



Pictured: a crop of lucerne, grown by a North Canterbury Contract Grower for one of our overseas customers.

GRAIN OF TRUTH

The primary sector is in good heart as we head into autumn, with great pasture growth and strong returns for sheepmeat, beef and milk solids. Wool is also experiencing improved pricing.

This year's harvest has been challenging to say the least, but we are looking forward to offering our seed growers a greatly increased area of multiplication contracts this autumn, along with increased prices from last year.

There is much more optimism in international markets, and this is reflected in the prices we are able to offer our growers this season.

As this issue of Grain of Truth goes to print, we are busy installing a new high-tech optical sorter at our Ashburton site.

This machine uses high resolution cameras and fine jets of air to sort seed according to shape and colour. It means that we will be able to identify and remove weed seeds that, in the past, we have found challenging to remove, giving us even greater confidence in the purity of our lines of seed.

Two new staff members joined the Luisetti Seeds' team at the start of the year, both adding to the pool of knowledge we have within the business.

James Davidson is our new Grain Trading Manager while Tony Pascoe is our first West Coast Regional Manager. We are thrilled to have a presence on the West Coast and to be able to offer farmers our products and services.



Edward Luisetti, Managing Director

You can read more about James and Tony in this issue of the Grain of Truth. We also have some agronomic tips and some advice for farmers looking to over sow subterranean clover this autumn.

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Tony Pascoe, Luisetti's new West Coast Regional Sales Manager.

WELCOME TONY PASCOE

Luisetti Seeds is thrilled to have secured the services of West Coast local Tony Pascoe to be the company's first ever West Coast-based agronomist.

As a fourth generation Coaster, Tony is well-known in the community, particularly amongst the farming community where he has spent much of his working life. Tony has worked for several rural retailers, including seven years with Pioneer, so he has a deep understanding of West Coast farming businesses and the environment in which they operate.

Tony says he particularly enjoys helping farmers and working with them to ensure they get the best return on their investment in pastures and forage crops.

While his territory will extend from Fox Glacier up to Westport,

Tony says most of his work will be concentrated around the Grey Valley where the majority of farms are dairy farms.

While the focus will be on grass and clover production, Tony says farmers also grow winter brassica crops, beet and maize – which is where his experience with Pioneer will come in handy.

Having worked for larger rural suppliers, Tony says he is looking forward to working for a smaller, family-owned firm and establishing its presence on the West Coast. Outside of work, Tony and his wife Mel spend time with family on both sides of the Main Divide and are keen travellers, both within New Zealand and overseas.



Pallet racking being set up in Greymouth.



University of Tasmania research farm where Simplot run their pea and bean small plot trials.

BUILDING SUPPLY RELATIONSHIPS WITH SIMPLOT

On a recent trip to Tasmania, Jono Young, our Cereals and Pulses Manager, spent time visiting Simplot, an agricultural and food manufacturing business, to check out some trials of peas and beans. Simplot has a comprehensive trial programme where they look at new varieties in small plot trials to assess maturity, disease

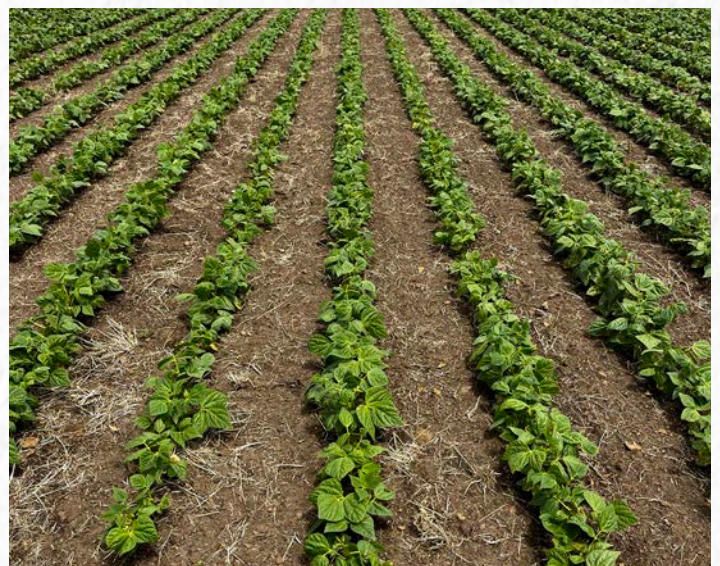
resistance, and yield. If new varieties look promising in the small plots, they are then taken to field trials for final testing before being introduced into their commercial programme.

Luisetti Seeds is fortunate to now have some pea varieties being introduced into their commercial

programme, and are looking forward to working with Simplot supplying them with both peas and beans.



Simplot's Field Officer, Annie, and Field Manager, Angus.



Close shot of Simplot's various cultivars on the hillside.

