

Project: **Maindample Alternative Fertiliser Demonstration Site**

Summary prepared February 2015

Location	Maindample, Victoria
Organisation	Upper Broken Catchment Landcare Group with Up2Us & SoilCare
Contact	Greg Bekker 03 5761 1631 greg.bekker@ecodev.vic.gov.au
Fund source	SoilCare Small Project Grants
Year of demo	2012 - 2014
Objectives	To demonstrate and test six fertiliser products chosen by farmers in soils of the Mansfield area in relation to soil health and pasture growth for grazing over a period of 4 years.
Basis of trial	<p>There are many different 'soil additive' products available on the market for a range of different uses, many making claims about soil health and fertility. The science on some products has been established but not on others. For example, we know how superphosphate works. Other products do not come with trial data.</p> <p>This demonstration will assist in providing some comparisons against a conventional approach to fertiliser use and management. The model being used is very similar to that used by the Strathbogrie Alternative Fertiliser Trial (<i>see Strathbogrie Alternative Fertiliser Trial summary</i>).</p> <p>Management practices demonstrated during the demo trial include taking and using soil chemical tests and a soil health plan to bring trial paddock up to conventional best management practice in relation to soil pH. That is, above 5.0 in CaCl₂. Ground cover is maintained at or above 80% with grazing aiming to leave 800-1000 Kg/Ha of dry matter.</p> <p>Of interest will be the management practices existing outside the trial areas. These include soil stabilisation and erosion control, fencing of drainage lines, revegetation and protection of native vegetation and fencing of individual paddock trees for future stock shade and shelter trees.</p> <p>The demo site is also used by the Mansfield SoilCare Group as a discussion point and for information sharing in the area.</p>
Treatments	<p>Demonstration plots are 10m x 100m with a 10m buffer between each plot.</p> <p>Lime was applied to the whole site on 7th November 2012 at 2.59 tonnes per hectare.</p> <p>The products tested were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pellatised poultry manure at 100kg / plot = 1000 kg/ha • Pellatised pig manure at 40kg / plot = 400 kg/ha • Single super at 25kg / plot = 250 kg/ha • RUM at 5 litres per hectare with 200 litres of water • SeaSol at 5 litres per hectare with 200 litres of water • Control <p>The rates will be label recommendations and/or consultant advice.</p> <p>Product was applied on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31 October 2012 • 10 September 2013 • 14 March 2014
Measurements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil chemical tests • Soil biology tests • Pasture growth and yield • Animal grazing observations • Ground cover • Soil compaction
Results	A soil test was done on 19 th October 2012 which showed pH 4.1 (CaCl ₂) with Aluminium at 29.8%.



Use of bloat sprayer and fire pump to apply foliar sprays is much quicker and less hassle.



Simple fencing of red gum seedlings will provide trees, shade and shelter into the future.