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Safeguard at Boolardy Pastoral.

For bulking up pastures and ARGV resistance.

Livestock are an important part of Boolardy Pastoral Company's operations at Round Hill, east of Moora.

As stud principals of Cranmore Park Merino Stud, they run 5000 breeding ewes as well as 500 Angus breeders.

Cropping makes up just 35pc of the 5200ha farm operations and pasture renovation has in the past involved the sowing of Dalkeith clover.



Bruce and Anna Lefroy and son Kristin have lost stock to Annual Ryegrass Toxicity in years gone by. For five years they have spread Twist fungus with oats using a super spreader.

Kristin said Agriculture Department staff have monitored the spread of the fungus.

"Conditions up until last year were dry and less than ideal for Twist fungus," he said.

"Last year was an ideal year and we now have a good establishment."

Keen to tackle ARGV more than one way and to bulk up pastures, they sowed the ARGV resistant, Safeguard ryegrass last year.

Kristin admits it was the first time in many years that ryegrass was sown on the property.

He said the Safeguard was sown to an 11ha paddock on June 24 at the recommended rate. "It did surprisingly well considering we had sprayed only once, it was late going in and had no fertiliser," he said. "It produced good amounts of seed and competed well with Wimmera.

"There were wetter parts of the paddock where it did not do well at all and in future we may sow these areas to perennial grasses."

Kristin said he may resow the paddock to Safeguard this year.

"That will be part of a long term strategy with rocky and wet parts of the farm in permanent pasture, as well as paddocks due to be renovated or too small to crop," he said.

"We resow about 400ha annually with Dalkeith, but long term we are looking to lift production from our pastures and this will involve a combination of pasture manipulation, resowing and grazing management.

"We have not had great success with lucerne up to now, but will be trying again following liming of those paddocks.

"Sub-tropical perennial grasses and medics will be sown on separate areas of the farm also."

Kristen said rotational grazing had been taken up at Boolardy Pastoral Company to some extent, but with large paddocks and stud stock it was a difficult concept.

"Because we have the stud, we only tend to run our ewe hoggets in mobs of 1000," he said. "Spray topping will be an important measure to control barley grass in our pastures and get on top of weed control for cropping."