LUISETTI SEEDS WELCOMES NEW GRAIN TRADING MANAGER

James, who was born and raised on a cropping farm in Eifflerton, Mid Canterbury, brings a wealth of both practical experience and industry knowledge to the role.

After gaining an Agricultural Commerce Degree at Lincoln University, James worked on the harvest in both the UK and Australia before going dairy farming and setting up his own milk company.

Four years ago, James decided to return to his roots and took a job as a grain trader for Farmlands.



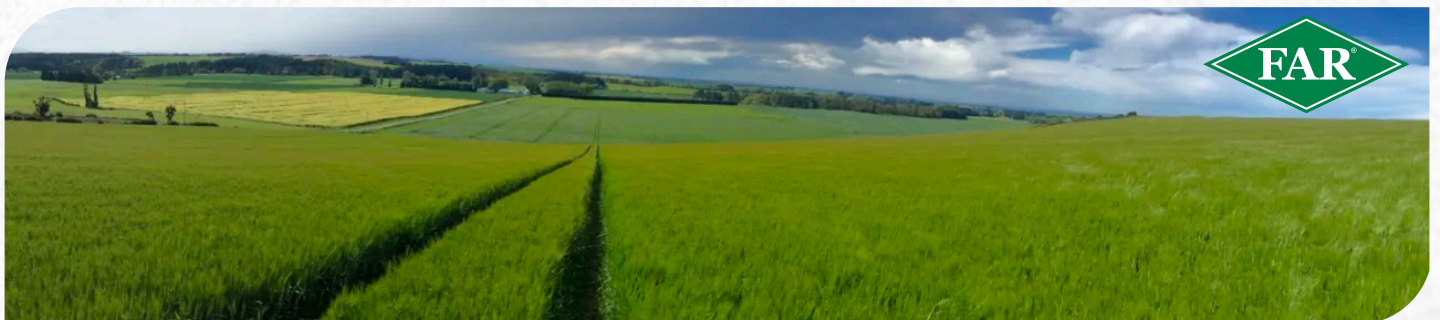
James Davidson, Luisetti's new Grain Trading Manager.

James was looking for his next challenge when he became aware of the role at Luisetti Seeds and we are fortunate enough to have secured his services.

James will be buying and selling wheat, barley and peas to end-users such as dairy farmers and

flour mills and will be looking after contracts for our domestic grains. James says he is looking forward to growing the tonnage of grain sold by Luisetti Seeds and building key relationships with end users. "Having an arable upbringing and a dairy background means I can speak the language."

James, who lives in Rolleston, will be on the road much of the time working with our field team and growers. Outside of work, James and his wife Chloe are kept busy with their two children aged seven and nine and enjoy camping, fishing and watching sport.



FAR OFFERS FREE TESTING FOR HERBICIDE RESISTANCE

Arable growers worried about herbicide resistance in persistent weeds can get these weeds tested for free thanks to an initiative launched by the Foundation for Arable Research (FAR). Luisetti Seeds is encouraging farmers to make use of this service and test any weeds that they suspect may be resistant to herbicides; this includes grasses

and broadleaf weeds. To get suspect plants tested, farmers need to cut off dry, mature weed seed heads and put them into a paper or plastic zip-lock bag. They then need to print off and fill out the herbicide resistance testing form on the FAR website and send the document and seeds to the FAR office. The seeds will be tested at

AgResearch facilities. Depending on the quantity of seed available, samples will be tested over one to six herbicides at label rates to determine resistance. Where possible, this will include both pre and post emergence herbicides.

For more information go to www.far.org.nz



A Kokomo Fodder Beet crop located in North Canterbury

AUTUMN AGRONOMY TIPS

Our South Canterbury-based agronomists Stephen Booth and Ella Richards share their tips and tricks as we head into autumn.

While on-going wet weather has been great for grass growth, it has rotted some winter forage crops. If you have a crop affected by the wet weather, ask your Luisetti Seeds' agronomist about the best options to ensure you have some winter feed available.

One option may be to start again and plant an annual grass, Upright is ideal, at 25kg/ha along with Intimidator oats at 80kg/ha.

This crop will be up and away quickly and can either be cut or grazed. And in spring, it will produce some great lamb feed.

Another option is to add 6kg/ha of Persian clover to the grass and oat mix. This legume will significantly increase the protein content of this forage.

Fodderbeet crops have fared better in the wet weather, but now is the time to apply a final fungicide along with WUXAL UAN and WUXAL Brassica, the latter contains molybdenum manganese and boron. Boron is essential for fodder beet crops. It helps optimise yields and reduces the risk of hollow heart and other diseases.

We are getting into the season for Diamondback moth and White butterfly. Talk to your Luisetti Seeds agronomists about the most suitable pesticides for your situation, taking into account withholding periods.

