

## National training for Guano and Agrispon

*Successful training sessions have been completed throughout Australia for Guano and Agrispon by John Jashar and his American associates, Derek Little and Kevin Sinks, with ongoing support for resellers pledged by Guano. "Australian growers are moving toward fully sustainable farming practices and are rejecting ag chemicals, providing consumers in Australian, and indeed worldwide, with clean, healthy produce. I am very proud that my company is at the forefront and driving that change", said John Jashar, managing director, Guano Australia.*

**J**OHNS Jashar's dynamic natural fertiliser company, Guano Australia Pty Ltd, has locked up the holy trinity of soil management - nutrients, soil structure and microbiology - in a new distribution deal.

The company, which has achieved phenomenal growth over the past seven years, has secured the Australian distribution rights to the biostimulant Agrispon, manufactured by the Dallas, Texas, based company Agri Sciences.

In announcing the deal, Mr Jashar broadened the appeal of his highly-effective products to the rapidly growing number of sustainable conventional farmers while retaining the high acceptance rating he has earned among organic and biodynamic producers.

"Basically I researched what happened with Agrispon in Australia up until about three years ago," said Mr Jashar.

"I saw it wasn't being traded in Australia in a correct manner.

"I identified that it was not a snake oil, that there was a very good product, but that it required an enormous amount of technical training to the right people.

"Agrispon has got a very big, strong, fit into sustainable agriculture, not so much the organic side, but true sustainable agriculture.

"I've built a very good working relationship for the long term with Agsci America, and we are going to be responsible for distributing this product right across Australia on a step by step basis.

"Agrispon is very much a product that will fit into all types of conventional methods for farmers going down the sustainability track, who want to fix up their soil.

"They can get their soil conditioned so that whatever inputs they choose, not only Guano Gold, will open up and release, so that they can grow crops more productively and more sustainably.

"Agrispon is now being officially launched nationally into the Australian marketplace in order to play its role in rebuilding Australian soils, backed up by a select network of specially trained agronomists and distributors.

"This is not being done for Guano Gold, it's being done for Australian horticulture and agriculture to enhance the farm fertility that is our livelihood."

Agricultural Sciences Inc president Kevin Sinks said in Brisbane: "Our company was started in Dallas, Texas in 1976 by my father Robert, my brother Robert Jun and myself.

"We actually started making Agrispon in our garage back in the early seventies so we could test it on farms, and went into full production in 1978, when Derek Little, marketing manager, and my brother Kim joined the company.

"In '95-96 we decided to restructure the company, realigning the marketing and sales and acquiring new distributors.

"Until then the company had been sell-

ing the product, but not marketing it, nor was it training people how to use the product.

"That's how we came across John Jashar. "We also moved from getting distributors to buy large quantities to providing them with what they needed, because in today's marketplace nobody warehouses anything.

"We re-emphasised education.

"Our marketing manager Derek Little has spent the past 20 years going to trade shows throughout the United States and Central America, training people. Basically he is our educator.

"Since we started the education process, we have seen a steady increase in sales.

"I would say we can attribute a 20 to 22 per cent sales increase to educating people in the use of our product.

"Meanwhile our biggest inhibitor of sales has been a lack of awareness of the product in the market."

Mr Little said: "A lot of people don't know what a biostimulant is, and too many people have been introduced to biostimulants with the wrong approach.

"For instance, if you put Agrispon in the

**'... So, treat the problem, not the symptom...'**  
**Derek Little, Agri Sciences**

soil and you don't add any nitrogen fertiliser, you can raise a crop fairly well for two years.

"After one year you say, 'Hey! We just raised a crop without any nitrogen fertiliser - we must be fixing nitrogen in the soil'.

"But there's a lot of organic residue in the soil and you can mine it out.

"If you don't replace it, after three years you're going to have crop failure.

"That's where a lot of people will see an early result and take a wrong interpretation of it.

"By the time they realise that it's wrong, it's hurting the client.

"The problem there is bad education.

"The health of soil has to be administered on a whole-of-soil basis.

Mr Sinks: "That means that when Agrispon is used, for example, we realised we had to be part of the whole program. It's not the only answer, because otherwise you would get a short-term result."

Agrispon distributes to 16 countries including Colombia, Algeria and Vietnam.

"We just came from Vietnam where the Government has officially announced it will be distributing the products - we've been working in Vietnam since 1994," said Mr Sinks.

"We're now in Australia for the first time, distributing through Kismet International.

"We started negotiations about a year ago and John now has a contract for exclusive rights to Australia.

"We are looking forward to a long-term relationship, and we are very impressed with the network he has set up and the qual-



NSW Agronomist Robert Drewitt testing for soil compaction with a penetrometer



Teamwork takes the biostimulant Agrispon to the top: from left, John Jashar of Guano Australia Pty Ltd; Agri Sciences' marketing manager Derek Little; and Agri Sciences Inc president Kevin Sinks

ity of people he works with, the education they put forth, the understanding of our product and the compatibility of his product and ours, the synergy between the two companies."

