

TESTIMONIALS

TRIPOD FARMERS BACCHUS MARSH, VIC

We are a salad and veggie farm located in Victoria, we have been using Bioweed Organic for spot spraying on young weeds around the boundaries of our paddocks and nursery. It works great in this capacity, is safe for the operator and allows us to use a lower amount of glyphosate.

Lok
Tripod Farmers

LANDSCAPE SOUTH AUSTRALIA, SA

Here on the Eyre Peninsula, we started using Bioweed Organic about 3 years ago. Our aim was to improve our current chemical recipe for use with the declared invasive grasses that we have present in our region.

These include buffel grass, fountain grass, african love grass and although not currently declared we manage feather top grass in some priority areas as well.

While researching Bioweed Organic it indicated that the product could help control the seed bank of plants. This stood out to us as many of the plants we deal with can have a seed bank viability span of 7-15 years.

2017 was the first year we added Bioweed Organic to our usual spray mix for control of fountain grass and we were hopeful of seeing some reduction in emerging plants in 2018. Upon returning to one of our priority sites in 2018 we were very pleased to see a site that usually produces in excess of 100 plants now with less than 10. It must be said that there was lower than usual rainfall for that time of year which may have contributed to the lower numbers however we are now in 2020 and have not seen an increase in plants at that site. I would suggest that from this trial that Bioweed Organic defiantly had impact on the dormant seedbank found at this site.

We will be continuing to use this product going forward as we feel it has demonstrated its value in helping to manage declared plants across our region. We have also been trialling the product in conjunction with other chemical recipes for the control of other plants such as Gazania.

These trials are more recent, and success is yet to be determined. I would suggest that although Bioweed Organic is not a “Silver Bullet” answer to control of plants, I feel that it is a very useful “tool in the tool belt” when used in conjunction with other control options.

Ben Tucker

Landscape SA Officer, Eyre Peninsula

(Formally, Natural Resources Management)

BUNINYONG BLUEBERRIES, VIC

We are only a small concern, 1200 Blueberry plants on under two hectares. The farm was established over 30 years ago and so contains plants of mixed age. About 30% are variety Blue Rose, aged plants but still the mainstay of our Pick Your Own component. About 30 % are variety Brigitta, used for both ready picked and some PYO. The remainder are plants less than 10 years old of different varieties. Some are in production; others are becoming established.

We choose not to use permanent netting; our plantings are in double rows that can be covered by one run of netting from fruit set to post harvest. This arrangement, combined with the mix of ages and canopy stages of the plants, means that we must be on top of weed control from when plants break dormancy until they drop their leaves leading up to the next dormancy.

We use an integrated program of weed control beginning with heavy mulching with straw at planting. We hand weed close in when we prepare drip lines for irrigation, spread fertiliser, prune and before netting the rows for summer. Further straw mulch is added when required. Close mowing is used between rows, supported by line trimming in spots the mower cannot reach.

In earlier years we used minimal applications of glyphosate for weed control, away from the blueberry plants. It served its purpose, but when Bioweed Organic became available it soon became our main herbicide, applied as a spot spray on young weed plants at the rosette stage.

Initially we used Bioweed mainly in the warmer months, understanding that it's mode of action was to destroy the surface cells of plants, resulting in rapid dehydration, particularly in warmer weather when the weeds were more water stressed.

More recently we have found it works even in the cooler months, if applied on a sunny day, as long as weed leaves are dry. We use an extended wand with a nozzle that delivers large droplets in a band, effectively “painting” a weed in one pass.

While not as versatile as glyphosate, Bioweed Organic has several distinct advantages. It is not systemic, only sprayed leaves die, making it safer to use closer into the blueberry plants than could be done with glyphosate. Sprayed plants, particularly if they are transpiring hard in warm weather, die quickly. We find that as we finish spot spraying weeds in a row any that we inadvertently missed stand out, they are looking green and healthy while the sprayed plants have collapsed into a grey remnant. It is very easy then to do a quick second pass to achieve a very high kill rate.

Of course, the fact that it is a sustainable, plant-based product makes it highly desirable too.

We have been using it for two seasons, so we hope to observe another claimed advantage this coming harvest, that it kills weed seeds in the soil before they germinate. We will be particularly encouraged if reduced germination rates of Nightshade and Fat Hen are observed this summer.

Bioweed Organic is dearer than glyphosate and not as consistently effective year-round. Hopefully, as demand for it rises, economies of scale might help lower its cost. However, because we sell all our crop directly to our customers by PYO and at the farm shed, we feel it is the way to go at this stage.

Our customers expect good holistically safe food and are enthusiastically appreciative when they get it. The pride and satisfaction we receive as a result does not have a dollar value, but it is an important bottom line for us. We certainly intend to continue to use Bioweed Organic as our ongoing emergent weed killer in the future, as a key component of our weed control array.

Ernie Neale
Buninyong Blueberry Farm