

EGVID 2020 WRAP-UP ADVERTISING FEATURE

Biostimulants lift yield in EGVID trial

BIOLOGICALS

BIOSTART is an agritech company with a strong biological focus based on the philosophy that a sustainable healthy soil is the key to making the most of a farmer's land.

Using this philosophy, it has been developing and testing products that harness the power of naturally occurring microbes to answer a wide range of primary industry needs for 26 years.

This year, BioStart planted a site at the East Gippsland Innovation Days to demonstrate how its biostimulant products work to improve vegetable crop yields.

The results were independently assessed and show clear increases in growth, faster establishment, less transplantation shock and bigger root and head sizes in broccoli and lettuce.

BioStart's key soil biostimulant, Mycorrcin, is applied to soil around actively growing plants to improve plant health and resilience by stimulating soil microbes, including mycorrhizal fungi.

QUICK LOOK AT...

BioStart

- Based in Auckland, NZ.
- Specialises in microbial activators and fermentation extract.
- In business 25+ years.

These microbes improve root growth and facilitate nutrient uptake leading to faster establishment and growth in crops.

Additionally, mycorrhizal fungi produce proteins that aggregate soil to improve its long-term structure.

Their foliar biostimulant, Foliacin, enhances plant growth through stimulating the microbes on plant foliage to help improve recovery from chemical and environmental stress.

Further, Foliacin optimises photosynthesis by aiding green leaf retention leading to greater growth, less crop rejects and higher yields.

Chief executive officer and scientist Dr Jerome Demmer explains the link between microbes and plant growth

and health.

"Plants cannot grow without the help of microbes to absorb nutrients from the soil," Dr Demmer said.

"There are naturally occurring microbes living in the root zone, inside the plant and on plant surfaces.

"All of these are essential to the plant's survival but getting the right mix of microbes is key to increasing productivity or plant health."

For the EGVID trial the vegetable seed trays were treated with Mycorrcin to stimulate the roots at an application rate of 0.5 L of 1:100 dilution of Mycorrcin.

This was followed by a seed bed treatment prior to planting at 6L/ha of Mycorrcin.

Foliacin was applied to iceberg lettuce and broccoli foliage at 1L/ha/application at two weekly intervals.

The Mycorrcin treatment showed better root growth in seedlings while the application of Mycorrcin and Foliacin led to increases in lettuce and broccoli head weight at the following rates:



COMPARISON: Mycorrcin treated brassica seedlings on the left, untreated on the right at the EGVID.



RESULTS: Mycorrcin treated lettuce on the right, untreated on the left at the EGVID.

- Iceberg lettuce planting date one: There was a 7.8 per cent increase in head weight from 1.37 to 1.48kg
- Iceberg lettuce planting date two: There was a 11pc increase in head weight

- Broccoli planting date one: There was a 7.8pc increase in head weight from 404g to 436g
- The BioStart biostimulant products are based on fer-

mentation extracts that work by activating the naturally occurring microbes in the soil or leaves.

As they contain no live microbes, they are stable, easy to use and can be co-applied with cover sprays, herbicides and nutritional sprays.

Some 26 years of developing products, scientifically testing and trialling them with growers, puts BioStart in the position of being able to support primary industries to be more productive while protecting and improving the environment.

For more information on BioStart products, visit biostart.com.au or to order call 1800 953 042.

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EGVID 2020 WRAP-UP

East Gippsland Vegetable Innovation Days 2020

Veg field days embrace digital

Victoria

AN ENGAGING online presence allowed the East Gippsland Vegetable Innovation Days to deliver significant benefit to the horticulture industry earlier this month, whilst adhering to strict rules to comply with COVID-19 regulations.

The event pivoted to be a national demonstration and data collection site but in a series of regular live events every day on social media was able to connect thousands of people from near and far via the small screens of their smartphones.

Through careful consultation with relevant authorities, permission was granted to allow a maximum of 50 people on site at a time, with strict adherence to social distancing and hand hygiene rules.

Organisers said the feedback from the three days has been positive beyond expect-

tations.

Growers, together with the participating seed and agricultural chemical company representatives, indicated that the limited numbers allowed them to engage in longer, more open conversations, affording everyone the time and space to talk privately about varieties and data.

"We were really pleased to be able to give the industry access that has still been very worthwhile, as well as driving huge increases in virtual engagement via our social media across the three days," EGVID co-director, Stuart Grigg, said.

And the online access to the data, learnings and insights will take on another dimension in the coming months, with a large library of professional videos produced from the event set to be hosted on the Ausveg website.



UNDERWAY: A bird's eye view of the East Gippsland Innovation Field Days at Lindenow, Victoria, showing the many variety trials.

The content will include in-depth discussion about varieties and products, accompanied by virtual tours of individual company plots, creating a valuable reference point that will be available

for many years to come.

The plans for 2023 are currently "up for discussion", according to EGVID co-director, Andrew Bulmer.

"There's been some fantastic learnings in how we

successfully adapted for this event that if we go again in three years time, we'd be definitely incorporating some of those changes into a future event structure," Mr Bulmer said.

Chester praises EGVID success

FEDERAL Member for Gippsland, Darren Chester, has praised the coordination and running of the 2020 East Gippsland Innovation Field Days.

Mr Chester met with Lindenow grower, Andrew Bulmer and industry representatives who were showcasing new varieties of vegetables.

"Our horticultural sector is worth more than \$1 billion each year to the Gippsland economy and we have some of the most productive agricultural land in the world," Mr Chester said.

"While it was disappointing the demonstration sites in Lindenow had to be closed to the public because of the coronavirus, it was good to see growers taking the opportunity to make appointments, meet with industry representatives and exchange ideas on how to improve the sector in the future."

Spread across two hectares in Lindenow, the EGVID site featured more than 1500 lines including lettuce, cauliflower, broccoli, baby spinach leaf, kale and celery, as well as a number of different herbs. The event was planned out over the past 12 months.

Use Mycorrcin to kick start your seedlings and ensure greater crop yields

Apply our soil biostimulant, Mycorrcin, to promote healthy root growth leading to enhanced nutrient uptake, better plant establishment and greater yields in crops.

Use Foliacin to enhance plant resilience at times of stress

Apply our foliar biostimulant, Foliacin, to the foliage of plants to improve overall plant health, growth and resilience particularly in times of plant stress.

Available from leading horticultural retailers or call Biostart 1800 953 042 or visit www.biostart.com.au