

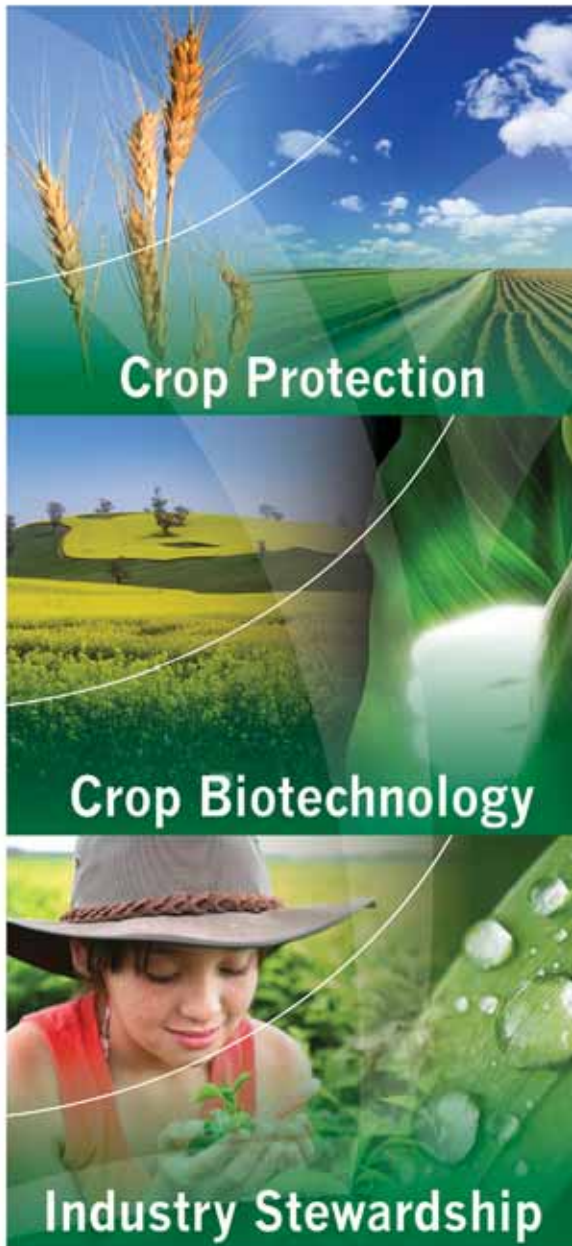


# CELEBRATING THE drumMUSTER STORY





# CropLife commends Agsafe on 20 million drums



Through CropLife and its members, Australia's plant science industry is a global leader in stewardship.

This significant milestone for the **drumMUSTER** program is testament to the long-term commitment of CropLife and its member companies to the highest standards of whole-of-life stewardship.

CropLife Australia's member companies spend more than \$13 million a year on stewardship activities to ensure the safe and effective use of their products throughout their life cycle.

CropLife Australia is very proud of the leadership of our collective membership in initiating **drumMUSTER** more than a decade ago. CropLife congratulates its wholly-owned subsidiary, Agsafe, for delivering the great success that this milestone represents.





# Acting on a shared responsibility

By **LAUCLAN McINTOSH**,  
chairman of AgStewardship Australia

**AFTER** more than a decade of service, **drumMUSTER** has become much more than a simple recycling program.

It's also become a household name. It's a remarkable accomplishment for a stewardship program dedicated to a very specific goal: to help farm chemical users keep their land free of waste containers and recycling the plastic and steel thus diverted from landfill into new products.

Today 97 per cent of farmers know the **drumMUSTER** brand and 65pc have said they have used the program.

This goes to show the spread of the **drumMUSTER** name that farmers and pest managers have now come to value.

But for years the program has come face-to-face with generations of poor attitudes towards recycling on the land.

Growers and chemical users have been known to bury or burn the containers they no longer had use for.

As **drumMUSTER** continues to grow and influence, we are seeing the last of those dark days.

Farmers and land owners now see the consequences of those unsustainable practices.

**drumMUSTER** has worked because of the consistency it has provided.



Everyone in the chain from farmers, resellers, manufacturers and local councils have done their bit to make the program efficient.

Local governments across the country have been key partners, recognising that collecting drums for recycling reduces landfill and provides a useful service for ratepayers.

Through industry leadership and action, **drumMUSTER** has delivered outcomes without the need for regulation.

It has adapted to be flexible in ways that government regulation cannot.

And with the advent of AgStewardship Australia in 2008, **drumMUSTER** continues to be strategically guided through the future challenges with its original vision at the forefront.

Agsafe Ltd has continued to operate the **drumMUSTER** service, steadily improving efficiency and achieving higher collection rates.

With funding through AgStewardship, it continues to reduce obsolete chemical stocks through the ChemClear® program, providing a safe disposal path for unwanted farm chemicals.

And our partnership with agricultural chemical companies, who have a long standing commitment to the responsible manufacture and safe use of their products, has been a testament to the very nature of stewardship.

## INSIDE



The 20 millionth drum

4



**drumMUSTER** champions

7-9



Life of a chemical drum

11



Overseas musters

14

**drumMUSTER** – Celebrating 20 million containers

**Writer:** Christopher Davis

**Graphics:** Liesl Meehan

**Photography:** Masha Zaric, Greg Hutt, Liesl Meehan

**Production:** Josh Hall and Karina Piddington

**Editor:** Vernon Graham

## Answering the call

By Major General **MICHAEL JEFFERY**, former Governor-General and **drumMUSTER** patron

IT GIVES me special pleasure to acknowledge the achievement of **drumMUSTER** in collecting its 20 millionth drum.

I congratulate everyone involved.

This achievement reflects the enduring commitment and follows action taken by rural communities and relevant industry bodies since **drumMUSTER** began 13 years ago.

The leadership displayed by crop protection and animal health chemical manufacturers, local governments and farmers across the length and breadth of

Australia has seen a determined bid to make a difference through a voluntary program to reduce landfill and recycle waste plastic and steel while enhancing our reputation as responsible stewards of the land.

In 2007 as Governor-General and then patron to **drumMUSTER** I had the privilege of recognising the delivery of the 10 millionth drum.

On that occasion I issued a challenge to reach the 20 million mark in half the time and it is pleasing to see Australian farmers have answered that call.

But there is more to do.

