

Seeds, pastures and fertiliser

Boosting clover performance

GROWERS should be planning out their pasture, seeding and fertiliser programs at this time of year. For those who are yet to do so there is still time. This feature aims to provide some direction for growers.



ALOSCA Technologies dry granular inoculants provide a cost effective option for growers to improve underperforming sub-clover pastures with or without reseeded.

Alosca granular inoculant usage extension, to include top-dressing or surface spreading with fertiliser at or before the break, provides an avenue to deliver the benefits of the new Group C inoculant strain to existing sub-clover seed-banks.

Alosca technical manager Chris Poole said the trialling and development process with top dressing had been primarily driven by growers who had been experiencing promising results.

"We've been playing catch-up with the growers on this one, last season however we were able to identify positive responses in glasshouse and field evaluations to support what grower experiences have been suggesting," Mr Poole said.

Gibson farmer Ray Sullivan outlined how his rotation had benefited from incorporating ALOSCA into the legume phase of the program.

Mr Sullivan said most of the ALOSCA product he had used was done when sowing clover and serradella pastures - with good success.

"Good legume pastures are crucial to our farming system, as we are running sheep on these pastures, with the added advantage of fixing as much nitrogen as possible as quickly as possible to allow a short phase cropping consisting mostly of two years beginning with canola followed by wheat or barley and returning to pasture while good seed

levels still exist to establish good instantly producing pasture," Mr Sullivan said.

He said some paddocks, while having good legume levels, were often found to be not nodulating very well and on a few occasions he had resorted to topdressing Alosca.

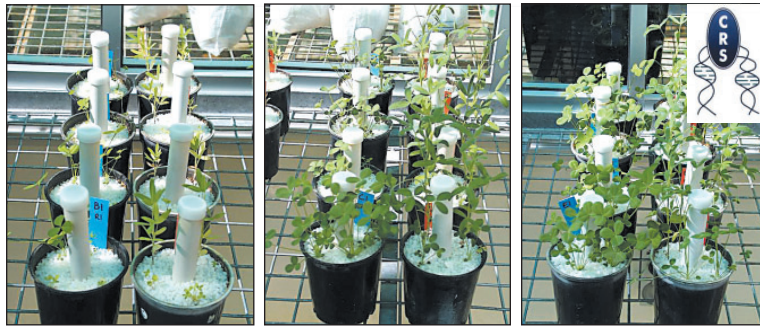
"I wasn't brave enough to just add this to our normal top dressing of phosphate and potash when summer conditions prevailed and there was negligible soil moisture," he said.

"I waited and performed the operation once an opening rain was received in May and then applied the above mix with 10kg of Alosca included with excellent results. A much more vigorous stand was achieved.

"The same result may have been achieved by spreading in January/February as is claimed by the makers but I felt it was not much inconvenience to wait for good conditions as 10kg/ha is not a lot of coverage and I wanted to give the Rhizobia the best chance I possibly could."

Mr Poole said the next logical step to turn around underperforming sub-clover, provided soil pH and nutrient needs had been addressed, was to look at upgrading the sub-clover inoculant stain to improve legume content and production.

The new Group C strain, WSM1325, was developed in WA by the Centre for Rhizobium Studies (CRS) at Murdoch University and tested nationally and subsequently released by the National Rhizobium Program (NRP) in 2006.



□ Strain WU95 1968-1994. The old Group C strain, common to many WA pasture systems.

□ Strain WSM409 1994-2005. Improved acidity tolerance.

□ Strain WSM1325 released 2006. Improved acidity tolerance and broader species range.

Group C (sub clover) development paying dividends

□ ABOVE: The pots are sown with the same species using the improved strains from left to right. New strain developments have improved pasture legume performance under broader soil type conditions across a greater species range. Picture supplied by the Centre for Rhizobium Studies (CRS) Murdoch University.

The new strain offers improved nitrogen fixation and nodulation initiation in more acidic environments than earlier Group C strains and will effectively nodulate a broader range of trifoliate clovers inclusive of the commonly grown Balansa and Persian clovers.

"To combine this strain development with the unique protective properties of Alosca puts together a pretty robust and flexible inoculation product for the pasture industry," Mr Pool said.

In other developments, Alosca inoculants will play a role in the evaluation and development of twin sowing technology.

The Agriculture Department's pasture group has secured Pasture Australia (GRDC, AWI, MLA and RIRDC) funding part of which will be to develop and test the concept of twin sowing.

This will evaluate the feasibility of undersowing grain crops with

non-germinable pasture seed (that will germinate in subsequent years) to reduce the cost of pasture establishment.

Also in the pipeline with Alosca Technologies is the development of their Liquid In-Furrow Technology (LIFT) which is at a proof of concept stage this season. The liquid furrow injectable range will primarily have a cropping legume focus however Mr Poole said that this development could be translated to pasture inoculants if the industry required.

