full circle of plant and soil nutrition. Minerals are the foundation of life, and through SAFE Fertilisers we provide a service that looks for the cause of environmental, soil, plant and animal problems and supplies the solution to them."

Neville Janke, Dip Hort., Dip Ag., Dip Hort. Landscaping, Dip Business, Cert IV Training & Assessment, Cert Fertcare Level C Advisor

Potassium: Sulphate or Chloride Based?

From Neville Janke

The debate regarding which form of potassium to use can be heard at many of the farmers' meetings that I have been involved in over the years.

Sometimes the decision comes down to price, what the local agent has in stock or 'the age old story' of using what Dad used to use! Potash, or the element potassium comes either in muriated (chloride-based) or sulphated (environmentally friendly) forms. Conventional farming sees muriated potash's use in many applications across farming areas of Australia.

Dr Volker Kleinhenz writes that chloride may accumulate in coastal regions when high doses of chloride-containing fertilisers are applied. Given that we know chloride in bleach takes the colour out of fabric; what could it be doing to our reef?

My concerns regarding muriated potash and its use in catchment areas around the Great Barrier Reef were highlighted some months ago with a family visit to Green Island. Whilst snorkeling and coral viewing from glass bottomed boats, I was dismayed to find very little colour in the coral. The coral was still there, but it was lacking any of the picture-perfect brochure vibrancy.

What are our industry powers and government bodies doing about the use of such chloride-based fertilisers? We only hear about the damage that nitrogen and phosphorous run-off may be doing to the reef.

SAFE Fertilisers uses only sulphated potassium in all of its potash-based fertiliser blends. Additionally, it complies with the requirements of the Government's Reef Rescue Plan. SAFE Fertilisers has a qualified Fertcare Level C Advisor who can assist in any fertiliser programming requirements.

SAFE FERTILISERS

PO Box 2225
56 Junction Rd
Burleigh QLD 4220
Australia
P +61 (0)7 5593 8042
F +61 (0)7 5593 4877
info@safefertilisers.com.au
www.safefertilisers.com.au

Soil Acidity: Achieving the Perfect pH

Good soil is created - not inherited. Australia is one of the world's oldest continents and is notorious for its ancient soils.

Millennia of rain, wind and varying temperatures have leached, pulverised and degraded her top soil. As a result, many minerals have been swept into the oceans and blown away to other continents. A saving grace for growers is the incidence of past volcanic activity and the remnants of previous inland seas. Modern technology is able to call upon the activity of these ancient times and fast forward the remaining pockets of nutrients laid down in the dinosaur era to nourish our present day, impoverished soils with historical nutrients.

SAFE Fertilisers has perfected the method of crushing rock from various sources to produce a full spectrum mineral fertiliser, which is prilled (balled) allowing for easy spreading from seeders, fertiliser spreaders and even from the air.

What has this all to do with a perfect pH? Old soils tend to be acidic. Why? It is an unfortunate fact that, when leaching occurs, it is mostly the minerals that disappear into the oceans. To boost growth from depleted soils, since the end of World War II, artificial fertiliser has been the fertiliser of mainstream choice. Organic matter (mulch) has been largely omitted from the equation as the resulting explosive growth from the chemical fertilisers seemed to be so successful. However, it did not take long to realise that these acidic inputs were further leaching the alkaline minerals at an even faster rate, and were even destroying virgin soil. The result has been lower protein and sugar levels, as well as insect, viral and fungal attack.

So, what do plants really need? The correct answer is minerals, mulch, moisture and microbes. When minerals are applied to the soil, providing that there is some moisture present, microbes will feed upon the minerals and the mulch to produce humus. What is humus? It is the perfect plant food. It is a pH-perfect, jelly-like substance containing everything that plant growth requires. It cannot be leached, evaporated or separated from the soil.

Perfect pH is vital in the soil environment and, in turn, is a significant factor in our own perfect health.

SAFE Fertiliser Specials

As winter planting finishes and crops emerge, it is time for a top up (or an initial application) of fertiliser. These July/August specials will help the hip pocket:

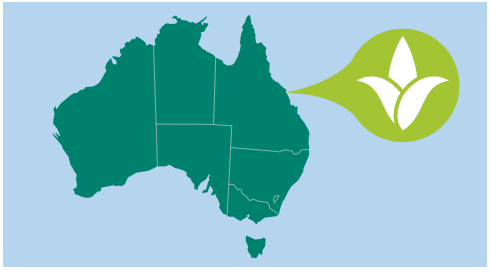
Vital P-Blast:	N 13 & P 19 with Fulvic Acid	$2.85/L in 1000L shuttles
Vital N-Blast:	N 40 with Humic Acid	$1.55/L in 1000L shuttles
Vital K-Blast:	N 8, P 0.5 & K 11.5 with natural plant sugars & stimulants	$3.30/L in 1000L shuttles

Product Tips

Coated Urea: Coated to requirements, e.g. with zinc, sulphur, calcium, zeolite, carbon or blended with fine natural minerals, such as phosphorous or potassium. Note: Coating slows the release of nitrogen for better plant uptake, resulting in less run-off into our waterways and less wastage.

The SAFE Fertiliser plant is able to manufacture custom blended fertilisers for every requirement.

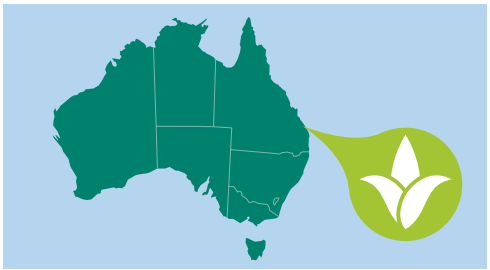
Demonstration Results



Mirani, QLD:
Sugar Cane Demonstration

John Sweet was official Field Co-ordinator of this demonstration to show the beneficial effects of replacing artificial fertiliser with the use of **ALROC** to grow sugar cane in the Pioneer Valley. Demonstrated benefits were:

- Lower input costs
- Better tonnage and CCs (sugar level measure), which was a full point above the conventional, chemically grown, control plot
- No disease or pest damage, despite the fact that no chemicals or herbicides were used. This also resulted in a healthier environment for farm workers. Note: toxic chemical residues in both the environment and humans in the Mackay region is a current health dilemma.
- Better soil structure and root growth



Bundaberg, QLD:
Sugar Cane Demonstration

The following result is from a Bundaberg sugar cane grower with a soil pH of 6.

MAP Supablend was applied to young plant cane eight weeks after planting at a rate of 500kg/hectare directly onto the rows. This was the last fertiliser the crop was to get. The comment was that despite the extremely dry conditions, the cane treated with **ALROC** maintained good colour throughout the season and it was believed that it would have good sugar levels. The assumption proved to be correct as the harvested cane achieved 13.8% sugar content. At that stage of the harvest, the cane was 1.8% higher in sugar than the mill average of 12%.