

May 2018 – Broadleaf, Budgets, Gibb Acid, Nitrogen and Accountants!

I have had a few questions on different things of late due to the late Autumn break.

Growth rates and rotations

We are growing at about an average of 30kg/ha per day in South Gippsland with leaf emergence rates being a bit slower than usual at about 15 days. So heading into winter we want to be targeting a round length around the 40 to 50 days if possible. For some areas this will be harder than others.

How to try and get there

Nitrogen is one of the tools to use. A basic rule of thumb is to apply 1 kg of N per day so if you are on a short 30 day round this would be 65kg of urea if you are going to follow the cows after each grazing. If it is a 45 day round then apply urea at 100kg.

Gibb Acid works well on older established perennial pastures. The reason being is that these older pastures generally don't naturally produce a lot of this plant hormone in the colder months. Rates of 20 to 40 gm per ha are common but depends on the strength of the product. Check the label first. Just make sure the weather is cold.

Controlling Broadleaf

If it is in new sown pastures that have not been grazed yet and there is capeweed, stinging nettle or chickweed then use Nugrex (also known as Tigrex, T Rex and a host of other names) at 500 to 700ml/ha.

If it is in existing pasture with just capeweed use Amicide 700 (or MCPA) at 1lt/ha. If there is stinging nettle, marshmallow or chickweed add Hammer 400EC at 30ml/ha.

You can include Gibb Acid with these mixes.

With grass being generally limited this year, hay and silage stocks being low remember to look after your young stock! To put on 0.5kg of liveweight a day a 200 kg yearling heifer needs about 12ME above her maintenance requirement. This roughly equates to 1kg of a 12.5ME pellet.

Speak to your accountant now. Even though you may be tight cashflow wise it doesn't mean that you won't have to pay tax. It is worth speaking to your accountant now to put in place any plans to help minimise your tax. It doesn't mean go and buy a new tractor but if you are thinking of replacing a motorbike in the near future it may be better off doing it now. If you wait until the 30th of June to do something it is too late. Might be a case of you have to pay some tax but at least if you know you can prepare.

Start preparing your annual and monthly cashflow budgets now. If you have everything in place you can easily put into place the opening milk price when announced. This way you are ready to take action on anything that may need to be changed depending on where the milk price opens. While it may seem daunting to start if you have not done these in the past there is plenty of help and resources out there that can make it easier.