Alosca Technologies general manager Stuart Crockett said all product groups were in good supply and their February promotion had drawn early orders. He urged growers to contact their stockist before the month was out to take advantage of the 10pc free product offer.

□ More information contact Alosca Technologies on 9446 1533 or visit www.alosca.com.au

Seed Hawk demand up

CRABTREE Agriculture in conjunction with Vaderstad have appointed recent Muresk graduate Ian Leeming to anchor the sales and delivery aspects for the increasingly popular Seed Hawk.

"With sales exceeding supply and an increasing demand from growers who have learnt the benefits of accurate seed placement, and with offset fertiliser being placed below and alongside the seed, we needed additional manpower to handle the demand," Crabtree principal agronomist Bill Crabtree said.

"Ian has previously worked briefly for us on a part time basis and we now welcome him back to a fulltime position with responsibility primarily for the sales and delivery of the Seed Hawk.

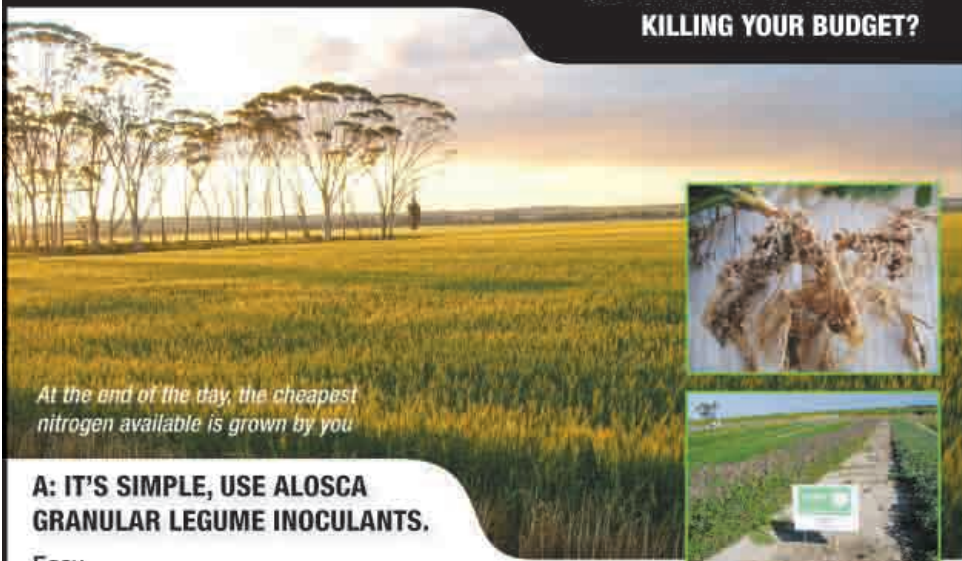
"Having been raised on a farm at Goomalling and last year graduating from Muresk he is well suited to the roll.

"Last year when he was with us he not only was involved in the assembly of the Seed Hawk but also got valuable practical experience as an operator of one."

"Ian is a proven reliable operator who will work well with the emerging leader Seed Hawk — being a knife seeder for the future of precision."

□ More information: Mr Leeming can be contacted through Crabtree Agricultural consulting on 9361 3333 or by email on ian.leeming@no-till.com.au

Q: IS THE COST OF NITROGEN KILLING YOUR BUDGET?



At the end of the day, the cheapest nitrogen available is grown by you

A: IT'S SIMPLE, USE ALOSCA GRANULAR LEGUME INOCULANTS.

Easy

Replaces slurry legume inoculation, simple preparation no limitations for time to sow**

Flexible

Apply mixed with seed or fertiliser, sow dry or to moisture with/without seed dressings

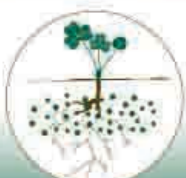
Effective

Reliable nodulation with moist or dry seeding. Inoculant viability maintained during unfavourable seedbed conditions

** when mixed with fertiliser, ALOSCA inoculants should be sown within 4 weeks

Your on-farm fertiliser plant

Enquiries & orders contact ALOSCA Technologies Pty Ltd
PH: (08) 9446 1533 Fax: (08) 9446 1599
or contact your local stockist • website: www.alosca.com.au



ALOSCA Technologies Pty Ltd



The Emerging Leader™
at WANTFA Trial Site 2007

95-100%
GERMINATION

40-70%
GERMINATION

SEED HAWK

CONVENTIONAL NO-TILL KNIFE



The seeder of the future:

- Excellent crop emergence in all soils
- Precise placement in sticky clays
- Strong establishment on non-wetting sands
- Handles rocks well - a robust seeder
- Has auto rear steering option

VÄDERSTAD

Contact

Bill Crabtree 0417 223 395
or 9361 3333 or
bill.crabtree@no-till.com.au
www.seedhawk.com.au