In a country where how we manage the land is crucial to the health of our environment and long term prosperity, I look forward to all stakeholders continuing to play their part and more in ensuring the continuing success of **drumMUSTER**.



# 20 million and counting:

SEEING Bob Linnett walk into the Riverina Co-operative in Wagga Wagga, NSW, everyone knows he's not there for the specials on fertiliser or dog food.

Bob's more interested in the stack of empty chemical drums piled outside in the lot.

After a quick peek at the pile Bob hunts down the co-op's head **drumMUSTER** inspector Conrad Haggar to see how many drums have come in since his last visit.

For the past three years the co-op crew have been collecting empty and clean agvet chemical containers from customers for recycling through the **drumMUSTER** program.

As part of the program the co-op receives 25 cents for each container inspected with every cent donated to local charity Country Hope, an organisation which supports families with children suffering from cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

As a Country Hope director, Bob's got a big stake in how many drums come through the co-op's gates: the more drums collected the more funds the charity has available to run programs for sick kids.

But what Bob didn't know was the store was about to make **drumMUSTER** history.

The co-op had just received the program's 20 millionth drum.

The lucky drum deliverer, Coolamon farmer Malcolm Mackenzie, said he had no idea what he was in for when he drove through the co-op's gates.

"How many drums are we up to?" he said.

"Twenty million! Fair dinkum, that's a lot of drums isn't it?"

Malcolm has been using **drumMUSTER** longer than he can remember.



The Riverina Co-op's chief **drumMUSTER** inspector Conrad Haggar and Coolamon farmer Malcolm McKenzie with the 20 millionth empty chemical container delivered to the **drumMUSTER** program.

But before Country Hope came on the scene things were a little difficult.

"We used to have to cart them out to the Wagga tip which was an absolute nightmare because it was on the other side of town," he said.

"Once you get into a routine, it's easy done. If you're dropping off drums all the time, it's just a part of it, and it works so easy."

For Bob Linnett, the 20 millionth drum was just one more container towards helping out his kids.

"I'm looking at more than 3000 drums here in the lot at the moment. That's more than \$700 going to our sick kids," Bob said.

He spends a lot of time chasing up drum numbers at one of the six resellers in the Wagga region, all of which inspect drums for **drumMUSTER** and donate funds to Country Hope.

They include Landmark, Tarcutta Rural Supplies, AGnVET Wagga, Elders, Delta Ag and the Riverina Co-op.

"The resellers inspect all the drums and sign them off, and then they post the cover sheets to our office in Blake Street or I go round to see how many they've got," he said.

"I'm all over town, I don't like sitting at home but if I can make a dollar for our kids I will."

Bob said **drumMUSTER** inspector Conrad Haggar was very dedicated to Country Hope, which set him apart from all the other resellers.

"I've known Conrad since he was a kid and he knows the kids with cancer and he cares," Bob said.

"All the other agents are the same, they care, but he's outward enough to say 'look, bring your drums in here because I want them'. That's what he does, that's the difference."

Conrad Haggar said without Country Hope, their drum collection service wouldn't be nearly as successful.

"Bob's always here annoying me – well not annoying me – but he's making sure things are on track and ticking away."

Since the charity became involved with **drumMUSTER** three years ago, drums recycled through the program in the Riverina have soared.

The co-op alone has collected almost 25,000 drums in less than three years with the total from the six participating resellers having passed 40,000.

The co-op's general manager Kevin Salmon said it was a big task for a business to commit time, effort and major resources to **drumMUSTER**.

But in the end he said it was worth the challenge.

"People recognise our work, we see it here. There are other reseller's names written on these drums – that's okay as long as people are coming through our gate," Kevin said.

"And it's helped knowing there's a portion going off to the kids. What a great thing."

## Why the program works

COUNTRY Hope is just one example of how **drumMUSTER** fits in with how a community operates.

Out of the 760 **drumMUSTER** sites in Australia most are



managed by local councils at waste management sites and transfer stations.

Others are taken on by community groups, charities or other organisations like rural firefighters.

**drumMUSTER**'s national program manager Allan McGann said because it wasn't restricted by government regulation, the program could fit the different needs of councils, community groups and charities.

"This is the reason the program has survived for as long as it has," he said.

"No one **drumMUSTER** site is the same. They vary from State to State, council to council, town to town."

For example, at Mangrove Mountain near Gosford on the NSW Central Coast, the local Rural Fire Brigade runs a **drumMUSTER** collection twice a year during its open days, along with regular by-appointment services for fruit growers in the region.

All money collected from inspecting containers goes towards buying gear and equipment for the team.

For the Central Murray Regional Waste Management Group in Victoria, it's all hands on deck year-round managing a network of 24 sites across five councils.

The group has been so successful they've processed almost a third of all drums recycled through the program in Victoria, preventing 1234 tonnes of waste from clogging up landfills.

In Toowoomba, south-east Queensland, the Regional Council takes care of all collections with trained **drumMUSTER** inspectors at 15 of their waste sites.

Their hard work has gone a long way with the council collecting more than half a million **drumMUSTER** drums during the past 10 years.

"These are just a few examples of how people make it



# the drumMUSTER story



**LEFT:** Bob Linnett from Country Hope; Coolamon farmer Malcolm McKenzie; Riverina Co-op's chief **drumMUSTER** inspector Conrad Haggar, and co-op general manager Kevin Salmon pictured after the co-op achieved the historic milestone of receiving the 20 millionth container delivered to the national **drumMUSTER** program.

**BELOW:** The **drumMUSTER** team (left to right) Andrew Winkler, John Knight, Vernon Keighley, Allan McGann, David Long, Christopher Davis, Lisa Nixon, Colin Hoey, Annette Mellick, Russell Mead, Phil Tucker, Martin Shafron, Graeme Passmore and Liesl Meehan.



work in their own communities," Allan McGann said. "Councils generally provide a service for the program in their region but where the service is limited, community groups get involved. And it's been that way since the beginning."

## We've come a long way

ALLAN has become a fixture of the program and a major driving force of the program from behind the scenes.

He's been with the program since its early days, first employed as a field officer in early 2001, and remembers starting out with hardly any exposure and limited funding.

"When **drumMUSTER** came onto the scene there was no

other national recycling scheme collecting chemical drums, we were it," he said.

"So we faced a mammoth task."

He said the first challenge was trying to change the negative attitudes towards on-farm recycling.

