

# commercial feedback

Volume 4

NEUTROG FEEDS THE RACING STARS  
OF TOMORROW

PAUL BURGER "JUST TRIES IT"

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# NEUTROG FEEDS THE RACING STARS OF TOMORROW



Nestled beneath the majestic Groot Drakenstein Mountain Range in Franschhoek, the L'Ormarins Estate is best known as the home of Anthonij Rupert Wines. The vineyards are mainly planted on the upper slopes of these mountains where the granite soils produce strong, expressive wines.

The lush green pastures on the bottom slopes of the mountains on the Estate are home to the Drakenstein Stud, arguably the most breathtaking stud farm in the world. Drakenstein Stud is run by Mrs Gaynor Rupert and is the home of future racing champions sired by

highly sought-after stallions, including the famed Trippi and Horse Chestnut.

The Stud Manager at Drakenstein is Ross Fuller who has been with the stud farm since its inception in 2004. His background is in farming and stud management, having previously farmed wheat, barley and cattle in Zimbabwe while also managing a small stud farm.

Fuller has been using Neutrog's Bounce Back at Drakenstein Stud for the past four years. As the pastures are the feeding ground for young foals and other horses on the farm, he had to be sure to choose a safe and organic product. Bounce Back was the answer: a

unique blend of the highest quality organic fertiliser and natural minerals, with no chemical additives, and the added benefit of being a slow release product. Fuller applies Bounce Back once a year using a tractor and a spreader, generally before spring.

"I have been consistently satisfied with the results of using Neutrog's

Bounce Back. The pastures are in perfect condition, green and lush and the perfect breeding area for the racing stars of the future", commented Fuller.



## PAUL BURGER “JUST TRIES IT”

The Burger family has been farming on Kolsvlei near Piketberg since 1914. Paul Burger Snr. rented the land for eight years before purchasing it in 1921. In 1958 Casper Burger took over from his father and was joined by his son Paul in 1985, after he completed a BSc Agric Broadacre and Grazing at the University of Stellenbosch. Paul took over the running of the farm in 1991 when his father retired.

Paul farms on a rotational basis with wheat and medics as his main crops. He experimented with oats and canola, but these crops were not successful due to the low rainfall in the area. He was one of the first farmers in the vicinity to start planting wheat and medics on a rotational

basis in 1987. He plants 845 hectares per annum, of which 430 are his own land and 415 are rented. He also herds SA Vleis Merino and Dohne-merinos to supplement his broadacre system.

Paul heard about Neutrog at a farmers' evening in 2002 and decided to “Just Try It”. He has been using Neutrog's Bounce Back as his standard fertiliser since 2005. He uses a fertiliser spreader to apply 150kg of Bounce Back per hectare before planting. This is done on an annual basis. He combines the use of Bounce Back with a chemical fertiliser to tie it into the soil for a longer period, allowing for maximum plant growth in the long-term.

Paul comments: “Neutrog's Bounce Back has definitely improved the quality of my soil and crops. It also enables us to skip chemical topdressing if it does not rain in May and June. I have really enjoyed working with Neutrog – their products are of a very high standard, staff are very friendly and knowledgeable, and the after-sales service is outstanding.”

Paul intends to keep using Neutrog in the future as he strives to reap the benefits of 20 years of soil building through his rotational crop system.

### ***Just try it.***

Neutrog's philosophy is that you can't compare organic based fertilisers against their chemical counterparts utilising conventional NPK methodology alone. The only way to judge the application of an organic fertiliser is to 'Just try it'. Organic fertilisers not only supply a wide range of nutrients to the soil, but most importantly provide the catalyst for healthy growth by stimulating the natural processes that occur in the soil. They can perform as well as, if not better than their chemical counterparts for the same cost. These articles reflect a growing number of farmers who by simply starting with a small trial of organic fertiliser have now changed their traditional chemical NPK mindsets.

If you would like more information about trialling an organic fertiliser speak to a Neutrog representative on 0860 110 110.



# GLOBAL ROUND UP - AUSTRALIA AND IRELAND

## DOWN UNDER

Australian farmer George White (pictured) has been farming in Manangatang, Victoria for 39 years. George's grandfather selected the land in the early 1900's and it is one of the few farms still owned by a descendant of an original selector in the region today. George, his wife Sue and their son Andrew, farm over 1600 hectares, growing wheat, barley and rye.

Like most farming families, the Whites applied NPK chemical fertilisers through their generations – applying such products as single, then double super, and eventually MAP. George says “that was simply how it was always done and really the only thing we knew”. For his part, some 20 years ago, George began to question the validity and sustainability of continuing to apply chemical synthetic fertilisers to his land – he had been noticing a steady decline in the soil fertility and the yields seemed to be slowly diminishing and reducing. At that time he began researching alternatives and whilst organic fertilisers were certainly considered as an option, he was concerned about the lack of available

information and when coupled with their low NPK, he saw them as a risk that he could not afford to take. He did however maintain an interest in exploring alternatives and in the last 5 years George has witnessed a far wider understanding of microbes and the significant role that fungi and bacteria play in the soil. George comments “after three generations of the same NPK fertiliser regime it understandably took me a while to even begin to comprehend how the low NPK within an organic fertiliser could produce the same or better results than that achieved with my traditional synthetic fertilisers”.

After considerable research George used some organic fertiliser in his cropping program. George says “**I was still nervous about the yields I would achieve and was pleasantly surprised to find that it performed as well as my traditional fertilisers. I now understand that it is not just about the levels of NPK applied to the soil, and that fungi, bacteria and microbes all play an important part in soil fertility**”. Over the last 5 years George has widened his use of organic fertilisers, applying Neutrog's Rapid



Raiser. George says “I have actually reduced my input costs whilst maintaining my yields and if I am able to do this whilst improving my soil fertility at the same time, I have gone a long way toward the sustainability I was seeking 20 years ago”.

## IRELAND

Growing potatoes on some 900 acres, Pat Reynolds is Ireland's largest potato grower.

Earlier this year the Reynolds commenced a trial of Seamungus on 10 acres at Tara, County Meath, growing 'Lady Clare' potatoes – Seamungus was applied at 415kg per acre (1 tonne per hectare).

The crop was contracted to Largo Foods for crisping. At the outset, Pat's son Shane said “We are always looking for ways to improve the quality of our crops. Large customers such as

Largo pay a premium for certain characteristics such as high dry matter, so a product like Seamungus could really improve the return we get from this crop.”

Only very recently harvested, the Seamungus treated area produced a significant increase in yield of 1.4 tonnes per acre (3.36 tonnes per hectare), with a noticeable difference in the size and uniformity of the produce.

Such a result will see more widespread use of Seamungus within the Reynolds potato growing program.

With a name like 'Seamungus' it was bound to work in Ireland!!



### Join Neutrog's Pooh Bah Club

The Pooh Bah Club is the club for all gardening fans to keep up to date with the latest in gardening products, news, and competitions. Be the first to hear about new Neutrog products launched and receive tips about fertilising your garden and lawn all year round. **To join register today at [www.neutrog.co.za](http://www.neutrog.co.za) - membership is free.**



### Neutrog SA is on Facebook

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