

## Products & Advice for Soil Regeneration & Animal Nutrition



From the Directors...

**AgSolutions expands to meet farmers' demands**

When we launched into the agricultural arena 15 years ago, the concept of sustainable farming and using natural biological products seemed a foreign philosophy.

Today, **AgSolutions** Australia assists not only organic farmers, but largely conventional farmers, to reduce costs and increase production through natural means.

With declining soil fertility and the rising cost of fuel and fertilizer, the rural community is now far more accepting of the need to apply broad spectrum minerals to restore soil fertility and to increase crop and pasture production.

Farmers have embraced the effectiveness of Natra Min to such an extent, expansion of our Gympie production facilities has become a necessity.

Our recent diversification into mineral lick blocks and animal supplements has also dictated the urgency of our expansion plans.

Our 'bigger and better' facilities are due for completion in November, and will ensure a faster turnaround on all orders.

So a huge thank you to all those customers who have supported our products and services, and who have ensured **AgSolutions** has stood the test of time.

We would also like to particularly thank the many customers who took the time to respond to our competition to win a weekend's accommodation at Novotel Twin Waters.

We appreciate the positive feedback as it assists us to help others in similar situations, however unfortunately there can only be one winner, and this time it was Peter Lynch from St Lawrence. Hope that you have a nice holiday Peter.

We remain committed to providing you with affordable and effective products as well as information and advice to help restore the health and productivity of your soil, plants and animals.

*Trevor & Wendy Zerner*

## PEANUTS: Improved Yield & Quality using Natra Min



Brothers Barney and Greg Horne and their wives Anita and Wendy have been using Natra Min HI-Phos on the Horne family farm at Wooroolin since 1996. Here the Hornes grow mainly peanuts and corn in rotation, with Natra Min HI-Phos applied prior to planting peanuts.

The Horne's property has both red and black soil types and the first applications of Natra Min were applied on the darker soils that were quite cloddy and a priority for improvement.

### Early Results...

Initially the decision to trial Natra Min HI-Phos was economically based, however, given the immediate and visible results, production became the driving force behind continuing to include Natra Min as part of the Horne's fertilizer program.

### Natra Min provided an economical replacement for Gypsum...

As Barney says, "we started using Natra Min instead of Gypsum because it had a lower application rate and we could spread it ourselves, making it cheaper and easier to apply. At first Natra Min was applied to the worst areas where the soil was heavy and the peanut quality needed to be improved".

Whilst **AgSolutions** recommends the use of Natra Min in a long term program to gradually improve soil health and nutrition, many farmers do witness immediate results in both crops and pasture. According to Barney, they could see the difference in the crop from the seat of the tractor the first time Natra Min HI-Phos was used.

Now Natra Min is applied in front of every acre of peanuts grown.

### Improved Growth & Quality

Barney reported that Natra Min helped deliver a number of improvements, the first being peanut growth and quality. In the black soil areas peanut pod quality showed a big improvement, with the soil also becoming more friable where it was previously very cloddy and compacted. The major improvement in soil structure has been particularly beneficial when thrashing peanuts.

As previously mentioned, the Hornes plant corn in rotation with peanuts with the Natra Min applied in front of the peanuts. This improved soil condition has therefore also resulted in better planting conditions for the corn.

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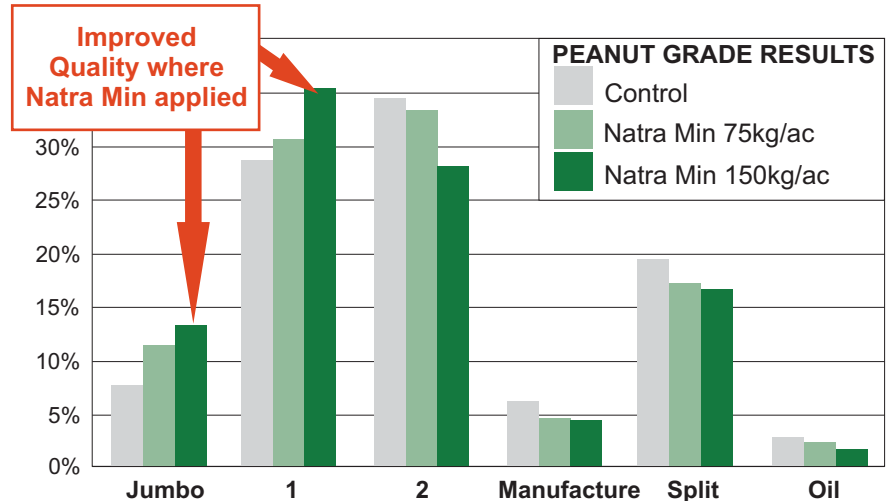
## Peanut Trials show improved Yield and Quality