"I was a rice and livestock farmer for more than 20 years before I came on board with **drumMUSTER**," he said.

"I knew first hand what farmers were doing with their chemical containers before the program, which was either burying or burning.

"That's because we didn't know any better. That's not the case now, it still happens, but not nearly to the extent it once was."

## Rinse 'em out, Round 'em up, Run 'em in

**drumMUSTER** is part of the Industry Waste Reduction Scheme (IWRS) and was created by the body representing agvet chemical manufacturers, Avcare (now Croplife and Animal Health Alliance Australia), in conjunction with the National Farmers Federation, the Australian Local Government Association and the Veterinary Manufacturers and Distributors Association.

The goal was to help farmers and other chemical users dispose of their chemical containers in an environmental and responsible manner.

The first drum collection was held in Gunnedah, north west NSW, in May, 1999. In less than five months the program had spread to Victoria.

It proved to be an even bigger year in 2000 with no fewer than 130 councils signing up to the program. By 2001 the program had collected one million drums, spanning to Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

Today almost every farmer in the country knows the **drumMUSTER** name, with more than 60pc having used the program.

"I like to think **drumMUSTER** had a big role in changing those attitudes, along with a new generation of savvy growers who know better," said its national program manager Allan McGann.

Nine regionally based consultants help spread the **drumMUSTER** word throughout the country, training inspectors to handle drums and helping community groups or councils get the program off the ground.

They, along with the staff based at its headquarters in Canberra, make up the very small **drumMUSTER** family.

"These are the guys on the ground assisting people with their questions and offering solutions for getting rid of unwanted containers.

"They're there day after day trying to make things easier for everyone using the program," Allan said.

"**drumMUSTER**'s success wouldn't have happened without local regional guys."

He said he couldn't be prouder leading the dedicated **drumMUSTER** team on reaching the historic 20 millionth milestone.

"Not only did we reach this significant event but we also smashed records for the year, surpassing our drum numbers from last year and rocketing past expectations," he said.

"And the year's not over yet. We've still got a lot of work to do. It's an exciting time for a program which once had no recognition in the agricultural community what so ever. Now a lot of farmers wouldn't know what to do without it."



# Industry's commitment ...now and into the future



THE **drumMUSTER** program is supported by a unique partnership between the member organisations of AgStewardship Australia: the National Farmers Federation (NFF), CropLife Australia, Animal Health Alliance (Australia) Ltd, Veterinary Manufacturers and Distributors Association (VMDA) and the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).

Their presidents share with us why **drumMUSTER** has been important for their industry and the future of product stewardship in Australia.

## JOCK LAURIE President of the National Farmers Federation

"I think you have to continue to strive to get management practices in place that deliver good environmental outcomes and at the same time overcome issues affecting the industry. And that's what **drumMUSTER** has dealt with, delivering a good environmental program and certainly has found a way to deal with those waste empty chemical drums. The industry is always looking at new ways to deal with problems on farm and **drumMUSTER** is a prime example of what farmers can do."



## MIKE VAN BLOMMESTEIN President of Animal Health Alliance

"I think people need to be aware that all these drums are not ending up in landfills and that we are not leaving a time bomb out there for our kids or our grandkids. I think it shows to all our stakeholders that we take our responsibility seriously and support self-initiative without legislation."



## LACHLAN MCKINNON President of CropLife

"CropLife's commitment to industry stewardship stems from a firm belief that responsibility extends well beyond a product's point of sale. The focus must remain on ensuring that industry-run stewardship initiatives lead the field in effective management of waste, rather than defaulting to regulation. There will be a continued focus on ensuring the program continues to meet the needs of all participants. Beyond this, innovative packaging, which will lead to reduced waste, has come a long way during the past 13 years and this will continue to play a key part in industry stewardship."



## JAMES ADAMS President of the Veterinary Manufacturers and Distributors Association

"I believe if we are going to have a quality environment to pass on to our future generations, companies now have to be on the forefront and **drumMUSTER** is a very proactive way to ensuring the environment is healthy for the future. It's important to get drums into the **drumMUSTER** program but to also get rid of their excess chemicals through ChemClear as well. Not all companies are now participating in the programs. It's a very integrated approach and it needs to be expanded to those companies."



## GENIA McCAFFERY President of the Australian Local Government Association

"The **drumMUSTER** program is important because it works! It represents a genuine partnership that relies on all parties to achieve its goals. Stewardship is important because it provides consumers with choice. They can support manufacturers who are responsible and accountable to their consumers and the community. It's the role of government to ensure those doing the right thing are supported and that they are not disadvantaged by those who will not accept their responsibilities and will not participate. Working with industry and farmers on **drumMUSTER** provides an opportunity to reduce the volumes of material going into landfill, reduces the environmental impacts of used chemical containers, facilitates the recycling of plastic and steel containers and shares the costs and responsibility."





# Beating the drum for our champions

## Tassie grower's drumMUSTER crusade

MAKING sure a farmer's land and crops are safe from pests can be tough work.

But having to think about what to do with their waste, particularly empty chemical drums, can sometimes be the last thing on farmers' minds.

But in the case of R.G. Huett Farms at Deloraine in Tasmania, they've involved the recycling of their **drumMUSTER** drums into part of their day-to-day operations.

The farm's owner Michael Huett (pictured left) has been growing mixed veggies including carrots, potatoes, peas, and onions along with poppies for almost 25 years.

For the past decade he's relied on spray man Martin Kenney (right) to make sure no pests ruin his crops while also preventing any empty drums ending up in landfill.

"We are bringing drums in pretty regularly at the moment," Martin said.

"I did one (delivery) six months ago and we delivered about 180 drums. The one I did before that would have been 200."

Martin has been using **drumMUSTER** for the past six years and said the program has played a big part in making the business more sustainable.

"Just in terms of being able to get rid of them instead of having to find some other way to dispose of them, like digging a great big hole or burning them.

"It's bad enough having the chemicals lying around let alone having burning plastic pumping plumes of black smoke into the air. That's what the service is for, so we might as well use it!"



## WA lettuce farm lets drums loose

FOR lettuce farmer Maureen Dobra, getting rid of her empty **drumMUSTER** chemical containers was the easiest thing in the world.

Maureen has used **drumMUSTER** for the past four years to recycle her eligible agvet drums left over from running her gourmet lettuce farm, The Loose Leaf Lettuce Company in Gingin, WA.

