



ANNA BINNA update

March Update

In the paddocks

Time flies and it seems as though we only just finished harvest. In January, we staggered our holiday break so everyone could enjoy some time off and we could complete our summer weed control program on time. After harvest, we spent time studying property layouts as we look to improve the properties we manage to make our cropping operations more efficient. This may involve the removal of old fences and stone heaps to rebuild driveways or access tracks. Finally, we have road train access to many properties which will require better roadways for all weather access.



Road train access will lower our freight costs

Reefinator improving production in stony areas

In February, we hired a Reefinator, which is a 25-ton roller fitted with 6 tynes at the front and is capable of ripping up limestone. The roller crushes the stone into smaller rocks and eventually turns it into soil. The



Danny & Simon having a

Reefinator requires a 400 HP tractor to pull it and it's very tough on both the tractor and the operator. The aim is to chip away at the stony areas in the paddock, increasing the depth of the tynes about an inch every pass. The tungsten points can wear out in as little as one day in very stony country.

This year, we operated the Reefinator for five weeks with two drivers running the machine 16 hours a day. The roughest areas had up to five passes with the Reefinator, and we covered around 500 acres in that period. The results have been amazing. Some areas that were covered in limestone reefs now have 2 - 3 inches of soil cover. In less stony areas, we now have up to 4 inches of soil profile without any stone. Hopefully, the improvement in crop yield will increase by up to 40% in some areas of the paddock with an increased soil depth.

With such impressive results, our aim is to eventually purchase a Reefinator and we will look to do a lot of the stony areas on both the land we own and the land we lease.

Trialing of a Speedtiller to deal with mice

Both mice and snails continue to be a problem in our production system in the coastal areas. This year we've hired a Speedtiller, which is a new implement based on the principle of a tandem disc and a prickle chain. This machine will cultivate at a high speed with a lot of stubble in the paddock. We're hoping this will disrupt the cycle of mice breeding in the paddocks by breaking up the mice holes and burying their food source (grain left in the paddocks during harvest). We've been applying mouse bait the day after tilling and are hoping to get a better uptake of the bait to reduce the mice numbers. So far, we have been very impressed with the results. Whilst cultivation will dry out the soil and we'll lose some of our ground cover, we are trialing one paddock after struggling to control the mice with multiple applications of bait last year.

Farewell to Derek Sansbury

spell from Reefinating



The Reefinator



Stone reefs breaking up



Derek & Marco shifting rocks

After eight years of employment with us, Derek decided that it was time to move on to employment a bit closer to his home at Kadina. Derek has become an accomplished operator and he leaves us with a great skill set. In his time with us, he has gained his Roadtrain licence, as well as his ticket for safe operation of a forklift, tractor, loader and telehandler. He has also been trained in working at heights, working in confined spaces and first aid, and has received his ChemCert. It's not surprising that with one phone call Derek secured a position on a farm near Kadina. Thanks, Derek, for your hard work and commitment over the years – we wish you all the best in your new position.



Thank you and good luck,
Derek

The next generation helping out

It's been great to have the next generation of our family, Charlotte and Charles, getting involved in the business. Charlotte is studying law at Adelaide Uni and she decided to get her semi licence during the holidays. It was a huge achievement to complete it in only three weeks, and she will help us drive a truck during the year. Charles is having a gap year after finishing year 12 last year. He's helping out in the workshop and will take on the role of driving a tractor during seeding. After seeding, he will also begin training with a forklift and doing telehandler operation.



Charlotte happy to have
gained her semi licence

So far this year has been very dry. Last year it didn't rain until July, so we are hoping for an early start this season. Danny has just finished servicing the seeder and has it hooked up and ready to start into seeding in mid-April.



Charles greasing the seeder

I hope you have a great Easter break. As always, thank you for your support.

Regards,
Ben Wundersitz





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