### DPI Conducts Trials

“We had been seeing the results visually for many years and knew that there had to be a significant difference when you can see it by the eye.” An increase of less than 5 - 10% is unlikely to be noticeable so in 2004 Barney involved the local DPI to monitor trials in order to quantify the benefits of using Natra Min at various rates against a control area.

Natra Min HI-Phos was applied at the rate of 75kg/acre and 150kg/acre with a control site having no application. While the lower application rate of 75kg/acre resulted in improved quality with a net return of \$7.68/acre, the area where Natra Min was applied at 150kg/acre resulted in increased yield as well as improved peanut quality and resulted in \$70.30 net gain in return per acre, making it well and truly worthwhile to apply Natra Min.

GRADE	Control	Natra Min 75kg/ac	Natra Min 150kg/ac
Jumbo	7.78%	11.41%	13.18%
1	28.90%	30.85%	35.50%
2	34.77%	33.43%	28.02%
Manufacture	6.24%	4.81%	4.68%
Split	19.52%	17.10%	16.91%
Oil	2.81%	2.40%	1.71%
<b>YIELD/ac</b>	74 bags	74 bags	76 bags
<b>COST/ac</b>	Nil	\$15.75	\$31.50
<b>RETURN/ac</b>	\$1,175.70	\$1,199.13	\$1,277.49
<b>GAIN in RETURN / acre</b>		<b>\$7.68</b>	<b>\$70.30</b>



### Trials with Corn also show benefits of Natra Min

This year the Hornes have been involved in another trial with Pioneer, assessing the yield of a new variety of corn.

Whilst the trial results are yet to be finalized, Barney can comment that “some of the trial area was planted in what used to be our worst soil and we expected that the yield in this area would be the lowest.

In fact, this soil has had the longest history of Natra Min and the crop out performed other areas.”

Barney, Greg and their respective families are certainly well known throughout the Kingaroy district, and are used to fielding questions about the results they achieved through the use of Natra Min. However, Barney and Greg are hard to catch up with these days as aside from their farming interests they also run a successful business with bobcats, excavators and supplying bitumen.

Yet if you'd like to quiz Barney or Greg about improving your crop with Natra Min... or of course improving your driveway with bitumen... then give them a call on 0438 642 327.

### Up Close & Personal... with Brett Rutter!



From renovating his own home, to a rewarding career in the Merchant navy, and more recently a successful career as a rural sales representative ... Ag Solutions' newest recruit to its expanding sales team, Brett Rutter has to date enjoyed a life of professional highs.

However, according to Brett, professional accolades aside, his greatest achievement can be found more on a personal level, citing his 3 beautiful children, and marriage to his wife as being life's richest reward.

However, despite Brett's admirable 'family-man' status, AgSolutions Australia also recognised someone with great sales experience, a passion for customer service, and expertise in advising rural customers on what products best suited their particular needs.

Since joining the company in May, Brett has taken to his sales-focused role like a herd of mineral deficient cattle to a Mega Mineral lick-block ... servicing customers from Hervey Bay to Brisbane, and West to Kingaroy.

Between his role as Doting Father and Field Advisor, we caught up with Brett and asked a few probing questions...

**Most Embarrassing Moment?** Jumping up and down hysterically in the newsagent convinced my scratchie had just yielded me \$10,000 ... only to be told to look again... the third number scratched was only \$1000.

**Most Memorable Moment?** After the birth of our 3rd child, my wife was forced to return to hospital for a week to rest... leaving me at home with 3 little ones... endless nappy changes, 2 - 4 hourly feeds, bath time, dinner time, play-time, and unfortunately not much sleep-time for Daddy! She returned to find me in a zombie like state chanting lines from the Wiggles, like “wake up Jeff”.