She said it just made sense to use **drumMUSTER** because there was no other sensible alternative in getting rid of her empty chemical drums.

"It's a really good way of disposing of our chemical drums and now the shire has taken it on at the rubbish tip," she said.

"It's a great way of disposing of them, why put them in the rubbish tip? They are not going to break down, not for centuries!"

She said it just made sense to use **drumMUSTER**, even while running a busy business.

"Send them into **drumMUSTER** and pass them on so something can be done with them. That's the best thing to do! It's definitely worth it."



## Neil scoring tries for drumMUSTER at Dalby

BEFORE **drumMUSTER** came along Queensland farmer Neil McVeigh didn't think twice about throwing his empty chemical containers into landfill.

But after joining the program more than 10 years ago, Neil has become a radical **drumMUSTER** convert.

He now owns a drum cage on his property where he inspects containers for neighbours.

"I'd admit 15 to 20 years ago we were terrible. If we had one drum we'd just chuck it away, it wasn't worth worrying about," he said.

"I tell my neighbours to make sure their containers are clean before they bring them along and with the lids off.

"They're happy to do that because being a private collection site they can arrange any time with me to come over."

To date, the Dalby grain and cotton grower has collected more than 34,000 drums on his own, with all the money he makes inspecting drums going to the Dalby Junior Rugby Union Club on the Darling Downs.

"It's things like **drumMUSTER** that make a club run," he said.

"Because the money is going to a junior sporting club, people see it as being good and do it for the kids."

Neil said the **drumMUSTER** program had also taught him the benefits of being careful with wastage.

"People are more aware of their environment and do the right thing and they also know there's a more efficient way to use their chemicals," he said.

"What we're seeing now is that we're cleaning them but also not wasting the last 100ml of chemical in the container."





## The 'Dump Rat' of Bundaberg

CALLING someone a "dump rat" doesn't sound an endearing nickname but Peter Radel wears it with pride.

Peter is the official Dump Rat (as he likes to be called) for the Bundaberg region, picking up empty agvet containers from busy farmers who don't have the time to recycle their waste.

For the past six years Peter has visited local veggie and small crop growers around the Queensland city a few days each week.

To date he's collected a whopping 151,000 drums, 45,000 this year alone.

And if he didn't have enough on his plate he also

contracts to local recycler IMPACT on their local runs.

"The season is going well for drum collecting," he said.

"At least five to six different farms have joined this year. They've just gone crazy, I don't know if it's the rain or what!"

Peter said farmers liked the program. Plus it's free.

"It stays out of landfill, that's for sure.

"Where I take them to IMPACT, they bale them up and send them off to be recycled into new products."



*It is not a hassle, just a matter of good house-keeping. It's a hell of a lot more convenient than years ago. We used to run over steel drums with an eight tonne roller to flatten*

*them out before picking them up and burying them.*

– Michael Eckert, broadacre farmer, Strathalbyn, SA



## Vic Cluster growers give drumMUSTER

FOR the next generation of farmers, being more sustainable and recycling is fast becoming a vital lesson in running an agricultural business.

Andrew Bulmer from Bulmer Fresh Farm Vegetables at Lindenow, Victoria, knows how important programs like **drumMUSTER** are to the young growers he trains as part of his work with the East Gippsland Food Cluster.

"I try and give them grounding in running a proper business the whole way through," he said.

"A lot of the younger kids these days are heavily into recycling and sustainability around products."

Andrew is a third-generation horticulturalist who runs a family business producing broccoli, iceberg lettuce and baby leaf for salads.

But after going through droughts, a global financial crisis and now recent floods, he decided to never again

go through these hardships alone.

He got together with seven other local growers and devised The Food Cluster.

"There were a few people in the community who just wanted to work collaboratively so we could promote the area and also promote the sort of business that we do."

Part of the work with the Cluster includes training young students looking to get into the industry, particularly best practice with their empty agvet chemical drums.

"It's very easy for us and our students to use **drumMUSTER**," he said.

Andrew said as farmers faced big challenges ahead they needed all the help they can get in terms of making recycling easier.



## WA potato growers keep eye on quality

IN AN age where quality assurance is becoming more important for farmers, programs like **drumMUSTER** that take care of sensitive wastes are considered a godsend.

It's something WA potato growers Graham and Mia (pictured) Rose take seriously when running their business based at Myalup about 150 kilometres south of Perth.

Graham said when they take a load of empty containers to their local tip, every container is counted.

"We're given a receipt on how many drums (we deliver) which we file away for our QA auditing," Graham said.

"The auditors always ask because it's all part of the quality assurance. They want to trace what happens to the use of the chemical and then we dispose of the container."

But making sure they are squared away with the auditors isn't the single reason why the Roses use **drumMUSTER**. Graham said it also helped rid their land of leftover waste.

"If you do the right thing everything turns out well down the track, so they both work hand-in-hand," he said.

"And **drumMUSTER** fits exactly, it's just good environmental practice."



## Every drop counts at KarriBindi

IF WASTING good wine is a sin, then letting expensive insecticides and fungicides go to waste on vineyards is also a major no-no.

**drumMUSTER** has helped hundreds of viticulturalists around the country including the Margaret River Wine Industry Association's 2011 Excellence Award winner James Harris.

James is manager of KarriBindi Wines, a 32-hectare vineyard south of the Margaret River that mainly produces white grapes for sauvignon blanc, chardonnay and semillon.

James said **drumMUSTER** was providing a major contribution to making his farming practices more sustainable.

"**drumMUSTER** is something I've been using pretty much since I've been in the industry for the

recycling and removal of drums," he said.

"The drum inspectors always seem to comment our drums are clean.

"It seems a lot of guys take them there with residue in the bottom and they're just too lazy to wash them out."

James said after spending thousands of dollars on chemicals every year, it just made sense to use every last drop.

"I live on the vineyard with my young family and I want to make sure all the chemicals are used correctly and the containers are clean," he said.

"The ease of convenience for me is great, when I go to the tip and I've got 20 containers to take up, I just bring them in and sign the paperwork."



*It (waste containers) comes back into our system where it's turned into something useful. From the top end all the way down, it all just works really, really well. I reckon it's a great thing for everyone involved.*

– Perry Ruffels, Veolia Environmental Services, Tasmania



## the thumbs up



## NSW graingrower a MUSTER champ

WHEN Bruce Watson returned to run his family farm almost 10 years ago he knew he had to do something about the big pile of chemical drums in his cattle yard.