"To understand how our product works, you need to understand the only problem in agriculture, and that is a loss of biodiversity," he said.

"If you walked out into a field and you saw that it had not been cultivated, you would see a lot of different plants.

"Each one of these plants produces photosynthetic material that is chemically different for each variety of plant.

"Some of that photosynthetic material goes through the roots and stimulates cell division in bacteria, fungi, and algae around the root system.

"Those organisms start releasing enzymes, polysaccharides and siderophores. "What happens is that through this community of action, the soil stays in balance biologically as well as chemically.

"Whenever we take away biodiversity and put in a monoculture, which is what we have to do to raise crops, from that point

on nature is fighting you to get back to biodiversity.

"When I talk about soil fertility, I'm not talking about the nutrients in the soil, I'm talking about the soil's ability to process nutrients.

"As we move away from biodiversity to monoculture, the soil fertility goes down because the different varieties of microorganisms reduce. That's the way nature gets rid of some plants - it reduces the fertility so other plants will have room to grow.

"Everything else that happens after we put in a monoculture is merely a symptom of that monoculture.

When insects take away some of the plants, some biodiversity enters.

"Once you understand that monoculture is the problem, you arrive at the conundrum - you've got to have the monoculture to raise the crops. So, treat the problem, not the symptom.

"Agrispon has four different plant extracts in it, so whenever we put these different extracts into the ground, we are basically recreating biodiversity in the soil.

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## Industry leaders back Guano and Agrispon

KATHERINE mango grower Ian Golding needed help with a particular growing problem so he turned to Agrispon.

"We are one of the few areas with highly alkaline soils, which means more tie-up of micro-nutrients and a poor uptake of phosphorus", he said.

"I was using soft rock phosphate but was seeing no real improvements in the phosphorus levels in the soil.

"John (Jashar) said there had been a good response in other regions so I decided to give it a go.

"Our soil is well-balanced but very low in organic matter - there's only about 0.5-0.7 per cent. This means the nutrient holding capacity of this light, sandy soil is extremely low.

"What I wanted was to balance the soil and increase the nutrient level. But, despite mulching, the lack of organic matter made it much harder and slower to kickstart the microbes.

"Agrispon is definitely a catalyst for microbial activity. I had some six-year-old trees that were very heavy with fruit and I applied Agrispon to these. The results were very fast. The trees picked up in appearance and the product had clearly converted a lot of unavailable nitrogens and other nutrients.

"In retrospect, I should have applied the Agrispon at the growing, not the fruiting stage. But despite the surge, it didn't overdose the tree - I still got good quality fruit at the right time."

Ian will be monitoring his trees carefully over the next 12 months to see how they sustain the response.

He believes Agrispon is a good tool for people who want to revitalise the microbial activity in their soil.

"But the timing of the application is important and you need to know what you are trying to achieve with the programme."

Ian believes Agrispon would work well with Guano Gold, a product he started using about two years ago.

"I applied Guano with other microbes and in 18 months it took the amount of available phosphorus from 25 ppm to 65 ppm.

"I was pretty happy with that."

*Ian Golding, Katherine*

"We have been stocking Guano Gold for five or six years and sales are definitely increasing.

"Our customers use the product on a broad range of crops, particularly vegetables. It blends well, which makes it popular, and they are seeing some good results.

"Guano Gold is an organic fertiliser which has a good component of immediately available phosphorus and slow release phosphorus. Most customers use it as a blend with chemical fertilisers.

"Mainstream agriculture is starting to look at using more organic products for better results and sustainability. They are looking to improve their soil long-term and Guano Gold seems to do the job well."

*Bruce Cairns, Patons Fertilisers*

FREELANCE agronomist Richard Jackson is happy to recommend Guano Gold and Agrispon to any of his clients.

"I certainly am. If we can replicate the results seen so far, not only will people continue to use the products but they will be recommending them to others.

"Guano Gold can be used on any crop where there is a known phosphorus deficiency and you can expect very good results.

"There has been a huge range of feedback to indicate that people are happy with it. A good sign is that people who use it continue to use it.

"It is a product that people are looking for in organic, sustainable agriculture.

"I have done some trial work with Agrispon and it has performed very well indeed.

"I recently visited the US where they are getting some outstanding results on pasture, soy beans, corn, vegetables and fruit.

"The results are good but more importantly, they are consistent.

"The increase in plant production is quite incredible. In a range of trials we saw improved potential for yields, bigger plants and leaves and better root development.

"Agrispon is being chosen by a lot of US farmers and agents because of its proven results."

