

Products & Advice for Soil Regeneration & Animal Nutrition



From the Directors

As winter approaches for 2006 it's time to talk about the most suitable and cost effective supplement programs to get your stock through to

Spring in good condition. Minerals should be an integral part of your program because when your pastures dry off or frost, their value in protein, minerals and energy is also reduced.

If you've ever noticed your stock licking at dirt, chewing bones or eating strange things such as sump oil and batteries then these are signs that your animals are craving minerals. Minerals are essential for growth and fertility in your breeders.

Having balanced minerals available to your ewes, mares, cows or sows will improve their return to oestrus. If you prefer Lick Blocks then consider our Mega Minerals Blocks that contain key trace elements or alternatively, our Superior Mineral Supplement can be fed on its own as a dry lick or mixed with protein meal, salt, molasses or your own property recipe.

Often you will need to alter your winter supplementing program as conditions change and roughage declines. At AgSolutions we have a nutritionist available to answer your questions and assist you with supplement mixes to suit your needs and livestock, so contact us as our advice is free and could save you \$\$\$.

There are also benefits in starting to supplement early as animals may be chasing minerals even when green feed is still around.

In addition to helping your cattle to shine during winter and dry conditions, Superior is also suitable as a buffer in feedlot rations.

In the last six months there have been expansions to our factory and offices and expansions to our family. Our daughter and son in law, Julie and Andrew who are our Business and General Managers, welcomed the arrival of their second daughter Jenna in October and our Marketing Consultant and niece Helen Cole, produced their third daughter Darcy in February.

Not to be left out, our Sales Manager and nephew, Gary Zerner and wife Kim, had an unexpected early arrival of their twins Bryce and Alexis who were born 12 weeks early on 20 February. (Photo over page).

Goes to show that minerals are great for fertility!
Trevor & Wendy Zerner

Animal production, condition and fertility improves with use of Minerals



According to the Smith family of Mt Surprise, the improvement in their stock condition and fertility is a testament to the effectiveness of Superior Mineral Supplement and Mega Minerals Lick Blocks.

The Smith's first introduced Superior and Mega Minerals to their 78,000 acre Tallaroo Station in March 2005. Their breeder property not only runs 3000 head of mixed cattle, but is also host to agistment cattle.

It is through the use of Superior in the dry season that the Smiths have witnessed some remarkable results.

Compare the cost ... and save \$\$\$!

According to Shonnay Smith their cattle have held up extremely well compared to other cattle in the district, and for a lot less money. While the AgSolutions recommended feeding rate would cost from 30 to 50 cents per head per week, Shonnay and Barry have calculated that their supplements are costing just 15 cents per head per week. As a cost comparison, a neighbour has been feeding the standard M8U mix at a cost of **\$2.50 per head per week**.

Whilst the Smiths acknowledge the neighbour's cattle are in a similar condition, they are quick to point out that the neighbour has invested more in terms of both time and money to achieve these results.

As Shonnay reports, "What really impresses us is that Mega Minerals Lick Blocks are less expensive, a lot less work and much more convenient. My neighbour has to do a feed run every day while we put Mega Minerals lick blocks out to these cattle 7 weeks ago".

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In this Edition...

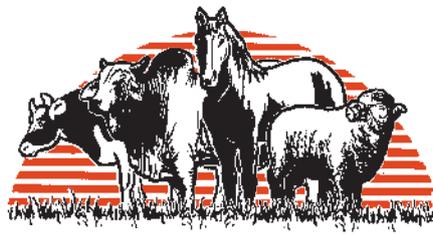


Animal production and fertility improvement (page ½)
Barry & Shonnay Smith, Tallaroo Station, Mt Surprise.

Stone Fruit... Improved flavour (page 3)
Warren and Lexie Harvey, 'Vamanha Orchards', Eukey.

Superior Mineral Supplement outperforms Urea (page 4)
Darren Pointon of 'Pointon Pastoral Holdings', Kilcoy.

