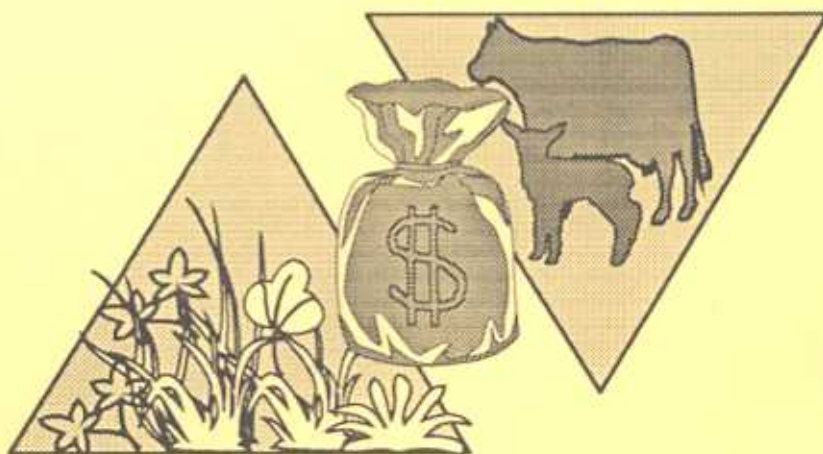




THE GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**PASTURES FOR
ANIMAL PRODUCTION**



**ANIMALS FOR
PASTURE PRODUCTION**

**Wednesday 7th July
Thursday 8th July
1993**

*Ex-Services Club
Orange N.S.W. 2800*

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 8TH CONFERENCE

***MANAGING PASTURES
FOR ANIMAL PRODUCTION***

***MANAGING ANIMALS
FOR PASTURE PRODUCTION***

***PROCEEDINGS OF THE EIGHTH ANNUAL
CONFERENCE OF THE GRASSLAND
SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES***

**Invited Papers, Contributed Papers and Poster Summaries
from the Conference Held at the Ex-Services Club
ORANGE, NSW**

July 7-8, 1993

**Edited by David Michalk
NSW Agriculture
Pasture Development Group
Agricultural Research & Veterinary Centre
ORANGE NSW 2800**

THE GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

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

The Grassland Society of NSW was formed in March 1985. The Society now has 900 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 fertiliser, seeds, chemical and machinery.

The aims of the Society are to provide opportunities for members to meet in conference, at field days, or socially, to exchange information, ideas and experiences relating to grasslands.

Other aims of the Society are to advance the investigation of problems affecting grassland 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 is establishing regional branches throughout the State.

Membership is open to any person or company interested in grassland management and the aims of the Society. Ordinary (including family or farm units), student and corporate membership is available.

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PREFACE

As I pen this preface to our Eighth Conference Proceedings, I thought that it might be useful to review where we have come from and where we are heading with these annual gatherings. In 1991, the theme of the conference, *Perennials: the Key to Pasture Stability* pointed us towards low-input systems as a strategy for the future. This was very timely as pastoralists and the service industries were endeavouring to optimise and consolidate in a depressed economy, but at the same time trying to accommodate the growing community ground swell for development of more sustainable agricultural practices. The role of perennials (especially the introduced and native grasses) in halting acidification and salinisation of our soils provided a good foundation on which to build the theme of last year's conference.

In response to requests by both the farming sector and service industries, the Tamworth conference used the slogan, *Managing Soils for Better Pastures and Managing Pastures for Better Soils*, to focus our attention on the interactions between pastures and soils. Papers like that of Bob Couch, *Can You Afford to Keep Your Soils?*, highlighted how difficult it is to maintain soil productivity and prevent loss over time. This led on to some interesting papers which showed the degree of variability in response to phosphate applied to pastures in different areas of the state, and how farmers must carefully select their inputs (both rate and type) to achieve maximum return from each dollar invested in fertiliser. Ian Vimpany's paper which discussed the impact of fertilisers on the environment put into perspective the adverse publicity which unfairly attributes major polluting of our river systems to agricultural fertilisers. He also provided good guidelines for the safe use of fertiliser for effective results. Jim Langlands paper put the whole soil mineral and animal health together, and rounded off the second part of our study of the soil-pasture-animal system.

This year we aim to balance up the ledger with more emphasis on livestock by addressing the theme, *Managing Pastures for Animal Production and Managing Animals for Pasture Production*. The papers presented at the Eighth Conference are designed to show how animals can be used in these tough economic times to manipulate pasture composition to achieve a more productive pasture. By creating the right pasture, it follows that animal production will also increase, or alternatively, that the outputs produced will improve in quality to suit the demands of the local and export markets. However, one of the hardest tasks for producers is to be able to rest pastures when they need to be rested and graze them when they need to be grazed and still remain viable.

Once again we have drawn on the combined experiences of scientists, advisors and farmers to review the various aspects of the theme, comment on relevant current research, and to provide examples of on-farm problems with descriptions of the strategies farmers have employed to solve them. Our congratulations to the Conference Convener, Mr Geoff Nielson, and the Organising Committee for the job they have done in putting this program together.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank our sponsors who have once again supported this conference and other activities of the Society throughout the year. In addition to the old friends who have faithfully supported the Society through thick and thin, I am delighted to welcome some new companies who have added their support this year.

Graham R. Brown

President