

Media Release

AGL feed from irrigation program suitable for cattle and sheep consumption: expert report

28 May, 2014

Fodder from AGL's irrigation program in Gloucester is of the highest quality and suitable for feeding to cattle and sheep, a new expert crop nutrition report has found.

The latest crop nutrition reportⁱ by Fodder King and Animal Nutrition Consulting Services (ANCS) found the crops grown using the irrigation program's blended water met the highest nutritional standards set by the Australian Fodder Industry Association (AFIA).

AGL's triticale and lucerne were graded as A1, while the first cut of forage sorghum was graded at A2/B2 and the second cut graded as A1ⁱⁱ. AGL's exploration irrigation program involves blending produced water with fresh water to irrigate crops at its Tiedmans property at Gloucester.

AGL's Manager of Hydrogeology, John Ross, said the high standard of fodder grown during the irrigation program was a pleasing result.

"These recent results are in line with the previous report which tested the winter fodder crops," Mr Ross said.

"To have confirmed that the fodder has a high nutritional value in the first report was really positive, but the fact it improved further is a solid indication that the blended irrigation water produces high quality crops and fodder."

In addition to testing crop nutrition, AGL chose to have extra testing conducted to assess the presence and levels of minerals and trace metalsⁱⁱⁱ in the crops.

There are low to negligible levels of trace metals in the blended irrigation water and this is reflected in the low concentrations observed in the harvested crops.

As there are no Australian guidelines and only limited published data on the mineral and trace metal content of crops, the international standard of Maximum Tolerance Level (MTL)^{iv} was used by specialist animal nutritionist ANCS.

Seven macro-minerals and over 20 trace minerals were sampled and the crop report concluded that the "macro and trace minerals results were acceptable".

"The ANCS report states that none of the tested minerals in the lucerne and sorghum were above the maximum level for cattle and sheep," Mr Ross said.

"The only spike was with the macro-mineral potassium and that could be explained by the rapidly changing soil structure as we have added large amounts of compost to boost the parent soils in a short timeframe. Local agronomy advice suggests that levels of potassium will quickly decrease.



“It was encouraging that the feed was found to be suitable for cattle and sheep as part of their supplementary feed, and the report clearly debunks claims that the blended water used in irrigation could affect the final animal products being sold for human consumption.”

All of the crop nutrition and minerals reports are publicly available from the AGL website at bit.ly/Tiedman.

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About AGL

AGL is one of Australia's leading integrated renewable energy companies and is taking action toward creating a sustainable energy future for our investors, communities and customers. Drawing on over 175 years of experience, AGL operates retail and merchant energy businesses, power generation assets and an upstream gas portfolio. AGL has one of Australia's largest retail energy and dual fuel customer bases. AGL has a diverse power generation portfolio including base, peaking and intermediate generation plants, spread across traditional thermal generation as well as renewable sources including hydro, wind, landfill gas and biomass. AGL is Australia's largest private owner and operator of renewable energy assets and is looking to further expand this position by exploring a suite of low emission and renewable energy generation development opportunities.

ⁱ The Soil and Cropping Report covers the period from September 2013 to March 2014.

ⁱⁱ The AFIA quality grading is from A1 to D4.

ⁱⁱⁱ Trace metals in the report are defined as essential minerals required for maintenance, health, growth, reproduction, lactation and fattening of animals.

^{iv} MTL is defined as “the dietary level that when fed for a defined period would not impair animal health or performance and should not produce unsafe residues in human food derived from the animal”.