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Welcome to the latest and long overdue edition of Vitality, AgVita's newsletter for our valued customers.

AgVita is proud to announce the addition of numerous new crop/variety specific guidelines to our range of NU-test Desirable Levels. Popular varieties of fresh market potato, tomato, apple and strawberry have been added to our extensive listings, bringing the total number of specific guidelines to almost 200.

In the antithesis of previous newsletters, where analysis of nutrients in soil after an extended dry period was recommended, soil nutrition should again be on the radar as nutrient levels will be affected by prolonged wet conditions. Mobile nutrients may be leached and a simple soil test could save crops from deficiencies through the growing season. AgVita offer several combinations of soil tests to determine all key nutrients, from simple available nitrogen to a comprehensive mix of nutrients and indicators.

AgVita have attended and exhibited at several national conferences and events across Australia since the last newsletter, in both horticulture and broadacre cropping - read inside for details!

A review of pricing has just been completed and we are pleased to announce that all prices are unchanged coming in to the 2017/18 financial year.

And finally, don't forget our popular competition where you can win an excellent bottle of Tasmanian wine by identifying the location of the AgVita staff member in the photos taken on our recent travels. This location should be a challenge...!

Additional NU-test crop guidelines:

AgVita has developed several sets of additional NU-test desirable levels or guidelines for new crops and varieties, and are releasing these over the coming weeks. In summary, we have now developed six new robust guidelines for apple varieties (Gala, Fuji, Pink Lady, Granny Smith, Jazz, and Kanzi), an additional strawberry variety specific set (Amesti), three variety specific sets of data for Tomatoes (Pinnacle, Entice and Sylvannia) and a big increase of 7 new variety specific guidelines for potato crops (Lady Crystal, Melody, Laura, Orchestra, Rodeo, Snowden, and the increasingly popular Topcat). The variety specific guidelines offer even more detail and relevance than the generic crop guidelines such as 'fresh market potato'.

All AgVita reports are sent direct to clients with the latest guidelines loaded to display against your results. AgVita does not charge a premium on top of test costs for this reporting format.

To apply these new variety specific guidelines to your NU-test analysis, please be clear on all submission paperwork what both the variety and crop type is.

Are you applying unnecessary inputs?:

The only constant in Australian agriculture these days seems to be that each season will be different, too dry one year, too wet the next. Soil inputs from last year's generally dry season may not have been fully utilised and could still be available for the upcoming season. However, the risk is that recent heavy rainfall events across many parts of the country may have remobilised these nutrients. Growers and advisors realise the importance of identifying the limiting factor in a crop - and it might not be the same as last year!

The most effective way to determine the nutrient status prior to application is an accredited soil test with AgVita. Turnaround time for an expressSoil complete test (ES22) is no more than five working days from receipt of sample. Turnaround times for our Soil Response suite of tests has been improved over the last 6 months, with results now available in 6-7 working days.

ExpressSoil is an accredited and established methodology suitable for use in all areas across the country. It provides all macro and micro nutrients, soil pH, EC and Chloride as well as total N & C and several useful calculations like CEC, lime requirement, exchangeable acidity, %OM, %meq macro's and %CEC macro's.

An alternative to expressSoil is our Soil Response test - this suite of tests uses proven chemistry and methods such as Olsen/Colwell-P, PBI, macros (ammon acetate) micro's (DTPA), OC, S, B, Al (KCl) and of course the regulars like pH (H_2O and $CaCl_2$) and EC.

Both test suites have multiple options of analytes and are reported to clients in simple to use, but effective reports that offer guidelines, status and options for advisors to add fertiliser recommendations. Of course, once the crop has emerged and is approaching key growth stages a plant tissue test can reveal issues not easily identified from a soil test alone - more about this next time!

Measuring nitrogen in soil in-crop:

A fundamental measure of paddock fertility and crop success for just about every crop is the soil nitrogen level, importantly, the plant-available form of N such as Nitrate and Ammonium. As mentioned above, after a mix of both an extended dry spell followed by wet conditions soil nutrition may behave differently from previous seasons. Even after a pre-plant soil test, there is a need to monitor soil nitrogen through the life of the crop to determine if sufficient levels of N are available to the crop at key times, and also that excessive levels are not being applied. Growers and advisors require these tests to be both reasonably priced and rapid, and AgVita has three options available to monitor available N in soil:

- Dried soil NO_3 by water extraction
- KCl extraction on dried soil for NO_3 and NH_4
- N-check: fresh soil NO_3 and NH_4

Turn-around times vary depending on test methods, from same day (N-check) to as quick as 3 days after soils are received for the dried soil N methods. Please contact AgVita to discuss your preferred option, as results between methods can vary considerably.