"I came back to the family business in 2003 and we made a decision to get those drums off the place and we thought **drumMUSTER** was the best avenue to do so," Bruce said.

From that day on Bruce never looked back, regularly heading into town to offload his empty containers which had contained chemicals used for growing winter cereals at the family-owned business Kebby and Watson, near Parkes, NSW.

It's a change of pace for Bruce who spent time travelling the world researching grain prices as part of a Nuffield Scholarship in 2009, in addition to previously serving as chairman of the NSW Partners in Grain, an organisation that helps support and train Aussie graingrowers.

He said it was a passion for grain and his drive to leave the farm in a better condition that led him to embrace **drumMUSTER**.

"You try to do the best to look after the environment because if you don't, your business is going to be compromised as a result," he said.

"When our drum storage area is close to getting full we give Len (Reade) at the Forbes Urban Landcare who runs the **drumMUSTER** site a call and arrange a time and go out and drop them off. It's pretty easy to be really honest. It's a great program. All farmers should use it."

## Len's a drumMUSTER hero at Forbes

LEN Reade from Forbes Urban Landcare Group has been the heart of the group for more than a decade and is solely dedicated to **drumMUSTER** most days.

"I'm here a lot," he said. "There's a fair bit of tidying up and cleaning up."

One look around Len's site is all that's needed to see a lot of love and care has gone into maintaining the area.

Plastics drums are neatly stacked along the wall, metal containers are placed against wooden slacks and smaller drums ready to be picked up are placed in big bulka bags.

He's even built his own drying rack for drums left by busy farmers.

"I'm very environmental and very much a landcare supporter and I just see it as a way of contributing by making it easier for people," he said.

"That's why I'm doing set days a month. Most people do it by picking a day but we just try and give a regular service."

Len's been a dedicated volunteer for the past 16 years he's lived in Forbes. He started doing **drumMUSTER** in 2007, moving the site from the tip into town to make it easier for people to drop off containers.

"We only got 1000 drums a year at that stage. Now we're here we bring in 10,000," he said.

But it hasn't been easy for Len, working tirelessly to keep the drums coming in and out while also working on other landcare projects around town.

"We've worked hard to do this and do that, we have put signs out there," he said.

"We've got 20 to 25 projects going on in the town. I'm flat out taking care of them as it is."

For now Len will continue to work with a passion, one drum at a time.



*I'm a dedicated, converted drumMUSTER user! It gives me somewhere I can get rid of my drums responsibly and that's a lot better than having them end up in landfill!*

– Ross Stuhmcke, stone fruit grower, Qld





# Agvet companies key backers

drumMUSTER relies on the support from almost 100 manufacturers of agvet chemical products.

The companies listed on this page have all signed an agreement to participate in the Industry Waste Reduction Scheme (IWRS).

This commitment demonstrates their responsibility to the

farmers and chemical users who buy their products, their communities and their environment.

Croplife Australia CEO Matthew Cossey said the industry will continue to support stewardship programs like drumMUSTER for as long as there is a need to clean up farms of waste.

“Through innovation and dedication to whole-of-life stewardship of their products, CropLife Australia’s member companies continue to demonstrate a genuine commitment to reducing the environmental footprint of the agricultural industry and ensuring its long-term sustainability,” Mr Cossey said.

## participating manufacturers

97

manufacturers on board

Accensi  
AgNova Technologies  
BASF Australia  
Bayer CropScience  
Becker Underwood  
Chemtura Australia  
Crop Care Australasia  
Dow AgroSciences Australia  
DuPont (Australia)  
Farmoz  
FMC Australasia  
Monsanto Australia  
Nufarm  
Sipcam Pacific Australia  
Sumitomo Chemical Australia  
Syngenta Crop Protection  
Ancare Australia  
Bayer Australia (Animal Health)  
Elanco Animal Health  
Fort Dodge Australia

Intervet Schering-Plough Animal Health  
Merial Australia  
Novartis Animal Health Australasia  
Pfizer Animal Health  
Virbac (Australia)  
4 Farmers  
Ag BioTech Australia  
Agricrop  
Agrichem - Liquid Fertilizer  
Agri West  
Agro - Alliance (Australia)  
Agrobest Australia  
agVantage Innovative Solution  
Amgrow  
Apparent  
Arysta Lifescience Corporation  
Australian Agricultural Chemicals  
Australis Crop Protection  
Axichem  
Barmac  
BioGlobal  
Caltex Australia Petroleum  
Chemvet Australia  
Chemsol Australia  
CMS Trade  
Colin Campbell (Chemicals)  
Cropsmart  
CSBP  
eChem (Australia)

Dasco  
Debenham Australia  
DeLaval  
Ecochem  
Ensystem Australasia  
Farmalinx  
Farmworks Australia  
Generex Australia  
Goobang  
Granular Products  
Grow Choice  
Growforce  
Hextar Chemicals  
IMTRADE Australia  
Intec Industries  
Inverell Ag  
Kendon Chemical & Mnfg  
Kenso Agcare  
Landmark Operations  
Macspred Australia  
Nutriam  
Nutrihealth International  
Ospray  
PCT International  
Perth Progressive Supplies  
Proterra  
Redox  
Runge Agrichems  
Rygel Australia

SACOA  
Sanonda (Australia)  
Sherwood Chemicals Australasia  
Simplot-Proline  
Sinon Australia  
Spectra Pacific (Australia)  
Spraygro Liquid Fertilizers  
SST Australia  
Stoller Australia  
Superway Garden Products  
Sustainable Liquid Technology  
Sylvan Australia  
Titan Ag  
United Farmers Cooperative  
United Phosphorus Australia  
Victorian Chemical Company  
Wadlong International  
Yara Australia  
Zelam



Products displaying this logo are eligible for the drumMUSTER program.



**the recycling process**

**20,000 000**

**containers**

delivered

across

**760**

**sites**

equals

**25,000**

**tonnes**

of material diverted from landfill

&

recycled by

by

**24**

approved

**processors**

**plastic containers are**

↓

**baled**



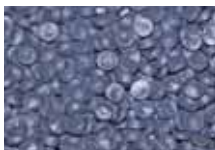
↓

**granulated**



↓

**extruded**



↓

**made into new products**



# The life of a chemical drum

ONE of the most asked questions about **drumMUSTER** is “what happens to the drums once they are collected?”