Consider stitching an annual grass such as Upright into Raphno crops in mid-March. This will significantly extend the life of this forage crop and provide multi-grazing opportunities over winter and spring.

Plan ahead for next year's fodderbeet crops. Now is the time to apply lime and effluent to paddocks ear-marked for next season's fodderbeet crops. Fodder beet is very sensitive to acid soils a pH of 6 to 6.5 is required – so lime needs to be applied at least six months before establishment.



Pictured: Subterranean clover, providing high-quality spring feed for sheep and cattle.

ESTABLISHING SUBTERRANEAN CLOVER IN AUTUMN

Autumn is the ideal time to sow subterranean clover and farmers intending to over sow, direct drill or broadcast this powerhouse legume into their dryland pastures this year should be grazing those pastures down to 700-1000kgDM/ha.

A hard grazing in February and March will open up the pasture and aid the germination of over sown subterranean (sub) clover seed. If necessary, herbicide can also be used to reduce drymatter before broadcasting or drilling seed. Ideally, the seed should be over sown, direct-drilled or broadcast at 10kg/ha and fertiliser applied if required. Legumes need a soil pH greater than 5.5, an Olsen.P of over 15 and Sulphate-S of over 8.

Germination is triggered by rainfall of over 20mm. Once germination has occurred, the area should be spelled to allow establishment and the seedlings to reach the trifoliate leaf stage.

Over winter, the area can be lightly grazed, preferably by cattle, to keep the pasture at around 2000 kg DM/

ha. This ensures the clover is not shaded. The area can then be used for lambing ewes before being shut up to allow reseeding in late spring.

ESTABLISHMENT METHODS

Because sub clover seed has adapted to germinate from seed burrs buried in the top 10mm of soil, drilling is the ideal method of establishment. Success from broadcasting seed is more weather dependent and the best results are seen when seed is spread just before a prolonged wet spell in March or April, this can be difficult to predict. Immediately after broadcasting, stock can be used to trample the seed into the ground.

RATES AND MIXES

The recommended sowing rate of 10kg/ha will generate about 100 established sub clover plants per metre square.

The best way to quickly build a large sub clover seed bank is to sow the clover alone or reduce grass seed rates down to under half of what would normally be used (e.g 8-10 kg/ha of perennial

ryegrass or 2kg/ha of cocksfoot and plantain). Alternatively, sub clover could be sown with rape (at 1kg/ha or less if the soil is fertile) as the brassica will act as a nurse crop for the clover and provide a couple of grazings over winter.

Grass can be over-drilled the following autumn, after the sub clover has set-seed.

CULTIVARS

Sub clover cultivars vary considerably in flowering dates, leaf size, pest and disease tolerance and hardseedness, so a mix of at least two complementary cultivars will compensate for site and climate variability. Luisetti Seeds has a range of sub clovers available, including Puawhaa, a variety bred specifically for New Zealand hill country environments. As a rule of thumb, earlier flowering cultivars are better suited to low rainfall areas (under 500mm) whereas later flowering cultivars are adapted to higher rainfall areas (over 700mm).



KEEPING THE EWES HAPPY ON A KALE AND SWEDE MIX

Winter forage crops play a vital role in the Richards family sheep and beef operation.

The family, who farm a total of 650ha including their home farm, The Point Station, at Windwhistle in Central Canterbury, rely on crops to provide stock with high quality feed over winter when pasture growth rates are negligible.

Jamie Richards says crops such as their kale and swede mix ensure their 3000 mixed-age Romney cross ewes remain in good condition going into lambing in early October.

This year, they have 30ha sown in the kale and swede mix and the family works with Luisetti Seeds' agronomist Caleb Pomare-

Edwards who provides advice on the best varieties to sow and on-going crop management.

Caleb says they have sown both Emblaze and Kestrel kale at 3kg/ha and Saddleback swedes at .5kg/ha.

The crops were sown on 25 November and Jamie says they came away well, tolerating the 220mm of rain the farm received in January better than the straight kale crops.

In early January, the kale/swede mix received a dressing of 100kg/ha of SustainN and a second dressing of liquid UAN and Wuxal Brassica was applied in late February.

Jamie says the twin and triplet-bearing ewes are run onto the kale

and swede mix in mid-winter, a week after scanning on 10 July and stay on the crop until just before set-stocking in September.

He says the family has grown the mix for 10 years and have found that ewes do really well on the crop which nutritionally, provides a good balance of both protein and carbohydrates.

“The swede and kale seem to complement each other well, so we don't need to feed any supplement to balance their diet. We do however give them a mineral drench and mineral blocks throughout their time on the crop.”

Straight kale crops are used for growing the family's 100 R2 and 150 R1 Friesian bulls.