SUPERIOR
MINERAL SUPPLEMENT



MEGA MINERALS
LICK BLOCKS

Improvement in Cattle Condition, Fertility & Production...



As Barry Smith comments, "We've got 600 cows in one lot that have been on the Superior and Mega Minerals lick blocks for 9-10 months. These cows are shiny despite the dry season and look a picture with little calves at foot".

"Late last year at the sale yards, neighbours commented on how well our cattle looked. They really noticed the difference in the coat quality. The cattle were shiny after being on Superior Mineral lick for only 3 to 4 months."

Phosphorus is well known to be a critical component in supplements for cattle in the north and to achieve optimum results for the Smith's property, AgSolutions prepared a blend of Superior Minerals with an increased Phosphorus percentage.

Making the Change from Urea Based Supplements...

While some farmers have been hesitant to make the change from Urea based blocks, many have now made the conversion and are reaping the rewards.

As Shonnay Smith testifies, "our calves are bigger and the weight gain in our weaners has been noticeable. Another neighbour (50 km away) has seen the results we're achieving with Superior here on Tallaroo and has also made the change to use the supplements.

Previously he was a staunch urea man and has since stopped feeding any urea. The major improvement he has seen is a definite increase in milk production in his cows which is really showing benefits for his calves this year".

Visible Improvement in cattle...

Being able to see a visible improvement in your cattle is always reassuring when starting to use a new supplement.

In this instance, the Smiths had the advantage of being able to trial AgSolutions Superior Minerals Dry Lick and Mega Minerals Lick Blocks against other supplements fed to cattle on agistment, under the same conditions and environment. As Shonnay says... "the agistment cattle fed on urea / cottonseed based supplements are in ordinary condition compared to our own cattle".

Minerals help to increase Fertility rate...

The Smiths are firm believers that the use of Superior Mineral Supplement has increased the cycling and fertility of their cattle.

In the past the Smiths' Brahman heifers had only calved as 3yr olds and then would miss the next year and have a second calf as a 5 year old. "We've turned this around through improved supplementation and changing over to Droughtmaster heifers. This season our 3 year old heifers have calved and cycled and gone back in calf on the first cycle. This alone will have a major influence on our operation not to mention the dollar gain in return for supplementing these breeders.

A line of twenty heifers were preg-tested as they were going to be sold. Eighteen were in calf (90%), and their embryos were all the same size co-inciding with when the minerals were put out. One had slipped her calf and the other heifer was too small.

In just 12 months our calving percentage average has gone from 45-50% to 60-70%, a substantial return on investment. When you buy supplements you think they're expensive but with these results it is paying us to use them."

Thankyou Barry and Shonnay for sharing your experience.

Congratulations Gary and Kim

Proud Dad and Mum of two babies...

AgSolutions Sales Manager, Gary Zerner, having his first experience of what it is like to hold two babies at once!! Born 12 weeks early, Bryce weighed in at 1.132 kg and Alexis at 1.078kg. Both are now doing well.



NATRA MIN

Beneficial for all crops



More cotton and small crop growers are discovering the benefits of Natra Min as both a fertilizer, soil conditioner and as a valuable source of **Silica**.

Silica is proving to have beneficial results in reducing pest and fungal problems in cotton and other crops.

When preparing your soil for planting, give us a call and we can provide advice for your fertilizer and cropping needs.

Feed Your Soil... and Your Soil will Feed Your Crop

Stone Fruit - improved flavour since using Natra Min



Warren and Lexie Harvey, owners of Eukey's "Vamanha" orchards, have been in the industry for many years and as a result have seen many changes... especially when it comes to the nutritional program for their stonefruit.

Their operation now focuses predominantly on Peaches, Nectarines, Plums and Apricots, with Natra Min being an integral part of their annual fertilizer program.

Encouraged by their local Stanthorpe agronomist, who had seen the results of using Natra Min firsthand in the field, the Harveys first experimented with using Natra Min several years ago.