PCA Update:

The Protected Cropping Industry is the fastest growing food producing sector in Australia, valued at around \$1.8 billion at the farm gate per annum. This is equivalent to 20% of the value of total vegetable and cut flower production in Australia (RIRDC report HSA-9A). It is estimated that more than 10,000 people

are employed directly in greenhouse horticulture throughout Australia, with the industry expanding at between 4-6% per annum. Protected Cropping Australia (PCA) is the peak industry body representing commercial hydroponic and greenhouse growers Australia wide.

AgVita's General Manager Michael Ruffels has recently successfully completed the intensive 5-day "Greenhouse Technical Management for the Future" short course held in Devonport, Tasmania. This masterclass in protected cropping and hydroponic production is designed for people from a range of backgrounds and experience and is thoroughly recommended.

This course is specifically designed to develop high level technical and management skills of

- Growers in protected cropping
- Suppliers of hydroponic equipment
- Agronomists
- Horticultural researchers and educators
- New industry entrants

To achieve this, topics covered included growing media, plant physiology, nutrient management, water quality, irrigation principles, EC & pH, environmental management, pest & disease and IPM principles, production systems and plant health among others.

AgVita strongly recommend those with an interest in protected cropping contact the PCA to find out more - see link [here](#).

Conferences:

AgVita was privileged to be part of the 18th Australian Cotton Conference, held in 2016 in SE Queensland. This biennial event always attracts a very large crowd, and this year was no exception with nearly 2000 delegates enjoying 3 days of presentations, a massive Trade Show and numerous social events on the Gold Coast. We were proud to accept an invitation to present a 3-minute thesis (on petiole sap testing in cotton crops) in the program, and a crowd of approx. 230 delegates crowded in to the seminar room to listen to AgVita and several other presenters focusing on crop nutrition.

AgVita also attended the well-organized East Gippsland Vegetable Innovation Day at Lindenow in late Autumn 2017 where several hundred growers, consultants and

industry reps were treated to a visually stunning layout of the latest varieties and crops in the leafy veg arena.

The Almond Australia Conference in late 2016 was also a huge success, with approx. 500 delegates enjoying the presentations and trade show during the 3-day event in Melbourne. As always, the Gala Dinner at the end of the event was a winner, with the recognition of industry leaders again proving popular on the night.

AgVita once again attended and exhibited at the GRDC Grains Research Update for Advisors in Perth, WA in late February 2017. This was a very large turn-out, with well over 500 delegates enjoying the latest research findings across the broadacre cropping spectrum. Once again it was a rollercoaster season for those in the west, with returns varying considerably across the regions in WA.

And finally, the Hort Connections (ex-AusVeg Conference) juggernaut rolled in to Adelaide for several days in mid May 2017. Registrations blew through the 2000 mark this year, and a spacious and extensive Trade Show provided plenty of opportunity for networking and socializing over the three main days of the event. The ever-popular Gala Dinner and Awards for Excellence was again an enormous event with approx. 1200 people seated for the dinner.

Coming events through the remainder of 2017 include the Apex-Brinkman 2017 PCA Conference in Adelaide starting on July 9th - AgVita is a Gold Sponsor and preferred supplier of analytical services to the PCA (and HFF). We will be exhibiting at this event and hope to see you there. AgVita will also be attending the annual Fertilizer Australia 2017 conference in Torquay, Victoria in September.

Analytical price review:

AgVita has reviewed our product & pricelist for the 2017-18 financial year, and are pleased to announce that no changes will be implemented - all pricing will remain at current levels for the following 12 months.

To obtain a copy of this current pricelist, please contact AgVita on the contact details listed above.

