

The role of pasture improvement in profitable farm businesses in central west New South Wales

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Over a period of 3 years (1997-2000) a number of farm families in central west New South Wales participated in BizCheck®.

BizCheck® is a simple benchmarking tool that allows farm businesses to assess their individual strengths and weaknesses while at the same time comparing businesses with each other to identify opportunities to change.

Farm business profitability was used as the measure by which individual farm businesses were assessed. One of the main indicators of farm resource use is land productivity.

Land productivity is closely related to the system of enterprises that make up the farm system. One distinct trend

that emerged across all farm businesses, regardless of the balance of enterprises was the importance of the level of pasture improvement on the farm.

The percentage area of the farm that was sown to sub clover/lucerne-based pastures within the previous 5 years showed a consistent positive trend to whole farm profitability (Figure 1).

A greater understanding of the role that improved legume-based pastures play will further enhance the strengths and the long term success of farm businesses and assist in achieving family goals.

Figure 1: Farm business profit and the % of farm area sown to improved pasture