Problem: High inputs & Poor results

"We were struggling with high inputs and we weren't gaining production... and our fruit was losing flavour.

Recommendations from fertilizer companies were continually saying more this, more that... but it never seemed to produce what we wanted to achieve.

On top of this, the increased fertilizer recommendations were becoming too expensive and not economical to apply. However, since using Natra Min HI-Phos our orchard has improved overall. We've picked up on our trace elements which are critical for fruit trees."

Proof is in the Eating...

As with any tree-crop operation, 'flavour' is of course critical to success, and as AgSolutions' representative, Gary Zerner, can testify ...the Harveys are certainly producing mouth-watering fruit.



As Warren adds, "our clients and agent give us valuable feedback. If our fruit has no taste then people don't come back".

"Before using Natra Min our BRIX levels were down and I was even hesitant to eat our flame crest peaches, they were ordinary in flavour, now you're pleasantly surprised."

Warren also believes that Natra Min HI-Phos is adding elements to his soil and trees that weren't being addressed through his fertigation program.



"Last year customers started to rave about our apricots so it must be doing something as our fruit is selling well."

HAVE YOU HEARD... that we now have a product that is particularly beneficial to use on heavy, dark soil areas ?

Natra Min Cal-S was originally developed for dark soils where Calcium:Magnesium ratios are often less than 2:1 or even 1:1. Cal-S is a blend higher in Calcium and Sulphur and like other Natra Min blends can replace the use of lime and gypsum as a soil conditioner at far lower application rates and less expense.

All blends of Natra Min contain our unique Bio-stimulant to increase microbial activity, improve soil structure and assist with pH correction.

Common Problems with Dark Soils...

Soil tests often reveal that dark soils are naturally high with Magnesium. While Magnesium is important for the uptake of Phosphorus, high Magnesium levels can reduce the availability of Calcium, Potassium, Nitrogen and Zinc.

Use of Nitrogen increases problems associated with high Magnesium...

High Nitrogen levels can stimulate the release of Magnesium, aggravating soil structure problems in areas that are naturally high in Magnesium. With the increased use of Nitrogen over the years, many farmers are now experiencing increasing soil structure problems with their soil becoming sticky and plasticine like when wet... and hard and cloddy when dry.

Where to use Natra Min Cal S...

Small Crops, Cotton, Lucerne, Pasture and Grain - growers of all kinds have reaped the benefits from using Natra Min Cal-S as a soil conditioner, especially where soil tests reveal Calcium and Sulphur levels are low.

Robert Venz, Beaudesert...



In one section of our property, it was impossible to cultivate because the soil was so hard.

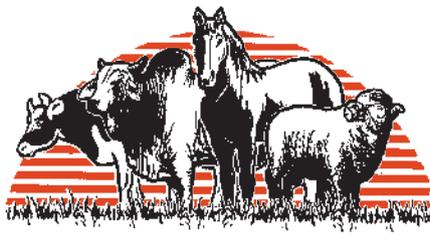
12 months after Natra Min was applied to this area, the discs penetrated 6 inches on the first pass.

Cal-S replaces Gypsum and Saves You Money!

Min Cal-S is a cost effective alternative to Gypsum as a soil conditioner and contains high levels of Silica as well as other essential minerals and trace elements. All blends of Natra Min are formulated to stimulate microbe and worm activity in your soil... thus helping to release locked up nutrients for your crop.

Give us a call, we can look at your soil tests and give you advice on your entire fertilizer program... not just Natra Min.

SUPERIOR
MINERAL SUPPLEMENT



MEGA MINERALS
LICK BLOCKS

Superior Mineral Supplement Outperforms Urea Supplements



Darren Pointon is enthusiastic about the benefits **AgSolutions'** Superior Mineral Supplement has delivered over traditional urea based supplements. Darren, formally of Pointon Pastoral Holdings, now manages 1200 head on the family property at Kilcoy.



