



Soil program boosts lambing by 30pc

SOIL IMPROVEMENTS: Applying lime and using a Life-Force™ soil fertility program has made a big improvement to Norm Joppich farm at Langkoop, west of Edenhope.

LIMING can raise soil pH in acidic sands and grazer Norm Joppich has added another dimension to building his soil with the Life-Force™ soil program on his farm at Langkoop, west of Edenhope.

Mr Joppich said when he first came to the property seven years ago, it had a 7.5 dry sheep equivalent (DSE) carrying capacity. He also experienced high levels of scouring in the stock and calving problems.

Applying lime made a big improvement.

Soil testing indicated low levels of calcium, magnesium, phosphorous, sulphur, and manganese.

The Life-Force™ soil fertility program recommended using a clay-based natural phosphate product containing 10 per cent phosphorous (P) and 25pc calcium (Ca) in colloidal form, with humates and the other minerals the soil needed.

The program included low amounts of lime, dolomite, gypsum, Nutri-Mate humates, Nutri-Phos soft rock, and manganese sulphate.

Mr Joppich said this cost double what they had spent on single super in the next paddock.

His son Craig joined in with the local Triple P group and compared the pasture response in the growing season with the two different applications.

Three months after application the Triple P paddock had 850 kilograms a hectare of dry matter compared with the Life-Force™ treated paddock which yielded 1130kg/ha dry matter.

The trial paddocks were a slightly different size, but this was compensated for by set stocking both pad-

KEY POINTS

- Life-Force™ soil program dramatically improves returns
- 25pc higher lambing percentage
- 20pc higher stocking rate
- Less moisture stress
- Animal health impressive

docks with the equivalent number of ewes a hectare.

What became obvious as the season progressed was a higher lambing percentage in the Life-Force™ paddock.

Over a four-year period the whole Life-Force™ paddock has increased from 7.5DSE to 10DSE a hectare. This has been achieved despite lower rainfall years.

**— NORM JOPPICH
Langkoop, near Edenhope**

At the conclusion of the two-year trial, Mr Joppich said they compared the gross margins, which factored in the extra money invested in the Life-Force™ treatment.

The control paddock which had 125kg/ha of single super applied returned a gross margin of

\$308.32/ha, and the the Life-Force™ paddock returned \$392.58/ha.

The improved returns were primarily from higher lambing percentage but also higher weight gains and heavier wool cuts.

After the trial was completed, in the third year without any fertiliser application the Life-Force™ paddock had a 25pc higher lambing percentage and carried a 20pc higher stocking rate.

The property now carries 10 DSE a hectare.

In the past season, which has been exceptionally dry, Mr Joppich said he had noticed that their pasture had not suffered moisture stress any where near to the extent it previously did.

Clover in particular had looked fresh as in a good season and they have carried the same amount of stock despite considerably less rainfall.

He said his son had moved into the youth ministry so he sold the property and purchased a more manageable size farm for his "retirement" years.

As a priority, he said, he would soil test and apply any major and minor trace elements that were low in a Life-Force™ blend including humates and microbes.

He said investing capital into minerals their soil were lacking had been very profitable.

The health and well-being benefits for animals had been impressive and it was rewarding to be providing the best pasture for their stock, he said

■ For information about Life-Force™ programs contact Lawrie and Co Sustainable Agriculture on (08) 8244 8558.