

Our Farming Community - Mugwort Plant

AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONVENTIONAL WORMING FOR STOCK

There is much documented about the 'Mugwort' plant as a herbal remedy for intestinal parasites in animals such as horses, cattle, sheep & goats. Mugwort contains Thujone, which is very efficient against controlling several species of parasitic roundworm. As a consequence, two local stock owners have decided to trial the plant as a means of parasite control in their own stock.

The Gunthorpe's along with Sharyn Hansen have kicked off their trial by sourcing the Mugwort seedlings from the very friendly staff at Mudbrick Herb Cottage on the Gold Coast. It is a

very hardy herb that will hang-in during severe dry spells without any attention; and it does not go dormant in winter. Occasional pruning keeps the bush lush, thick and in good condition.

Seedlings have now been planted out with the intention of feeding the leaves to stock once it reaches maturity. The Gunthorpe's plan to strip the leaves from the stems of the mature plant and add it to their horses feed at regulated intervals.

Sharyn Hansen, on the other hand, has planted several seedlings into old tyres with the intent of allowing sheep to feed off them freely as they require. Attaching a wire frame cover to the tyre



hopefully will provide enough protection for the plant so that it will keep reshooting, but Sharyn says '...the success of this idea remains to be seen, I may have to rethink that approach'.

At this point the seedlings are safe from hungry inquisitive animals until they are more established.

With our recent wet weather, conventional drenching has been a more expensive exercise than usual, so achieving a successful result from this trial, will prove a very cost effective method of parasite control in stock.

Benefits from a successful trial will be more than just the cost savings, but reduced time & effort also as the animals will basically treat themselves – no more hassles of having to treat each animal individually with conventional worming products. In addition to this, we will be reducing the chemical intake of our stock, which is a definite bonus

Ultimately, the results remain to be seen; but for such a small amount of effort & expense, we are keen to pursue this as an option and hopefully see successful results in the near future.

*This story brought to you by the folk at
Firebreak Farm*

