Soil and pasture investments in 2025 – Where do we start?

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A bit about you...

- https://www.mentimeter.com/app/presentation/alho5mn2juq6oqi8thhh1hj7pt5phecd/edit?question=52bz1nvuww38

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Where do we start?

- Assess the current pasture base & look for indicator species
- Understand current fertility levels
- Understand / identify any additional soil constraints

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Assessing the pasture base - Perennial Grass Pastures

Critical factors
(Pasture paramedic)

- Groundcover
- Dry Matter
- Live sown perennial grasses

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Decision Matrix – Pasture paramedic

Decision Wizard
FARM DECISIONS MADE CLEAR

Do I need to manipulate this perennial pasture?

Trigger	Late summer, Early autumn

Consideration	**Condition when I would think differently**	**Value**	**Test Score**
Ground cover	Greater than 70% on flats, 90% on slopes	3	
	Less than 70% groundcover, 90% on slopes	0	
Current level of Dry Matter	1000-2000 kg DM/ha	4	
	Greater than 2000 kg DM/ha	1	
	Less than 1000 kg DM/ha	0	
Presence of live sown perennial grasses	Greater than 2 phalaris, tall fescue or cocksfoot in square, 3 perennial ryegrass	7	
	1 or 2 phalaris, tall fescue or cocksfoot in square, 1-3 ryegrass plants	4	
	No live sown perennial grasses	0	

Max value	14
Risk tolerance	moderate

Decision	**Suggested score**	**Confirmed score**
Current management suitable but consider improvements	More than 11	
Consider resowing or oversowing	9 to 11	
Consider pasture manipulation	Less than 9	

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Assessing the pasture base - Perennial Lucerne pastures

Critical factors

- Plant Density
- Groundcover
- ‘Strength of stand’

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Decision Matrix – Lucerne management

Decision Wizard
> FARM DECISIONS MADE CLEAR <

Do I need to manipulate this lucerne stand?

Trigger	Autumn	
Consideration	**Condition when I would think differently**	**Value**
Current plant density	Greater than 18 plants /m2	10
	12-18 plants / m2	5
	Less than 12 plants/m2	0
Current level of groundcover	Greater than 70% groundcover	6
	Less than 70% groundcover	0
'Strength' of stand	Stand is solid and can withstand cultivation	5
	Some plant losses may occur with cultivation	3
	Stand will not withstand cultivation	0
Max value	21	
Risk tolerance	moderate	

Decision	Suggested score	Confirmed score
Maintain existing stand	More than 16	More than 15
Consider oversowing with an annual / grazing cereal	14 to 16	8 to 15
Consider renovation or sowing an annual	Less than 14	Less than 8

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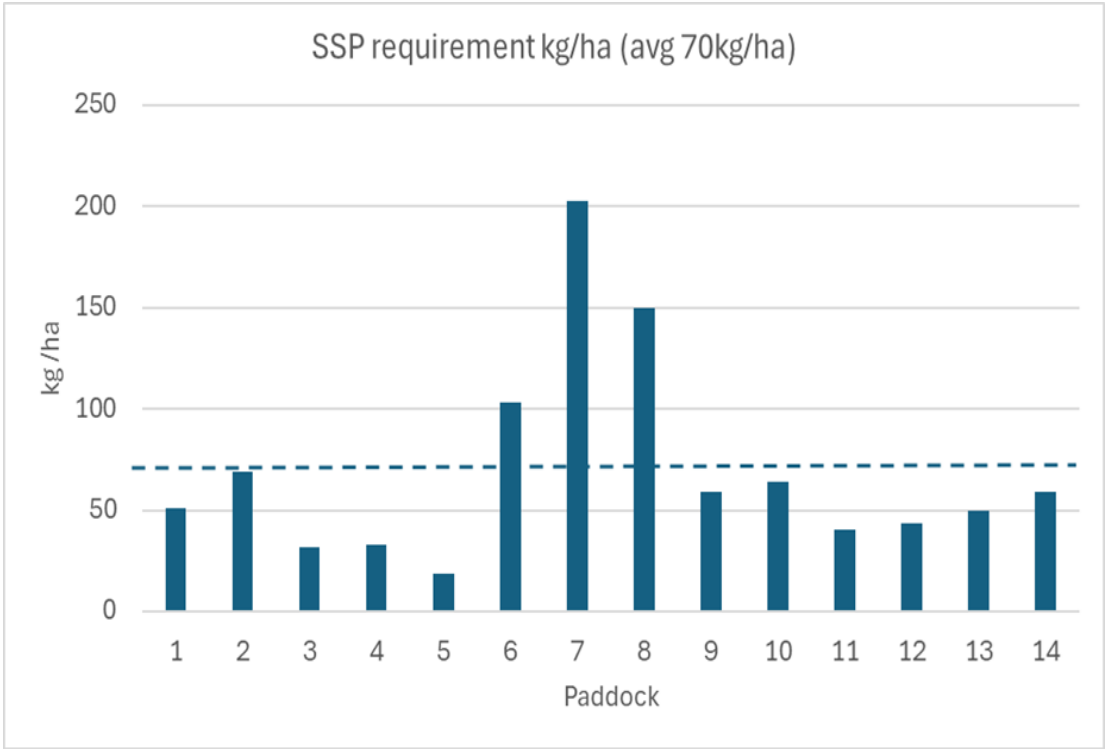
Current production levels