Better Results than Urea...

As Darren explains, "I've gone right off using any urea supplements here now as our cattle don't perform."

Last Winter one mob of breeders were on a dry lick that gradually increased to 30% Urea. These cows went backwards and a lot of them lost hair off their coats. Four hundred cows that were very poor were pulled out of the mob and put on Superior. This is where we became convinced about the benefits of Superior as these cows lifted in condition right through the drought".

For five generations the Pointon family has been involved in the industry, and understandably various supplements have been trialed over the years. However, the Pointon Pastoral Company is now in its third season of using **AgSolutions'** Superior Mineral Supplement, and Darren Pointon is satisfied that he has finally found a supplement that provides results. "I'm not a nutritionist but I know our cattle, and Superior definitely works".

Application...

How the Pointons feed Superior varies according to seasonal conditions. At present cows are on Superior Minerals as a dry lick, however, as winter sets in the mix changes to include molasses and also copra meal to provide additional protein.

Darren has also observed that some cattle consume more at certain times. "We join for 4 months of the year and when the bulls have been in for about 2 months we usually see their intake of Superior Minerals increase as they obviously need it more when working."

Its also interesting that our calves go for the Superior more than the cows at some stages. We add a bit of copra meal to the minerals to get the calves started early".

Darren has indicated that he finds the cost of Superior to be reasonable, with their wet mix being 800 litres of molasses with 2 bags (40kg) of Superior, and up to 4 bags in harsh conditions. "We feed this out three times a week in the dry and our running costs are the same as previous supplements. I don't feed all year round but I know that my drought mix is cheaper than other supplements we've used."

Safe and Sound...

Superior Mineral Supplement is a safe alternative to urea for winter and drought feeding, and this was a key consideration for the Pointons when selecting supplements. As Darren comments, "the fact that Superior is a safe supplement really suits us as we usually get rain on and off and don't have to run around to troughs which we physically couldn't do on this scale. With the minerals and trace elements in Superior it's something cattle can get everything from... without the problems or risks".

Benefits of Minerals...

The results Pointon Pastoral has witnessed include improved body condition, hair growth (after cows lost it on urea supplement), and an increase in energy in their cattle. Furthermore, when the season improves the cattle are already improving in condition and "don't seem to scour on the first flush of feed anymore".

Better Calving Rates...

According to Darren, calving percentages at Pointon Pastoral have definitely improved over the last three seasons.

As Darren comments "our calves are born healthy and do well from the start... this reflects on the health of the cow and we're seeing some of the best calves we've produced. Calves were pulled off early at 7 months averaging 225kg. Breeders seem to have more milk - and considering the poor season I put this down to cows getting what they need out of the supplement."

Stock horses at Pointon Pastoral have access to **AgSolutions'** Mega Minerals Lick Blocks all year round. "These horses are fed well but we still notice they go on and off the blocks depending on when they need minerals."

Darren recalls that they first heard of **AgSolutions'** products from well respected cattleman, Percy Bishop of "Garglen" Brahmans, from where Pointon Pastoral purchase bulls. "That was good enough for me. Percy uses the fertilizer so I went on to trial the Superior Mineral Supplement on half of one of our breeder mobs and had good results." Darren concludes by saying he too would now happily encourage anyone to try Superior Mineral Supplement and enjoy Superior results!

TAKE THE WORRY OUT OF WINTER SUPPLEMENTS

SUPERIOR and MEGA MINERALS lick blocks provide you with a SAFE, economical and effective ALTERNATIVE TO UREA

For more information on the benefits of using Superior Mineral Supplement to replace urea, ask us for a copy of trial results, University of New England.

AgSolutions
AUSTRALIA

8 Wadell Road Gympie 4570

CALL us now for answers to your animal nutrition and soil fertility questions.

Freecall: 1800 81 57 57 Fax 07 5482 7219 email: info@agsolutions.com.au