**Most Admired Person?** Make that plural. Mothers! Multi-talented and amazing!

**I just can't live without....?** My babies. Lots of work, but loads of fun. (Note to Brett... for self-preservation should you also mention your wife?)

**Ultimate Ambition?** Happy and Rich... or Healthy and Wealthy. I'm not entirely fussy which one.

# SUNFLOWER SUCCESS...

Here at AgSolutions it's a pleasure to look back at the farmers we've been working with for many years. Jim and Pat O'Farrell fit that criteria having been using Natra Min for over 10 years.

When asked why he started using Natra Min Pat said "We wanted to get away from using just conventional fertilizers. Each year we had to apply heavier rates of fertilizer in order to try and sustain our grain yields".

Pat and his father Jim made the decision to give Natra Min a go. "We wanted to try and get our soils back to what they used to be like... to get the worms back in the soil and to prolong the productive life of the soil."

Pat admits he hasn't applied Natra Min every year but over the years he has been able to reduce the application rate of both Natra Min and other fertilizers which means dollars saved!!!!

## Soil Structure Improvement... Salinity problems reduced...

"Our soil is definitely better, it works easier. The puggy areas have improved out of sight and break down better."

When Trevor Zerner first spoke to Pat and Jim and looked over his paddocks 10 years ago, Pat had problems with high sodium levels and uneven growth in his oats paddocks due to salinity. "We know what these paddocks were like back then and now our oats is even in height and colour as well as decreased sodium levels."



Brent Bowles (Warwick Freighters & Ag Services) and Pat O'Farrell inspect last year's winning sunflower crop that yielded 3.375t/ha.

Pat was pretty pleased recently to win the Toowoomba Royal Show Dryland Sunflower Crop Competition with his Mono Sunflowers yielding 3.375t/ha.

"We've seen good results with Natra Min in our sunflowers. The plant colour has been an even, bright green across the crop with no yellow patches."

The biggest improvement has been Jim and Pat's soil where high magnesium and sodium levels once caused structural problems, now Pat notices worms back in the ground which had previously disappeared.

## Congratulations to...

**Peter Lynch, St Lawrence**

### Winner of the weekend away at Novotel Twin Waters!

Congratulations to Peter Lynch of St Lawrence who was one of many farmers who sent in details of their successful results achieved with the use of one of our products.

Peter first used Natra Min HI-Phos in 2004 on pastures at his St Lawrence property and said "in my opinion the results are outstanding". The 8 photos he sent in highlighted the response his improved pastures have had.

"Yes I was surprised with the great response so quickly after rain, I thought I might not even notice the difference by eye for a while."

Growth, colour, height and density of pasture were some of the results Peter described.



### Peter's comment...

"A huge amount of feed in this area and yes, my steers and cows just love it... 50 head of steers and cull cows put into this paddock only moved about 100 metres in 2 hours... They just ate."

We hope you enjoy your stay at Novotel Twin Waters, complete with full cooked breakfast daily.

Thanks to all our satisfied clients who sent in their results and photos, we enjoyed reading them and look forward to talking to you soon.

# NATRA MIN

## Did you know?

The nutritional and structural aspects of soil health are widely understood, however, it's the biological aspect that is often overlooked or is not recognized as a potential limiting factor for crop and pasture growth. The biomass of microbes in healthy, living soil can easily amount to 4-5 tonne per hectare and provides another source of Nitrogen for your crop.

Our five blends of Natra Min are formulated to address all three aspects of soil fertility... as a fertilizer, a soil conditioner and a microbe stimulant.

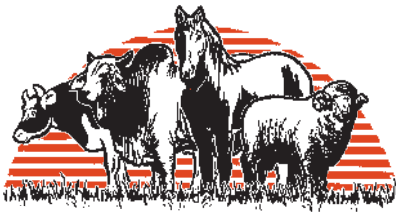
Soil organisms range from single-celled bacteria and fungi to earth worms and are necessary to form humus in your soil. This humus acts as a sponge in your soil to store moisture and nutrients.

Microbes convert mineral elements to plant available form. Therefore microbes are essential to release the minerals supplied in Natra Min and also assist to release locked up nutrients in your soil, helping to maximize the effectiveness of applied fertilizer.

