

# Harvest Time 2016



# Passionate about soil health

ESTABLISHED in Broken Hill in 1997, Australian Vermiculture is now firmly planted in Mildura having moved the business to Sunraysia in early 2014. Company founder Brendon Price is passionate about maximising economic viability whilst improving soil health in farming. Over the years, Brendon has worked hands on with growers, local and international soil scientists and accredited bodies. This has led to a deep practical knowledge that is paramount to the development of Australian Vermiculture's biological fertiliser products.

Australian Vermiculture has three core products – Vermicompost fertiliser, Progro liquid fertiliser, vermicast fine powder used for seed coating and pelletising.

Vermicompost was the first on farm product resulting from processing organics through worms and additional biological processes. This result was a high-grade soil enhancement fertiliser that has been very successful in transforming non-arable land to arable – such as sandy hills or rocky fields.

Progro, aka “The Juice” was developed several years later following a request from a broad acre Mallee grower looking for alternatives to traditional fertilisers. Costs and volumes of traditional fertilisers were increasing making conventional practices unsustainable. Since the first on farm trial of Progro in 2010, results achieved for growers have been significant. Financial viability, increase in crop quality and improvement in soil health are key benefits achieved for the farmers.

Following on from success

of “The Juice” in broad acre practices Australian Vermiculture's products are now being used in growing potatoes, table grapes, wine grapes, almonds, citrus and pomegranates.

A key result of using the biological products is the ongoing improvement in soil health. This addresses a key issue for farmers where soil health has deteriorated markedly over the decades forcing growers to use more and more traditional fertilisers to try and achieve the same outcome. Brendon explains the simple yet complex science behind soil health as follows;

“The microbiology in soil is what generates trace elements and nutrients for the plants. Nutrients in the soil must be in their natural form before plants can take them up. It is one of the functions of a healthy food web to hold nutrients in non-leachable forms so they remain in soil, until the plant requires the nutrients, and then the plant “turns-on” the right biology to convert the nutrients into forms the plant can take-up.”

Soil scientist Dr Ash Martin of Adelaide's Microbiology Laboratories urges growers to look at their margins as well as yields. “Calculating your overall returns is the most important thing” he said. “You can go broke growing the best crop in the district if your costs are too high.”

Del Price, business partner and wife, adds “On the flip side, consumers are demanding to know more about where and how their food is produced.”

The team at Australian Vermiculture is keen to empower farmers through annual crop walks and facilitating grower networking. Brendon explains

that much of the products success is that it is easy for farmers to move to biological farming. They can start a trial, experiencing the differences for themselves, and expand the replacement of conventional fertilisers in their own time over seasons. The key benefits of improved margins becomes a significant motivator to change. In most cases this has led to full conversion with a significant benefit in return due to lower input costs and improvements at harvest.

Please see results direct from the growers' mouth on the testimonials page of their website: <http://www.australianvermiculture.com.au/#/testimonials/c1zfk>

Dr Ash Martin, left, inspecting soil health with Werimull grower Don Rankin and Australian Vermiculture's Brendon Price.



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## A Healthy Crop starts with Healthy Soil

All Australian Vermiculture products are the result of biological worm centric practices

**Progro aka “The Juice”**

A unique nutrient and biologically rich liquid fertiliser in a bioavailable form extracted from Vermicast. Increased microbial activity results in increased biological release of soil nutrients - the cornerstone to improved crop and plant health.

**Starts at \$2.00/litre ex gate Mildura**

**Vermicompost**

A nutrient rich biological compost derived from manures, organic sediment and green waste with worm castings and microbial and beneficial fungal liquids applied.

**\$35/t ex gate Adelaide**

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...we farm the soil

Initial enquiries Del Price ph. **0414 358 869**  
For further information and grower testimonials  
**[www.australianvermiculture.com.au](http://www.australianvermiculture.com.au)**