



## Grower Makes A Date With Emu Rock

While Riverina, New South Wales summer and winter cropper John Douglas keeps a close eye on the season and the weather, he typically sows by the calendar, which means he needs grain varieties that fit neatly and reliably into the busy program on his 3900 hectare farm 50km west of Deniliquin.

A smooth 2013 transition from 400ha of irrigated crops, including 120ha of rice and into 1800ha of dryland winter crops, including wheat, barley and field peas, was essential and timing, as always, was everything.

And this is where Mr Douglas believes InterGrain's high yielding, short season, Australian Hard wheat variety, Emu Rock, comes into its own, so much so that it's likely to become his variety of choice and the only dryland wheat he'll grow beyond this season when he planted 440ha after bulking up 20ha for seed last year.

This year Emu Rock was sown mid-May with a Janke seeder with direct drill bar fitted with opening tynes and knife tynes.

"The big plus for us with Emu Rock is its short growing season, as wheats can suffer when spring cuts out quickly with hot northerly winds coming through in late September," Mr Douglas said.

"Emu Rock tends to finish better than long season varieties such as Ventura and dual purpose varieties such as Wedgetail, which we also grow.

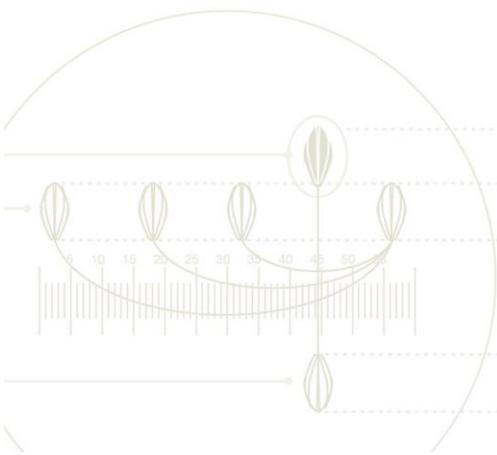
"We typically dry sow our winter cereals by the calendar and this year the season didn't break until early June, but we'd already planted about 80 per cent of our crop by then."

Mr Douglas said InterGrain's Emu Rock also offered a good disease resistance package and this had been a plus this season, with some signs of crown rot in his wheat paddocks, but Emu Rock, with its effective crown rot resistance rating of MS, had handled it best of all.

He expects Emu Rock grown on pea stubble this season to yield about 2.8 tonnes per hectare and perhaps slightly less for the Emu Rock which followed a wheat crop.

"The season is looking pretty good after a bit of a worrying start and this is where I have begun to rely on Emu Rock, because I have confidence that it'll do the job in limited time," he said.

The two Douglas farms, 'The Springs' and 'Thornton', where John's 83 year old father Don lives, also support about 1000 Dorper ewes, which means sheep work and an all-year-round cropping program simply have to fit together.



Cereal Breeding for Australia

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“Profitable, sustainable farming is all about precision farming, in every way, from your equipment and technology to your varieties and this is where wise choices and accessing new technologies and high performing grain varieties, such as Emu Rock, can take a little of the worry out of a busy program,” Mr Douglas said.

According to InterGrain Marketing Manager, Ash Brooks, Riverina grain growers can also confidently sow Emu Rock as their winter wheat due to its quick maturity, excellent grain size and good short, strong and stiff straw, which is handy on irrigation, particularly in double crop rotations.

“Emu Rock’s short season maturity means it gets to work as soon as the summer crop is off,” she said.

Last year Ian Lea, owner of Superior Seed Company in Deniliquin, bulked up Emu Rock on raised beds at Hay and it yielded exceptionally well at 6.8 tonne/Ha, after being sown dry and watered up in late June.

“Half of this crop was sown on cotton stubble, with the balance sown on maize stubble and there was very little yield difference across the paddock,” Ms Brooks explained.

“With InterGrain breeders, Robin Wilson, Chris Moore and their team bringing together high performing parents Westonia, Kukri, Perenjori and Ajana, Emu Rock has very robust genetics, complemented by a comprehensive agronomic package, making it very appealing to wheat growers when they’re making informed sowing choices,” she said.

On the disease front, Emu Rock provides growers with suitable stripe rust resistance (MR-MS rating), with its resistance based on a number of genes.

Emu Rock also offers a useful level of Crown Rot resistance (MS), similar to one of its parents, Kukri. A rating of MS is the highest of commercially available varieties.

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**Photo:** Riverina grain grower John Douglas says the big plus with InterGrain’s Emu Rock is its short growing season, as wheats can suffer when spring cuts out quickly.



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