The simple answer is they are recycled into useful products. But there’s a little more to it than that.

When eligible **drumMUSTER** drums are delivered to a collection site they are checked by trained inspectors.

Each drum is inspected to make sure they are free of chemical residue before they are processed and recycled.

Twenty four recycling processors have signed on to the program to collect and recycle drums gathered at any one of the 760 **drumMUSTER** sites across Australia.

Once collected drums are baled into cubes that can weigh between 200 kilograms to more than half a tonne, or granulated on site and bulk bagged for transport to a recovery facility.

Recycling processor, VIP Packaging Sustainability Services, collects between 450,000 to 500,000 containers a year for **drumMUSTER** across the country.

The service uses three specialised vehicles including a semi-truck that can scoop up 10,000 drums a day and bale them into 600kg packs.

After the containers are collected, they are baled before being shredded, granulated and heat extruded.

This is done in a machine designed for the production of plastic pellets from scrap materials.

The heated plastic is screwed through the machine and filtered to remove impurities before being pelletised and bagged for sale to the plastic recycling manufacturers.

The extruded materials are manufactured into a variety of products including wheelie bins, fence posts, garden stakes, bollards and even new chemical containers.



**The greatest challenge right now is developing strong, sustainable end markets for the collected materials**

**drumMUSTER** national program manager Allan McGann said recycling was a major incentive for the launch of the program and was a driving factor for why so many drums had been collected during the past 13 years.

“Apart from getting rid of these containers from their land, people love to recycle. They want to see useless waste turned into something useful again,” he said.

“And by and large the waste is used for new items that can be more sustainable and last a bit longer.”

For VIP Packaging general manager Andrew Smith, being a part of the **drumMUSTER** program was a no brainer.

“Sustainability is core to VIP Packaging and as a prominent supplier in the packaging supply chain it made perfect sense to be actively involved in the **drumMUSTER** program,” he said.

“It not only allows VIP to meet its product stewardship commitments but also provides a path to return used packaging as a raw material input into our manufacturing process.”

He hoped more processors would join **drumMUSTER** to help improve the industry.

“If more processors are involved then services should be more flexible to meet the needs of farmers,” he said.

“This should lead to better service and improved recovery rates.”

“The greatest challenge right now is developing strong, sustainable end markets for the collected materials – so assistance in this area would be greatly appreciated.”

## PROUDLY SUPPORTING THE DRUMMUSTER PROGRAMME

VIP Packaging is one of Australia’s largest recyclers of plastic.

DrumMUSTER provides us a path to include more recycled material in our manufacturing process.

It gives our customers greater flexibility and sustainability.



For more information contact Tony Goodyer on 0418 226 972 or [tony.goodyer@vippackaging.com.au](mailto:tony.goodyer@vippackaging.com.au)  
© 1300 797 326 [www.vippackaging.com.au](http://www.vippackaging.com.au)





# ChemClear: making regional

WHEN a quarter of Jeffrey Keller's farm in the Lockyer Valley was wiped out by the Queensland floods in 2011, containers half full of agricultural chemicals he had stored away in his shed washed out onto his property.

Facing financial ruin with a devastated grain crop, Mr Keller could have been forgiven for leaving the flood-damaged chemicals for another day to deal with getting his farm up and running again.

Instead he gathered up the stockpile and registered them with ChemClear during its Queensland collection after Cyclone Yasi and the floods.

"We found the water came up to around 30 to 40 per cent of our property and noticed there were a couple of drums floating up to the house," Mr Keller said.

"We got a little bit of floating stuff around on our property so we brought that in, I think there was around eight different types of chemicals in total."

Most of the chemicals from his own stock were either inherited or out of date.

"ChemClear took care of all those unwanted containers. It's a really good project," Mr Keller said.

It was a similar story for cane and banana grower David Singh in Kennedy, Far North Queensland, who struggled to

store both inherited and obsolete products after Cyclone Yasi ripped through his property.

"The cyclone certainly made it tough for me to store these chemicals but what can you do?" he said.

"You've got to do the right thing and this is the only way to do it. ChemClear is the way to go."

During a seven-week period the program gathered more than 62,000 litres of chemical across Queensland, a giant undertaking for a program that started less than nine years ago.

"The post-flood collection was our largest ever in both geographic footprint and volume," ChemClear's national program manager Lisa Nixon said.

"As a program we were honoured to assist so many people in need of a service like ours."

## Small beginnings to necessary stewardship

CHEMCLEAR was established in 2003 to complement **drumMUSTER** which started in 1999.

It provides a way for farmers and chemical users to get rid of their obsolete agvet chemicals manufactured by companies participating in the **drumMUSTER** scheme.

ChemClear aims to minimise the accumulation of unwanted farm chemicals being stored on properties.

The program which had humble beginnings as a small chemical disposal program has now grown to see 338,000 litres of chemicals being destroyed since 2003 through State and regional collections.

"At the start it was just a small program with an even smaller budget working in the shadow of **drumMUSTER**," said Lisa Nixon (pictured).

"After nine years we have ingrained ourselves as Australia's agvet chemical disposal program collecting thousands of litres from every State and territory."

ChemClear uses chemical resellers, local government, advertising and the media to inform farmers about the service and register their chemicals.

As part of the process, chemical users take an inventory



## TOXFREE SUPPORTS THE CHEMCLEAR PROGRAM

Since 2003 we have been a proud supporter of the ChemClear Program by offering a national service of collecting and disposing of unwanted agricultural and veterinary chemicals.

Chemsal, a part of the Toxfree Group provides the following:

- A team of dedicated and friendly staff on standby to take calls and answer any questions
- A detailed database of both registered and unregistered products
- Customised service to suit the needs of the program participants
- Dedicated infrastructure and supply chain to guarantee service delivery in the safest and most economical manner possible
- Disposal occurs with the utmost respect to our environment with approximately 98% of the products collected being used as an alternate fuel source

For further information please contact: P 1800 008 182 [www.toxfree.com.au](http://www.toxfree.com.au)

## Waste chemicals find other uses

TOXFREE, through its chemical division Chemsal, has trained chemists contracted to inspect, test, collect and destroy chemicals collected by ChemClear.

