

Individually customised fertiliser and soil-conditioner blends

Rural Business MARCH 2018 Fertiliser Market Insight

SPECIALTY nutrition, crop-protection and pest-management supplier Barmac has a proven track record in marketing niche products into Australian agricultural markets.

In today's competitive agricultural supplies market, it's the fertiliser side of the business where real growth and product specialisation is happening.

Barmac business manager Chris Ramsey said the company had renewed its focus on one of its biggest assets – a quality fertiliser and soil-health range, and the ability to custom- blend fertiliser for individual growers.

Customised fertiliser a key point of difference

The merger of Barmac and Amgrow Specialty manufacturing resources in 2012 provided the capacity to service increasingly-sophisticated, individual farmer's fertiliser requirements.

“The pooled resources provided Barmac with more than 20 years of fertiliser-blending experience. With its team of fertiliser-savvy territory managers, Barmac now has a competitive edge.”

Mr Ramsey said farmers were looking to fertilise their crops more accurately.

“Standard off-the-shelf, convenient fertilisers – while still very popular – don't always match grower's production and quality expectations as they may have done in the past.

“Soil and plant analysis and the farmers' increasing knowledge of specific crop requirements are driving increasing demand for Barmac's customised fertiliser and soil-conditioner blends.

“Custom mixes are generally ordered through growers' local rural stores and suppliers, using Barmac calculators to determine the blend required to return nutrients in the both the soil and plant to optimum levels.”

Quality blends need quality ingredients

Mr Ramsey said Barmac had a reputation for controlled-release fertilisers to better match crop demands – with traditional fertiliser components providing an upfront kick start for a few weeks, and controlled-release components continuing to release nutrients for several months.



Barmac can individually customise blends of fertilisers and soil health and conditioning products.

“Using MultiCote technology, slow-release polymer and resin-coated urea can deliver nitrogen over two to three months. As well as better matching crop growth and requirement patterns, application rates can usually be reduced by up to 20% due to increased nitrogen-use efficiency, with less leaching and volatilisation.”

One of Barmac’s popular soil amendment products, NutriSmart, is a granular soil conditioner and microbial fertiliser containing carbon, silica and specialised microbiology.

“It can be incorporated into fertiliser blends or applied separately to improve soil properties, plant health, crop yield and quality.

“Each granule of NutriSmart contains weathered coal (leonardite/lignite), phosphate rock, carbohydrate and enriched microbes including yeasts. Soil benefits are increased microbial bioactivity in the plant rhizosphere, and freeing up availability of soil nutrients to improve uptake by plants.

“NutriSmart is a salt and chemical-free certified organic fertiliser that does not leach – and reduces the leaching of chemical fertilisers when applied together.

“We put Nutrismart in as many blends as we can – to provide high carbon and microbes, to incorporate OM and biological input blended with traditional individual nutrients.

“Barmac’s granular guanos – Guano Gold and Guano Sulphur Gold – are 100% natural organic-certified phosphate fertiliser and soil conditioners that can also be incorporated into fertiliser blends – solely or additionally to DAP or MAP to provide an alternative, longer-lasting phosphate source to the crop.”

Chris Ramsey said the company was able to handle the growth in customised blends from its granular-blending facility at Stapylton in Brisbane.

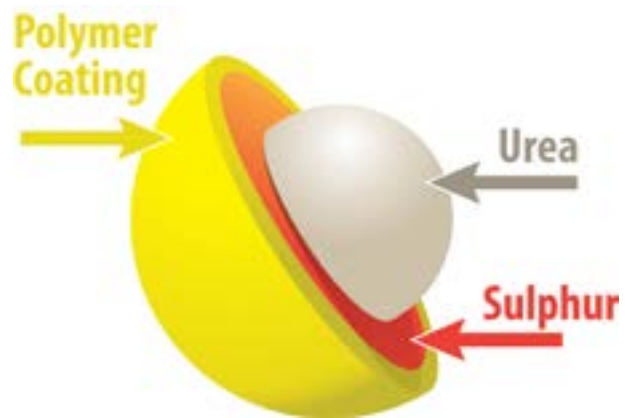
“Barmac can custom blend a range of specialty items such as MultiCote, Polymer Sulphur coated urea, NutriSmart, Guano, humates and trace elements with traditional fertilisers to deliver a truly specialised and unique fertiliser blend that performs in the field.

“Barmac can also custom-blend soluble fertilisers from its large range.

“Leaf analysis shows what is deficient in the plant. If it’s not deficient in the soil test, there must be constraints to the uptake of that nutrient. The grower can then decide if foliar application of the nutrient is required to supply the deficient nutrient quickly and directly to the crop.”

He said Barmac’s Manni-plex foliar nutrients were sugar-alcohol formulations for increased phloem nutrient loading and increased translocation. Important nutrients are available individually (B, Mo, Fe, Zn, Mn, Mg, Ca and K) and as mixed products.

“So whether it’s a choice of granular fertiliser blends for planting or broadcasting; or soluble crystalline or liquid fertilisers for foliage or fertigation applications, Barmac has the nutrient solution.”



MultiCote technology allows Barmac to include slow-release nitrogen in its customised blends