## Healthy soil = Healthy plants and animals

It's common now for farmers we're working with, especially grain and small crop growers, to say they're having less pest and disease problems in their crop.

This is a sign their soil is both balanced nutritionally and biologically. Silica also plays an important role in the plants ability to defend itself as it is directly related to cell strength... resulting in a higher tolerance to stress factors such as pests, heat, cold and water logging.



# Superior Mineral Supplement... for a Superior Feedlot Performance



**Claude Pain** and his family run their grain and cattle property, 'Boobilarri' just north of Jandowae, Queensland, and have been using **AgSolutions'** Superior Mineral Supplement in their feedlot for over 2 years.

According to Claude, Superior Mineral Supplement is very aptly named. "The results are just that... Superior!! I wouldn't go without it."

## Good Weight Gain...

Claude feedlots approximately 200 heifers. When first bought, heifers are back-grounded and enter the feedlot at an average weight of 300 kgs. After just 60-70 days the heifers are turned off at between 400 and 430kgs, resulting in an impressive weight with some heifers gaining over 2kg/day.

Claude mixes his own feedlot ration from grain sorghum grown on their property as a way of value adding around \$100/t.

As Claude comments, "I'm very happy with Superior... I use a simple feedlot mix of Sorghum, Copra Meal and roughage with Superior added at the rate of 15kg per tonne. During their introductory period to grain, I use a higher roughage content plus a small amount of bicarb. Intake of Superior averages approximately 70-80 gm per head per day, making it very economical to use".



## Improved Condition...

According to Claude, since introducing Superior to his feedlot rations, cattle have looked more impressive, with good coat colour, and an increase in energy.

**AgSolutions'** Sales Manager Gary Zerner has also noted that the improved condition and energy of cattle is something that is usually quite noticeable and has been widely reported in drought cattle supplemented with Superior and Mega Mineral lick blocks in Western areas such as Charleville.

## Reduction in Feedlot Odour...

An additional benefit, particularly pertinent to neighbouring properties is the reduction in odour coming from the feedlot since the introduction of Superior.

As Claude reported, "the smell in the feedlot definitely decreased and the colour of the manure improved to a darker and firmer appearance and was not as loose ... I was quite impressed".

In fact Claude's neighbours were equally impressed and are now adding Superior to their feedlot rations. They have since reported they are more than satisfied with the performance, condition, and weight gain of cattle.

## Cleaner Water Supply...

Another visible advantage to the Pain family's introduction of Superior to rations has been that water troughs in the feedlot are much cleaner as a result of Superior dropping into the trough. Claude was particularly conscious of this, as prior to adding Superior to his rations, troughs were being cleaned daily. When it became obvious to Claude that Superior was contributing to the cleanliness of troughs, he also began adding **Natra Min** directly into the troughs to further assist in keeping them clean.

**AgSolutions** is aware of several farmers who also add **Natra Min** to water troughs to assist in keeping them clean, including a few larger horse studs on the Darling Downs which have enjoyed a far cleaner water supply since its introduction.

## Healthy Animals ... and Healthy Soil too!

Claude has also become an advocate of another of **AgSolutions'** products, applying **Natra Min** to his soil for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year, with most of his country having had 2 applications.

As Claude adds "we've applied **Natra Min** to areas where we're growing chick peas, barley and sorghum. The only other fertilizer I'm using is about 30kg/ha of DAP or a DAP/Urea blend. Crops have been as good as ever and the soil appears to be softer ... I'm applying the **Natra Min** through an air seeder so I get it in the ground where it's needed."



Superior Mineral Supplement and Mega Minerals Lick Blocks provide a source of broad spectrum earth and sea minerals, providing animals with vital macro, trace and ultra trace elements.

## Proven Results

Trials performed last year by Dr Lewis Kahn at the University of New England, demonstrated that Superior Mineral Supplement (Superior) effectively controlled acidosis in feedlots compared to Eskalin (an antibiotic) and a blend of Eskalin and Rumensin.

For further information on the University Research Results or advice on using Superior Mineral Supplement in feedlot situations, simply contact **AgSolutions** Australia on 1800 81 57 57.

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**CALL NOW for answers to your animal nutrition  
and soil fertility questions.**

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