With more than 20 years of experience, chemist and Chemsal Victoria State manager Jason Cran has seen it all, from chemicals arriving in garbage bags to liquids found in drums almost 50 years old.

"In my time we have seen the good, the bad and the ugly. But through the service, we safe storage and have systems in place to manage the risk involved in handling these chemicals."

Once collected, 98pc of agvet chemicals are used as an alternative fuel source in the manufacture of cement.

Hazardous waste recycling company, Toxfree, in conjunction with its project partners Geocycle, blend your typical chemicals like Roundup with other material such as paints, oils, resins and solvents.

The blended chemicals are used in the combustion process to power the machines to make raw cement.

Most of the material is recycled in kilns which can reach temperatures of in excess of 1800 degrees C.

Any left-over inorganic material is used in the formation of raw cement.

Reusing farm chemicals as an alternative fuel helps reduce the usage of non-renewable fossil fuels such as coal and also reduces the amount of waste that would otherwise go to landfill.

The remaining two per cent, such as organochlorine pesticides like Dieldrin and DDT, are treated and destroyed by Plasma Arc technology, reaching temperatures of up to 15,000C.

"Persistent Organic Pollutants or POPs are destroyed by our Plascon unit," Jason said.

"The process converts complex organic compounds into non hazardous and non toxic inorganic salt solutions like brine."

Pictured are Gino Celentano and Andrew Haines from Chemsal taking delivery of unwanted chemicals from farmer Leonard Walker (on the ute) at the Coominya site in south-east Queensland.



# communities safer

of their unwanted chemicals and register them with ChemClear for safe disposal.

ChemClear then does State and regional collections when enough chemicals have been registered to support a run.

“Once chemicals are registered with the program, ChemClear helps users manage and store the stockpile safely by providing reference numbers and storage stickers to identify the chemicals,” Lisa said.

“This ensures waste holders are doing the right thing in safely storing their chemicals awaiting collection.”

To date hundreds of waste holders have registered their chemicals through the program for safe disposal.

## ChemClear expands

IN ITS early days ChemClear was only intended to take products from chemical manufacturers who participated in the program.

These chemicals were classified as Group 1 products and are collected for no additional charge as they are funded through a levy.

But organisers quickly learnt a large proportion of chemical users had products with an unknown origin.

“As time went on more and more farmers were calling about products they were holding but having no idea what they were,” Lisa said.

“The label had either disappeared, the chemical decanted into other vessels or people had inherited chemicals that had been sitting around in sheds for decades.

“That’s why we introduced a service for non-eligible chemicals requiring disposal to take these mystery products off waste holders’ hands but on a user pays basis. These are classified as Group 2.

“Since then some State governments have provided financial support for farmers returning Group 2 chemicals which has greatly assisted in reducing the presence of these kinds of chemicals on farms.

“The cost (of disposal) can be very expensive and is not possible to call on chemical companies to foot the bill as it is no longer possible to identify the manufacturer.”

## Changing attitudes

HAVING lived on the land herself, Lisa said many farmers still had “old” attitudes when it came to stockpiling agvet chemicals.

*We are finding that storage habits and attitudes are changing as a new generation of farmers are coming on board and clearing out the old stores of chemicals, many of which have no idea what they are.*

“Traditionally when a farmer buys a container of chemical they want to use each and every drop. Chemical wastage is expensive and farmers cannot afford to be complacent with their chemical stocks.”

She said ChemClear encourages farmers to buy only the quantities they require and use what they have in store to prevent chemicals building up in sheds.

“In days gone by farmers held onto their chemicals for as long as possible, they paid good money for them and they needed to be used, even through changes in farming operations,” she said.

“We are finding that storage habits and attitudes are changing as a new generation of farmers are coming on board and clearing out the old stores of chemicals, many of which have no idea what they are.”



## The future for ChemClear

WEST Australian beef farmer Tom Tate said he had to think of his grandchildren after dropping his unwanted agvet chemicals for collection during a statewide run earlier this year.

“My grandchildren are precious and there was no way I was going to risk their welfare by having these old chemicals sitting in the shed any longer,” he said.

Mr Tate was one of the many farmers who took up the opportunity to register his unwanted chemical for this year’s collection and said he was happy to get rid the chemicals he hadn’t used for a decade.

“It’s important to provide a reliable service for farmers like Tom so they can dispose of waste chemicals from their properties,” Ms Nixon said.

“Through ChemClear the agricultural industry is implementing its product stewardship responsibilities to give them the opportunity to safely manage chemical stockpiles.

“If more people take advantage of the ChemClear program, the future for sustainable farming will be much brighter along with the reputation for Australia’s agriculture industry.”





# Overseas musters

## Chemical container collection schemes around the world

**drumMUSTER** isn't the only program that recycles ag and vet chemical packaging.

It works alongside dozens of programs from around the world trying to clean up farm land and do their bit for the environment.

From England to Brazil, organisations, environmental authorities and governments are getting together to do the right thing for their land.

Many small stewardship programs have made huge strides in cleaning up plastic waste.

In South America more than 15 countries have collection schemes that have been operating for more than three years. Brazil, Chile, Bolivia, Mexico, Peru and El Salvador have well established schemes in place similar to **drumMUSTER**.

From Eastern to Western Europe, more than 20 farm waste reduction schemes have popped up on the back of quality assurance in chemical use standards.

It's a similar story in Africa where planning for collection schemes have sprung up in more than 10 countries including Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.

With many programs still in the planning stages in other parts of the world, some countries close to home have used

**drumMUSTER** as a model for building their own schemes.

Agrecovery, an on-farm recycling program based in New Zealand which started in 2007, has slowly built its services to meet farmers' and chemical users' waste demands.

**In (2011) just over 60,000 tonnes of material was collected, the bulk of it from Latin America. That's 5000 tonnes more collected compared with 2010.**

Like **drumMUSTER**, chemical manufacturers in NZ pay a levy of 12 cents per litre to fund Agrecovery's container recovery and waste chemical disposal programs.

So far the non-for-profit trust has collected just over 470,000kg of plastic waste and like **drumMUSTER**, its empty triple-rinsed containers are recycled into useful products like underground cable covers.

The program also started silage wrap

recycling and chemical recovery programs in 2009.

Chair of the Agrecovery Foundation Graeme Peters said the trust started with 12 brand owners and 22 collection sites and now has 57 brand owners and 70 collection sites.