- Where are you getting your best return?



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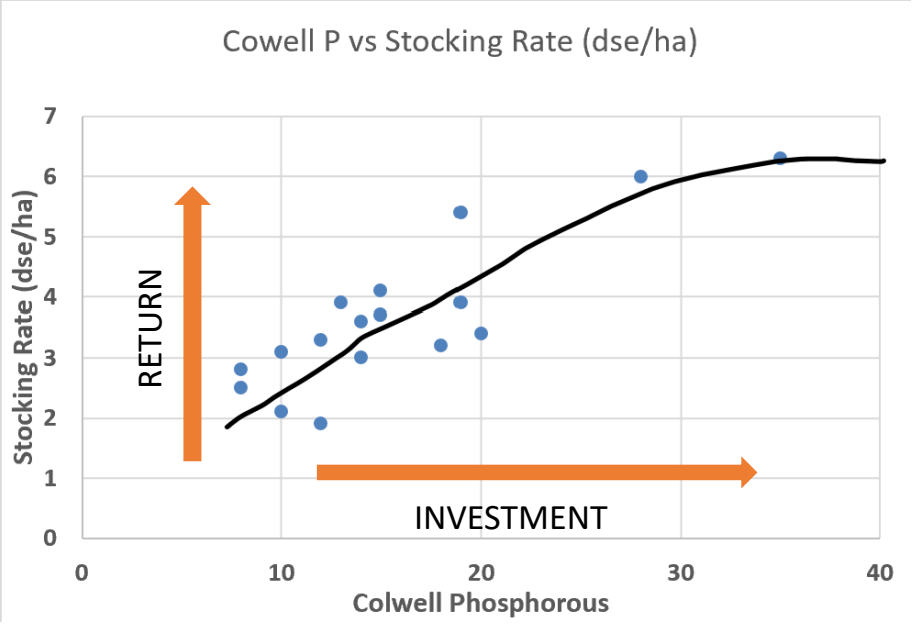
Current fertility levels

- Where are you going to get your best return?



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Prioritising Investment…

- Scoring paddocks
- Lose the blanket approach
- Consider oversowing with annuals for quick feed

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When renovating pastures…

Don’t miss the opportunity to treat:

- Acidity
- Water repellence
- Compaction
- Nutrient deficiencies

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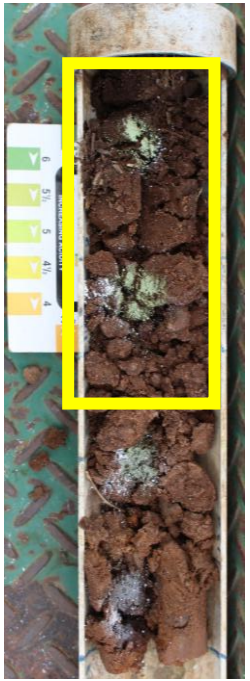
Acidity

