

### GROMOR FEBRUARY 2017 NEWSLETTER

The subject of Land Restitution comes up regularly in farming circles. Recently I was asked what my opinion was regarding the wiseness of purchasing land earmarked for Restitution under Land Claims.

I wish I fully understood the workings and implications of the Land Expropriation Bill that passed through Parliament last year and which is currently being considered by President Zuma. Please don't presume that expropriation will be at a fair price. This is Africa! Over 40 years ago we bought a piece of land that a neighbour could no longer afford to pay rates on. Despite being Transformed land with the underlay of the Old Main Road running through it, two abandoned farmyards (no buildings or fences) and having been fertilized out of the range of Untransformed land suitable for conservation, 30 years after purchase it was capped with a D'Moss restriction in 2002, making part of it valueless. The Department of Conservation claimed they were conserving Ngongoni, an invasive sourveld grass of which there are thousands of hectares of in KZN on land that has been overgrazed and overburnt.

Should land be earmarked for expropriation without assured compensation, I would not touch it. If it is land subject to Land Claim with Compensation whether it be "willing buyer, willing seller" or "fair price" as past land takeover's have been, one could view it in a different light.

It's almost impossible trying to make a living on a small farm nowadays. It's vital to take advantage of "economies of scale" and get bigger, which may mean having to purchase neighbouring land earmarked for restitution as the only way forward.

I really wish that the politicians would stop stirring up the electorate on the Land Issue. At the last count 90% of the Land bought by Government under LAND Claim had not been maintained as productive units. Furthermore, there are thousands of hectares of "Homeland" land waiting for development. But politics does not equal economics!

### **POTTED MINATURE ROSES**

Make the most of POTTED MINATURE ROSES at their first bloom and do not get too upset should they go backwards after that! They are not easy to maintain, being prone to insect (particularly Red Spider and Aphid) and Fungal attack, if conditions are not perfect. If after this you wish to continue:

- a) Potted roses have shallow roots and need to be watered regularly. Generally, twice a week in winter and every second day in summer, adjusting for exceptionally hot or long cloudy wet spells. Water in the morning, keeping water off the leaves if possible.
- b) Potted roses like air movement and lightly shaded light AREAS in summer. In winter expose them to few hours of cooler morning or afternoon sun.
- c) Feed Potted Roses as you should be feeding your other Pot Plants i.e. a good morning watering ONCE a week with a nutrient solution made up of 1g GROMOR PLANT FOOD per litre of water – again keeping the nutrient solution off the leaves.
- d) Regularly remove old flowers and prune back to  $\pm 1$ cm above the lowest actively growing bud.
- e) Potted Roses are prone to common problems.
  - i. Red Spider and Aphid attacks which are easy to identify on young buds and leaves. Initially one can literally rub these off, but the time will come when spraying will be necessary.
  - ii. Fungal diseases that attack the leaves, turning them yellow and leaving them to die off. Limit this by having a well drained medium and don't let irrigation water or the nutrient solution touch the leaves. You can also try spraying a fungicide twice a week.

## **LAWNS**

As Autumn approaches, it's time to review lawn management practices.

- a) A regular light trim, with the mower blades set as high as possible, will leave substantial photosynthetic area to lay up root reserves for the winter. For Berea grass, cut to a height of  $\pm 6\text{cm}$  and Buffalo  $\pm 4,5\text{cm}$ .
- b) If you have bad patches in your lawn (eg shallow or established more or less directly on subsoil) topdress with GROMOR LAWN DRESSING (1 x 30dm<sup>3</sup> bag/5-10m<sup>2</sup> or 1 x 50dm<sup>3</sup> bag for 15m<sup>2</sup>)

If you have not limed in the last 3 years, apply GROMOR DOLOMITIC LIME at 300g/m<sup>2</sup> over the whole lawn and give a fertilizer dressing of GROMOR 5.1.5(28) at 30g/m<sup>2</sup>. Whilst 5.1.5 may not be recognised as a general lawn fertilizer, I like the high potassium (last 5) which strengthens the plant over winter.

## **STOCK FARMERS**

Whilst the use of chicken litter in cattle "licks" is no longer recommended, the need for a protein based winter "lick" has not diminished. It is in fact vital for cattle running on KZN Sourveld in winter, from as early as the beginning of March through to three weeks after the first 50mm Spring rain.

Fortunately, cattle can convert "Non protein nitrogen" like urea, to amino acid protein in their rumens.

Regards.

**GROMOR (PTY) LTD**

## **R. Hagen**

PS: Rolwing is defined as a deep massage technique aimed at releasing muscular tension at skeleton level. TRUE!

PPS: World Top 5 Beer Drinking Countries

<u>Countries</u>	<u>ℓ/capita pa</u>
Czech Republic	159
Ireland	131
Germany	110
Austria	108
Australia	105

RSA comes in at the 25<sup>th</sup> spot with 60.

PPPS: The biggest blue whale was recorded as 33,5m long weighing 130 tons and to think that whales live off plankton the smallest sea creatures. They take in mouth full of water, filter out the plankton, and blow the water like a fountain from the top of their heads.

PPPPS: Considering that mankind started using the wheel in  $\pm 4000$  BC in Mesopotamia, which was a Potter's Wheel, it's unbelievable that it took another  $\pm 1000$  years before they started using the wheel for transport.