*Richard Jackson*

# NEWS



My introduction to Guano was from another farmer who used it growing oats. We spoke about the product and its makeup of high phosphate and calcium and I thought I'd give it a try.

The first application was at 80kg per hectare, half a tonne of lime, 45kg of gypsum, 100kg of mineral mix, with oats seeded at 75kg per hectare. The paddock was ploughed and harrowed to incorporate the above fertiliser mix.

This was not my usual practice. I would normally use a knock down herbicide with application of super potash or AGRAS no 2, with direct drill.

It was a reasonable season with a little water logging mid-winter for two weeks. The crop performed quite well, showing no sign of needing nitrogen. The harvest was fairly average, due to a late attack from army worm.

The second year, we planted oats again, using knock down herbicide with the same application of fertiliser, with Guano at a less rate of 48kg per hectare. It was planted late because of the poor break to the season and just after planting the crop, it suffered 200mm of rain in seven days.

Once again the crop seemed to show no signs of needing nitrogen application. As the season went on, I was tempted to spray for ryegrass, as it seemed there would be quite some competition with the oats. As it happened, it remained too wet to spray and was left to a later date.

The oats seemed to cope with the competition outgrowing the rye and still not showing signs of needing nitrogen. It was evident that the oat plant had developed a very rigorous root structure to seek moisture and nutrients to compete against the weeds.

At harvest I was surprised at the quite reasonable yields of all paddocks sown. The best paddock performing at an average of 4.5 tonnes per hectare, even though there was quite a lot of competition with ryegrass and still no application of nitrogen for a second year.

I would suggest to anyone wanting to try this new product that it has shown to work quite satisfactorily for me and has proven itself to be a top quality fertiliser which I believe will be used for many farming practices.

*Chris Ridout, Boyup Brook WA*

## Agrispon national training sessions



In attendance at Sandringham Hotel, WA: Derrick Little, John Jashar, Mike Zarb, Allan Bellard, Rob Mokill, Phillip Ralph, David Cullan, Warren Stirrot, Brian Meyer, Vic Combe, Gary, Chris Ridout

Chris Nathanael is a hard man to please when it comes to trying new products.

He refused point blank to even try Agrispon when first approached by Guano Australia Pty Ltd. In fact, it took a full 12 months before he agreed to trial it at all.

But when he did, he wished he'd tried it sooner.

He told *Acres Australia*: "We took a small amount and put it out through part of our orchard and through the nursery. Late in the dry season, the nursery becomes dormant, everything turns yellow and the fertiliser is locked out.

"After we had applied the Agrispon the results were so tremendous I just could not believe it. It was really fantastic.

"We have proven for ourselves that everything in the sales literature is true."

Chris is the director of Tropifert Australia Pty Ltd and Tropiculture Australia and is based 40km south of Darwin.

"Our business is threefold. Tropiculture Australia incorporates a very large fruit tree nursery providing more than 400 different varieties of fruit trees to every State bar Tasmania. We also export overseas.

"It also incorporates a horticulture advisory service."

Under the Tropifert Australia banner, the company manufactures its own organic fertilisers, as well as selling other brands.

"We stock Guano Gold to sell direct but we also incorporate it into all our own 100 per cent organic blends. It is invaluable.

"But again, we tried the product on our own orchards first to be sure of the results."

Tropiculture Australia grows known varieties as well as developing new crossbreeds. The company has two orchards, including an eight hectare block at Bees Creek which carries about 3,000 trees of which 1,300 are soft fruits and therefore netted.

Chris is currently planting a 250 hectare orchard with 70,000 trees, of which about 14,000 are in the ground so far.

"I cannot sell or advise growers to use a product if I haven't successfully tried it on my own orchards and nursery first.

"After that first success with Agrispon, I tried another experiment.

We had some snakebeans which had just about finished so we applied a mix of Agrispon and fish emulsion. Within a fortnight the plants had reshot from the bottom and were producing beans again.

"Our advisory service covers a range of horticulture aspects including orchard management, pest management, choice of crop and, of course, soil care. We are more than happy to tell them about Agrispon and Guano Gold.

"We have been having some amazing results with Guano. Our research shows that some of the best mangoes in the Northern Territory have been grown on one of our blends using Guano. And what's more, it's giving the fruit a shelf life of at least four extra days.

"The mix of calcium, silica and the magical release of phosphorus is producing a much firmer fruit which travels better and lasts longer. We are getting these results with mangoes, guavas, figs and tomatoes.

"The Guano blend we produce delivers the right nutrients to the cells to produce a better skin thickness.

"But it's not just fruit either. One of our biggest sporting complexes here applies Guano Gold in conjunction with our other fertilisers every two years. The texture of the grass has changed so that it no longer grows straight up and needs cutting every week. It is knitting together better and is much softer underfoot.

"Guano really is magic. I am over the moon with what the different blends are achieving.

