

'The grass is greener'

24th Annual Conference of the Grassland Society of NSW Inc.

TAREE 5-6 AUGUST 2009



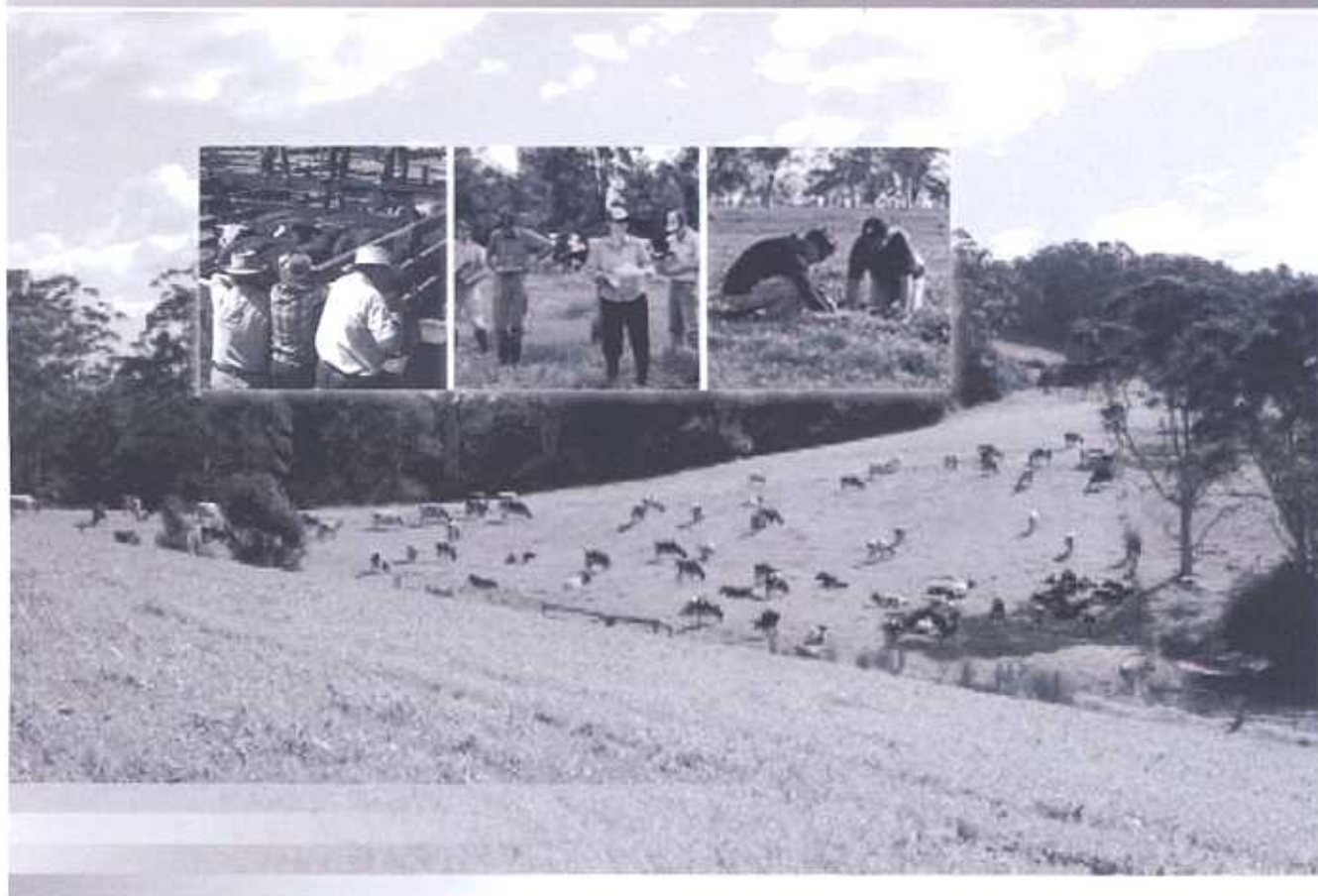
THE GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

'The grass is greener'

Proceedings of the 24th Annual Conference
of the Grassland Society of NSW Inc.

Edited by David Brouwer, Neil Griffiths,
Ian Blackwood

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THE GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

The Grassland Society of NSW

**A unique blend of people with a common interest in developing
our most important resource – our Grasslands**

The Grassland Society of NSW was formed in March 1985. The Society now has about 500 members and associates, 75% of whom are farmers and graziers. The balance are agricultural scientists, farm advisers, consultants and executives or representatives of organisations concerned with fertilisers, seeds, chemicals and machinery.

The aims of the Society are to advance the investigation of problems affecting grasslands husbandry and to encourage the adoption into practice of results of research and practical experience. The Society holds an annual conference, publishes a quarterly newsletter, holds field days, and has established regional branches throughout the State.

Membership is open to any person or company interested in grassland management and the aims of the Society.

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Preface

I extend a very warm welcome to all members attending this 24th Annual Conference of the Grassland Society of NSW. I would also like to welcome those who are not members of the Society and I encourage you to join us. The benefits of membership are well worth the annual subscription of \$50.00.

This is the first conference of the Grassland Society to take place at Taree. The Manning Valley offers so much to primary producers involved in cropping, pasture and animal production and this conference is an ideal venue for everyone to discuss and see 'cutting edge' technology in a relaxed environment.

Plant and animal production depend on new technologies to complement sound agricultural science. The Grassland Society brings together producers, agronomists, agri-business firms, animal scientists and teachers of agriculture to review and exchange high quality information relevant to grassland farming. One important objective of the Society is the promotion of animal and plant production systems that embrace improved efficiencies and environmental responsibility. Pastures, both native and introduced, are the powerhouse of agriculture in all forms across Australia. They sustain grazing animals and importantly, provide for microbial activity under the ground. Pastures both depend on and improve soil health. In turn, they produce forage for animal production, suppress invasion from unproductive species and protect otherwise bare ground from erosion.

This conference examines the very topical subjects of soil health, pasture production and animal performance. As well, the emerging challenges of climate change and its effect on animals and soils are discussed by prominent scientists.

The organising Committee has put much time and effort into selecting expert speakers who will bring delegates up to date with current aspects of pasture and animal technologies. The conference convener, Ray Johnston and his team are to be congratulated and thanked for putting together such a stimulating program of formal sessions and farm tours.

I would like to acknowledge our many sponsors representing corporate and government sectors who regularly support the Grassland Society. Conferences of this nature do not happen without the substantial assistance of our sponsors. Furthermore, I encourage all conference delegates to visit the well-prepared commercial displays and exhibits. They are full of current information on new pasture varieties, fertiliser products, herbicides and management strategies to assist producers and their advisers. Please take time to talk with representatives of the trade exhibits. They are a valuable source of information and are always happy to discuss product developments with conference delegates.

Finally, I thank all of you who are here to enjoy and learn from this conference. The Grassland Society is keen to maintain the high standards of previous years, and we invite suggestions to improve future activities. Please feel free to let any member of the Organising Committee know your thoughts in this regard. After all, the Grassland Society is only as effective as its members and depends on them for continued existence. I also encourage non-members to join and enjoy the many benefits of membership. Application forms can be printed from our internet site: www.grasslandnsw.com.au and are available from the registration desk at this conference.

Best wishes for a most enjoyable conference.

Mick Duncan
President