Deep sands

Clays and loams



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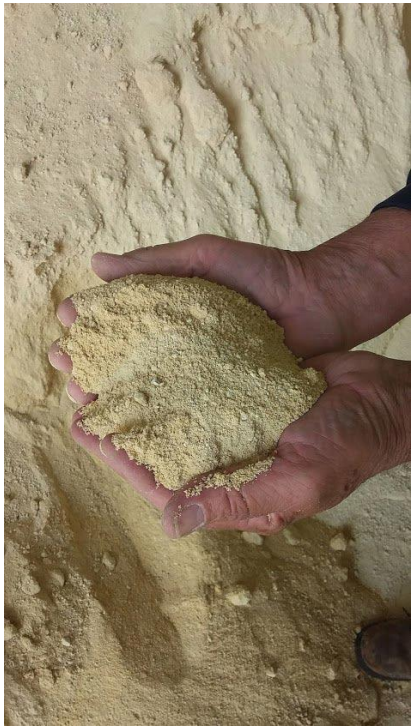
Treating Acidity – Incorporation counts



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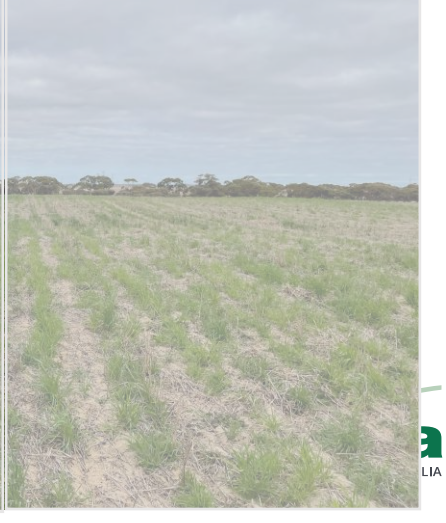
Water Repellence

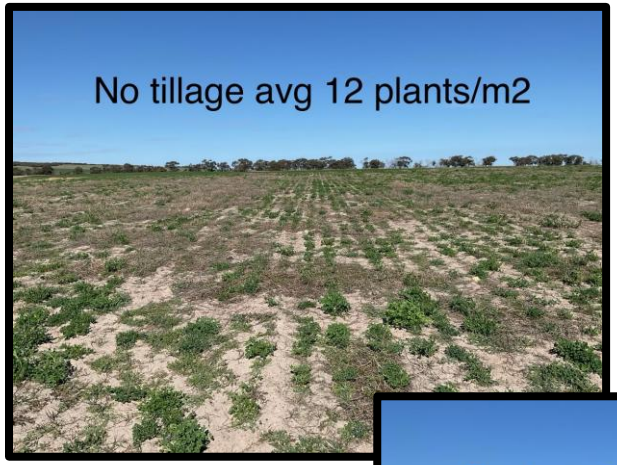
Water Repellence

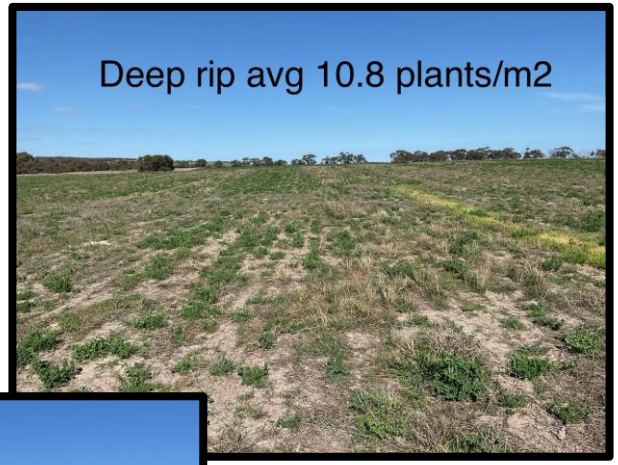
	Control	Inversion	Deep Rip
Cumulative DM	8.3 t/ha	11.6 t/ha	10.5 t/ha
Carrying Capacity @40% utilisation	3.0 DSE/ha	4.2 DSE/ha	3.8 DSE/ha
GM @ $50/DSE	$150	$210 (+$60/ha)	$190 (+$40/ha)