"Once every 20 years or so you touch on something that turns out to be magic. I have done that with two of our blends that use Guano.

"And word is spreading. The orders just keep coming in. So much so that within six months of setting up the company, we have met our two year targets."

*Chris Nathanael, NT*

WA mango grower Bill Brogmus is lucky enough to farm on rich, dark, loamy, river soil, eleven kilometres from Kununurra. But he still had a problem.

The heavy machinery brought in to har vest the fruit was leaving the soil hard and compacted. And the nature of the orchard made it impossible to plough or rip.

So he tuned to Agrispon about two years ago.

"I am trying to use as few chemicals as possible so, as an organic product, I was keen to try Agrispon."

He applied it to four rows - about 100 trees - after the harvest but before the wet.

"It really helped to loosen up the soil and get the microbes working. I was really pleased. In fact, even though that was two years ago, I am still seeing the results today."

*Bill Brogmus, WA*

## Agrispon national training sessions



An Agrispon/Guano training session at Katherine, NT, Australia

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"We are recreating a diversity, a multiplicity of bacteria, fungi and algae. These micro-organisms think all the plants are there. We are recreating the biodiversity that increases the fertility, so whenever you put a nutrient source on, the soil can process it, get it into the plant, and take the stress off the plant.

"What happens also is that whenever you increase the biodiversity of micro-organisms in the soil, they start releasing the materials that begin breaking up the soil, putting in air space, all those things that made the soil so good in the first place.

"Before fertilisers came out, farmers used to rotate crops on a three year basis and then let it go fallow - we had biodiversity.

"Now because of machinery costs, commodity costs and things like that, we tend to have one crop year after year after year."

Mr Little said the Agrispon education plan in Australia was based on a train-the-trainer method. "What we've been doing is going around to the various agronomists and educating them on how this type of programme fits in with what they have.

"Distribution in Australia will depend heavily on working in with the agronomists. We figure that if we can train the top tier of agronomists, then they can take that education out and train the next tier and so forth, in a trickle-down kind of education."

Agrispon's product information describes it as a reasonably priced, fully EPA registered, biostimulant for soils and plants.

The company says Agrispon is applied at 13oz per acre, or one gallon to 10 acres for all food crops, row crops, landscapes and gardens. It says the product has been tested and proven worldwide for more than a decade.

Said Mr Little: "Agrispon is a natural, easy to use and cost-efficient biostimulant that dramatically improves plant performance and yield. It is effective in any climate suitable for plant growth. Agrispon performs especially well where there is stress due to soil or weather conditions.

"Many agronomic practices suppress beneficial micro-organisms and hence limit the nutrient supply to the roots, even in situations where adequate fertiliser has been applied. The product enhances nutrient availability and soil structure without any negative environmental impact.

"It's important to distinguish between types of biostimulants. Most are byproducts of bacterial cultures, manure extracts, seaweed extracts, or a combination of those. They work by increasing the enzyme, vitamin and hormone levels of the soil or plant, so encouraging growth.

"What we say is that Agrispon works in exactly the same way that plants themselves work. As a plant grows, nutrients and other elements are converted through photosynthesis into a liquid that is spread to the growing cells, causing division.

"This photosynthetic material is transported throughout the plant, and a portion of it is released from the roots.

"That material is then absorbed by the one-cell plants in the soil that are unable to perform photosynthesis and must rely on the upper plants for the material.

"Once the material is absorbed into the one-cell plants, it causes cell division, resulting in increased populations of these organisms.

"Each plant species produces a photosynthetic material that is unique to its species. Certain subspecies of micro-organisms, such as fungi and bacteria, are reliant on the particular type of photosynthetic material, so that the different species of upper plants have groups of lower plants or micro-organisms that are associated with them.

"As the micro-organism populations grow, so does the release of enzymes that free nutrients to the upper plants. However, other materials are also released that build soil structure and suppress the pathogens associated with host plants.

"For the suppression mechanism to be effective, a number of materials might need to be combined from populations of various microorganisms from different species of host plants. As a plant goes through its life cycle and active growth stops - as in the case of an annual that has started to produce seed - the photosynthetic material to the micro-organism also stops. This allows the pathogens to attack the plant and start the process of decomposition that cycles the nutrients back to the soil."

The company says that although much is made about growing things naturally, the term means, strictly speaking, letting whatever will grow in an area without cultivation, irrigation or fertilizers. This would eliminate all agricultural and horticultural production, and trigger a return to a survival system of individual foraging and hunting, the company says.

"Growing a single type of plant in a field or in rows is an unnatural occurrence," said Mr Little. "In a natural situation, plants will grow with a variety of other plants. This is called biodiversity.

Each of the plants is naturally selected for the area because they are able to survive the soil and atmospheric conditions of the area.

Because of the biodiversity, the basic mineral and microbial balance is stable. □