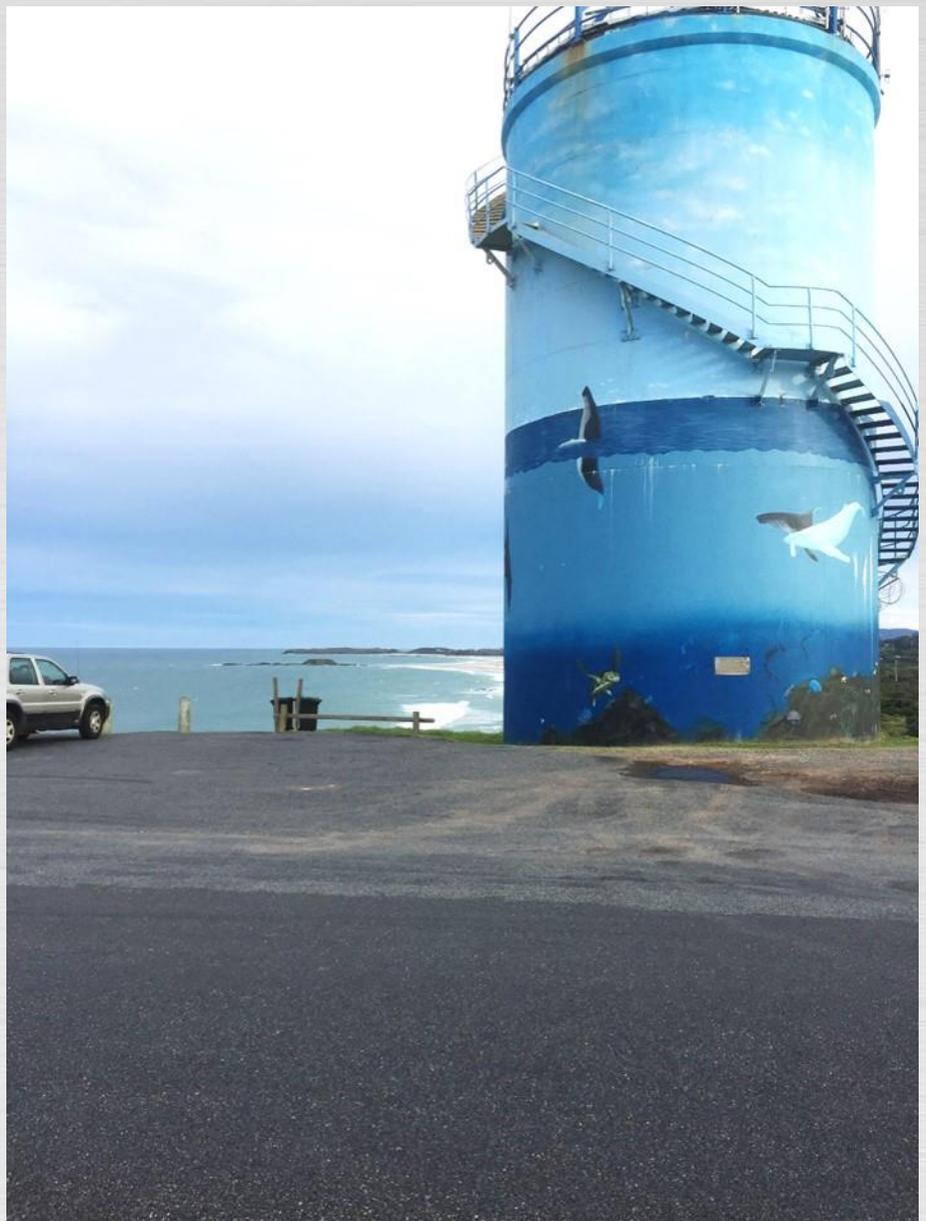
Name that Location (...or "where's AgVita been now?"):

AgVita staff members have been on the road yet again, travelling to meet existing and new clients across Australia. We proudly bring you yet another round of the "where is AgVita?" competition which again features our love of Big Things (use your imagination to work out what sort of big thing this is...).

We have another quality bottle (or two) of Tasmanian wine to give away to the lucky winner, and in each newsletter we'll have a new location and a new prize. Get your entries in **before June 16, 2017** by email to info@agvita.com.au.

The winner will be the best correct identification of the location (as per instructions below).

No clues this time, but any funny or embarrassing stories linked to the location (or the major crop this area is famous for) may sway the judge's opinion....!





The fine print....

- Competition is open to all clients and recipients of the Vitality newsletter.
- Entrants who inadvertently live in the town/vicinity of the location pictured may not be considered for the prize (unless no other correct entries are received!)
- Entries close 7 days after receipt of the newsletter
- Winner will be notified by email at the end of the 7 days, prize will be posted out the following day.
- Winners details will appear on the AgVita website soon after.
- We probably need to keep it to over-18's, but that shouldn't be a problem
- If multiple correct entries are received, additional "weight" will be given to entries that describe humorous/odd/interesting/embarrassing event which took place at the location (caution, details may appear in the next newsletter!!)
- The judges' decision is final, as we follow the Donald Trump rule in regulations compliance.....(we're always right!).