

GROMOR JULY 2017 NEWSLETTER

There was a delightful Ode written by Keith Parkinson in the Tailpiece of The Mercury of the 5th June 2017, about his rugby playing days. "Parkie" as he was known, played hooker for Natal in the 1960's. In those days the replacement of injured players was not allowed. Parkie interpreted this as not leaving the field of play before the final whistle had blown or you had taken your final breath!

Playing against Northern Transvaal at Loftus Versveld, he was in excruciating pain and had to be helped by his team-mates in getting his one arm above and over his "prop's" neck in the scrums. On being rushed to the closest Pretoria doctor after the game, the X-ray revealed that his arm was fractured. From the doctor kept coming the words "bloody fool, you're just damn lucky I'm not amputating your arm"!

Keith was with Durban Bag Co., who supplied Gromor's bags for many years.

USE JULY TO PREPARE FOR SPRING

1. Remove faded flowers from winter annuals
2. Prune roses and fruit trees, using sharp secateurs to make clean cuts. (There is a recommendation to give two foliar sprays with a mixture of magnesium sulphate and gypsum. A tablespoon of each/litre water. Does it do anything positive? I honestly don't know!)
3. Remove dead and straggly growth from shrubs.
4. Repair fences, pergolas, paving, pools etc.
5. Scrub down white walls with sugar soap and paint if necessary.

WATERING

Gardening books tell you that July is the time to pull out the hosepipes and start watering. In KZN, the drought may be broken, but 3 to 5 years of well below average rainfall has left dam levels and soil water reserves worryingly low. DELAY watering open ground by a few months this year!

With a lack of soil moisture, it's also best to hold back on fertilizing. This does however not apply to composting, liming, or applying GROMOR ACCELERATOR fertilizer pellets.

GROMOR DOLOMITIC LIME at 500g/m² should be dug in as deeply as possible. GROMOR COMPOST 1 x 30dm³ bag per 5m² to 10m² and GROMOR ACCELERATOR ORGANIC FERTILIZER PELLETS at 150g/m² can be lightly scratched into the soil. (if you have very clayey soil replace the Lime with GROMOR GYPSUM)

SEEDLINGS AND POTTED PLANTS

For SEEDLINGS and POTTED PLANTS, both watering and feeding throughout the year are essential. Grow seedlings in GROMOR SEEDLING MIX before repotting into GROMOR POTTING MEDIUM or planting into open ground. Both GROMOR SEEDLING MIX and GROMOR POTTING MEDIUM are well drained, but be sure to use containers with drainage holes.

Start feeding 2 weeks after sowing seeds, with a solution made up of 1g GROMOR PLANT FOOD/litre of water. Once rooted, a weekly watering with this solution, to the extent that leachate seeps through and runs out the bottom of the containers, should be applied. If more water is required, irrigate with straight water.

I cannot recommend the use of SLOW RELEASE FERTILIZERS when growing in containers. It's difficult to get the EC right and the ratio of ammonia to nitrate nitrogen is far from ideal.

If you're growing in containers, get feeding if you have not already done so! I see far too many hungry container grown plants!

PS: If you're looking for an uncomplicated solution, feed container plants once a week with a solution of a heaped Teaspoon of GROMOR PLANT FOOD in 5ℓ water. This does NOT mean each plant gets 5ℓ of nutrient solution. It only gets sufficient so that the nutrient solution starts leaching out the bottom of the pots. If it gets dry during other times in the week, use straight water.

SOIL ACIDITY

1. Nitrogen does leach and in the process acidifies the soil:
2. The more acid the soil gets the more PLANT TOXIC ALUMINIUM is released.
3. Some of this ALUMINIUM can be precipitated with a 3 ton/ha dressing of GROMOR GYPSUM (300g/m²).
4. Unfortunately, GYPSUM will NOT adjust pH, with the result that ALUMINIUM will continue to be released, but hopefully to a lesser extent.
5. Lime heavily (5 tons/ha GROMOR DOLOMITIC LIME/ha – 500g/m²) and work it in as deep as possible.
6. Lastly institute cultivation practices to maintain SOIL ORGANIC MATTER above 2½% (C >1,5%) which will in turn reduce nitrogen leaching and so prevent further soil acidification.

IGA

The Intensive Growers Association (IGA) has put together an interesting programme for their Symposium to be held at the Indian Cane Growers Hall, ML Sultan DUT Campus in Durban, on the 20th July 2017.

At IGA Symposia one can hear a wide variety of interesting presentations on different intensive growing topics, delivered by experts in their field, in one day, for a very reasonable cost.

Contact the IGA at iga@sai.co.za for details.

ORGANIC FERTILIZER SOCIETY OF SA (OFSSA)

After lying dormant for a very long time, the Organic Fertilizer Society of SA (OFSSA) recently affiliated to the IGA.

Regards,

GROMOR (PTY) LTD

R. Hagen

Politics: With the mess SA Politics is in, it's essential that the opposition keep ahead of the game. With this in mind, I found Tony Leon's comment on the Helen Zille affair interesting. "10 years ago I retired as leader of the DA following some excellent advice I got. It's easier to field questions like; why are you leaving the field, than why are you still in it?"

PS: "We can sell our time, but we can't buy it back."