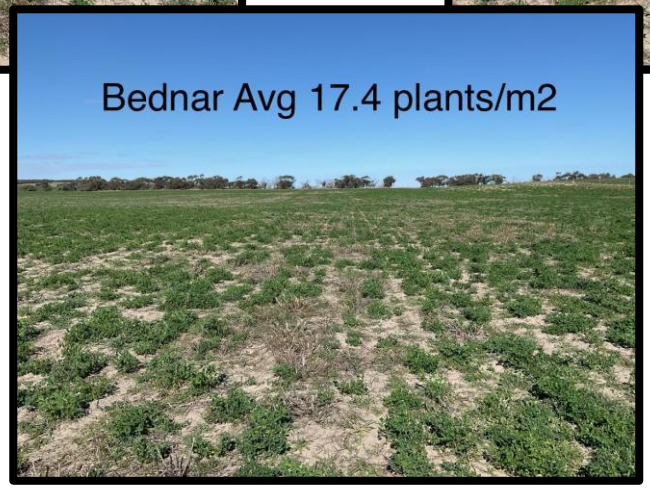


Treating compaction – mixing matters?

Treating compaction – mixing matters?







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Treating compaction (mixing matters in perennial pastures!)

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Nutrition counts

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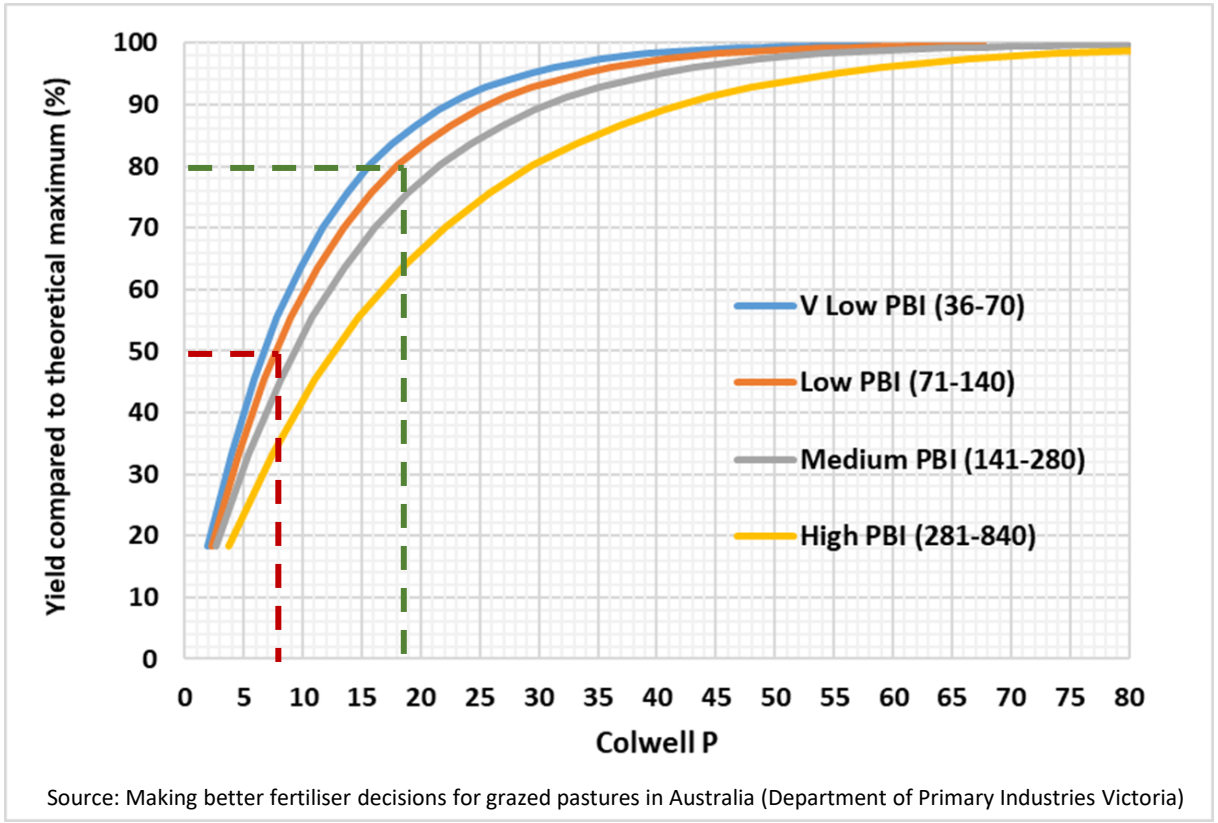
Nutrition counts



Source: Making better fertiliser decisions for grazed pastures in Australia (Department of Primary Industries Victoria)

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Thankyou

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