"The program is straightforward, accessible and most importantly, free to use, plus it keeps unwanted plastic from being burnt or dumped – it's a win-win situation," Graeme said.

The program is one of the 32 internationally-recognised container recycling schemes which collectively collect over 60,000 tonnes of containers worldwide each year.

This is a dramatic increase compared with 2005 when less than 30,000 tonnes were diverted from farms and landfill.

As more programs come on line, this is expected to continue.

The amount of agvet chemical packaging recycled worldwide increased by four per cent in 2011.

In that year just over 60,000 tonnes of material was collected, the bulk of it from Latin America. That's 5000 tonnes more collected compared with 2010.

Collection costs have also more than halved.

In 2005 it cost \$US1.40 a kilogram, today it's less than \$US70 cents.



## facts & figures



Levy Applied in February 4 cents per litre or kg

**QLD** collections started in July

**VIC** collections started in October

**2000** 28 chemical manufacturers participating

**WA** collections started in January

**NT** collections started in July



**1998** Industry Waste Reduction Scheme Agreement signed in June  
Program launched in December

**1999** first collection in May Gunnedah, NSW

**SA** collections started in September

**129** councils participating

**TAS** collections started in June

**2001** 1 million containers collected

**2002** 3 million containers collected

**363** councils participating





# Commitment to agvet standards

By **MATTHEW COSSEY**,  
CEO of Croplife Australia

THE Australian plant science industry is a global leader in industry stewardship.

Croplife Australia was an instrumental partner in establishing the **drumMUSTER** and ChemClear programs to manage waste disposal options for Australian agvet chemical users.

Through funding and participation in these programs, CropLife Australia and its members have had a genuine and sustained commitment to manage products throughout their lifecycle, from research and development to ultimate disposal.

Despite the efforts of our industry, trade in counterfeit and illegal crop protection products presents serious threats to Australian farmers.

Illegal crop protection products have the potential to endanger human health, agriculture, the environment and the economy.

Illegal pesticides are often poor quality and may not even contain effective levels of active constituents.

They also contain dangerous

contaminants which can be a safety risk. Those who seek to trade in unregistered illegal crop protection products have a criminal disregard for farmers, consumers and the environment.

Illegal products can cause immeasurable harm at all levels of the food supply chain.

They can damage farming land, human health and potentially have disastrous effects on the economy.



There is no place for illegal chemical trade in Australia.

It poses serious risks to our farming sector and the nation more broadly.

It is imperative that our regulatory system is effective in ensuring that only legitimate registered products are imported and sold on the Australian market.

This way we can continue to ensure the prosperity and sustainability of Australia's agriculture industry.

Croplife Australia urges chemical users to recognise those manufacturers who support the **drumMUSTER** and ChemClear programs by purchasing products which have the logo applied to their containers.

(CropLife Australia is the peak industry organisation representing the agricultural chemical and biotechnology (plant science) sector in Australia.)



**2005**  
6 million  
containers  
collected

**2007**  
10 million  
containers  
collected



**2009**  
celebration  
of 10 year  
anniversary  
at NFF  
Congress

**ChemClear  
collected  
233,600 litres  
of unwanted  
chemical**

**2011**  
18 million  
containers  
collected

**452**  
collection  
agencies/  
councils  
participating  
**762**  
collection sites



**More than 25,000 tonnes has been diverted from landfill thanks to drumMUSTER**

- That's 465,000 cubic metres of uncompacted waste, enough to fill more than 120 Olympic swimming pools.
- That's 276 road trains packed to the brim. That's almost 10km of road train.
- If the waste was cotton it would represent more than 110,000 bales.
- Laid end-to-end it's enough containers to go from Brisbane down to Sydney, past Melbourne, across to Adelaide, swinging past Perth, up to Broome and stopping in Kununurra. That's more than 8200km.

**62** chemical  
manufacturers  
participating

**2008**  
AgStewardship  
Australia  
launched in  
November



**2010**  
15 million  
containers  
collected

**97** chemical  
manufacturers  
participating

**2012**  
20 million  
containers  
collected

**2004**  
ChemClear  
program  
launched  
in July





# 762 sites across australia

Deliver your empty agvet chemical containers to a **drumMUSTER** site near you.



## meet your local consultant



**QLD**  
Colin Hoey  
0428 964 576

"I like meeting the people and getting results. It's really good to find an area that hasn't been going that great in terms of drum numbers and try and implement some changes along with council and make a difference."



**NSW - Northern**  
Phil Tucker  
0427 925 274

"In the early days I worked at field days and people would walk down the rows and look at **drumMUSTER sideways**, they didn't want anything to do with it."  
"Now I've got people coming up and saying how wonderful the program is."



**NSW - Southern**  
Vernon Keighley  
0406 745 030

"I enjoy the adventure, being out there driving around. I love particularly engaging with community groups because that's a real win-win situation: a win for the program and a win for them."



**VIC**  
John Knight  
0427 346 325

"I really get a kick out of explaining the program, what it does, particularly on what happens to the drums. They're made into new products. I had no idea anything like that existed before my time at **drumMUSTER**."



**TAS**  
Andrew Winkler  
0405 633 410

"The one thing I love about being a regional consultant is solving problems. You're on the phone or you're in the car straight away, you're dealing with that problem there and then."



**SA**  
David Long  
0427 012 273

"I want to get more councils to offer a regular service and do myself out of a job. It's exciting when farmers ring me up and I can tell them you can go in every Sunday or during waste transfer hours and they go 'oh, didn't know that! That's fantastic!'"



**WA - Southern**  
Graeme Passmore  
0429 933 307

"My region isn't like it used to be in terms of **drumMUSTER**. Growers can now go into town when the tip's open and drop off their drums. All they need to do is check with their council to book, load up the trailer or ute and head into town."



**WA - Northern**  
Bevan Henderson  
0429 089 780

"The best thing about working with **drumMUSTER** is that it provides a service that has an impact on the environment. I see it as good farm husbandry. I don't see it any different to crutching dirty sheep or spraying weeds out of crops."



**NT**  
Russell Mead  
0407 148 590

"I like seeing the system grow and prosper, seeing the environmental aspects of cutting down on farm waste and assisting farmers with a problem. We are looking to open new sites to provide an increased level of service in the top end."



[www.drummuster.com.au](http://www.drummuster.com.au)

1800 008 707