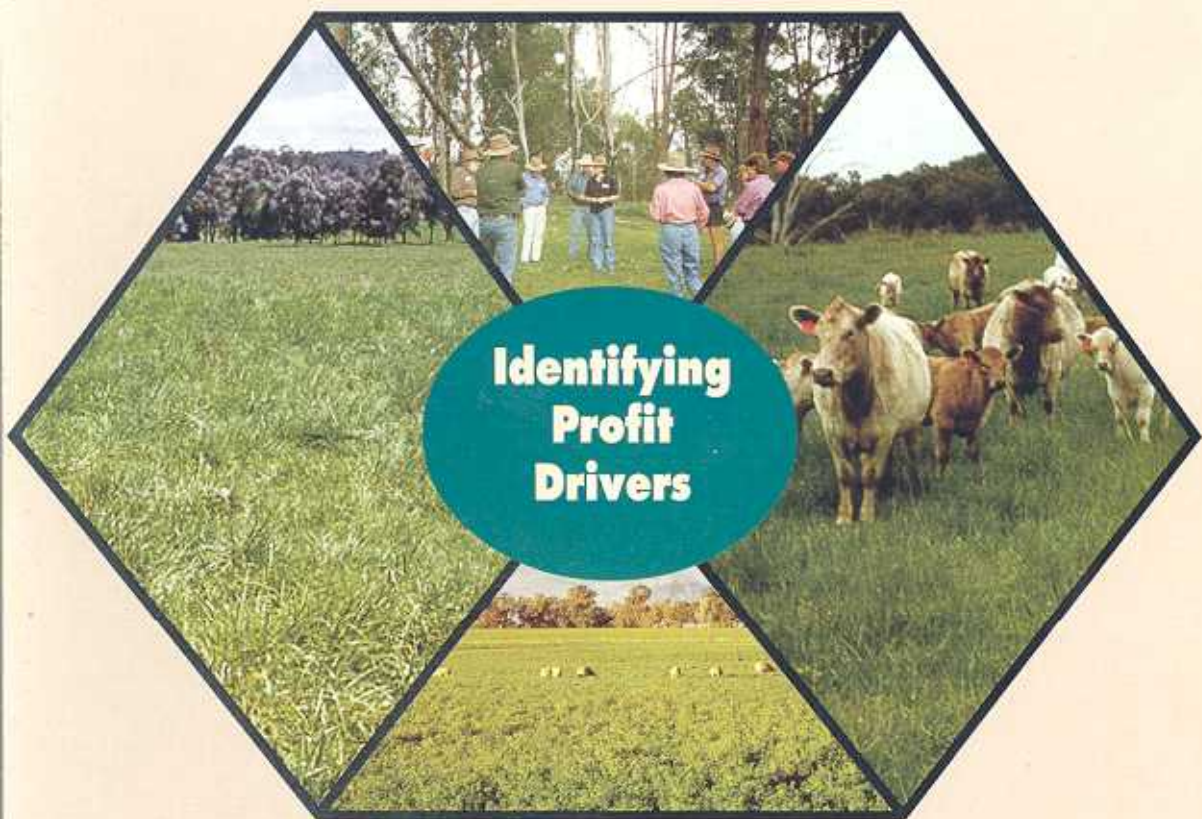




THE GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC

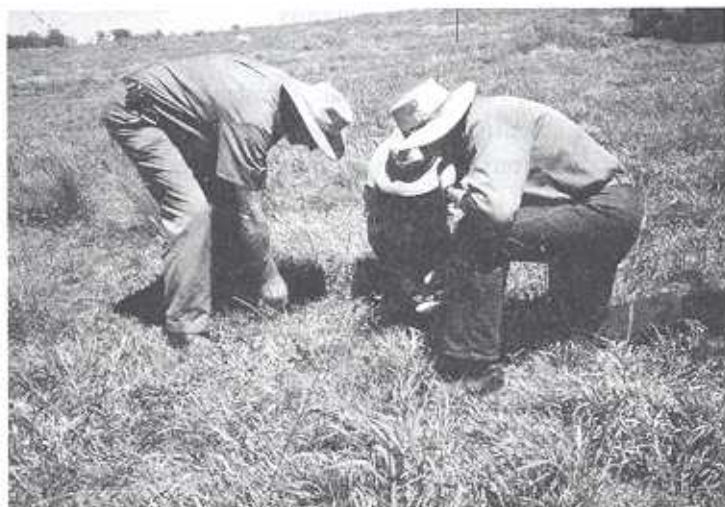
15th Annual Conference



Armidale, July 2000



“Identifying Profit Drivers”



**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTEENTH
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC.**

Invited papers, poster papers from the Conference held
at the Wright Conference Centre
University of New England, Armidale, NSW
on 11-13 July, 2000

Edited by Warren McDonald



THE GRASSLAND SOCIETY OF NSW INC.

**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 1100 members and associates, 70% of which are farmers and graziers. The balance is made up of 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 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 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. Ordinary (including family or farm units), student and corporate membership is available.

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PREFACE

This 15th Conference of our Society has the title "Identifying Profit Drivers". Profit is an essential ingredient of any business or organisation that wishes to remain successful. With increasing restrictions being placed on what landowners can and cannot do, our successful 14th Conference at Queanbeyan had a strong focus on environmental and resource management issues. The organising committee has again set a very high standard with a stimulating and challenging program.

This years conference takes a more traditional approach by identifying successful livestock producers, who are also excellent resource and environmental managers, and examining how they achieve their success. Conference delegates also have the opportunity to visit successful properties before and during the conference with organised tours. The tours are a great opportunity to gain an appreciation of agriculture on the New England, as well as seeing the technology, marketing and sound business management that will assist successful farm enterprises thrive. Our overseas and interstate visitors and keynote speakers receive a special welcome and we look forward to your challenging and stimulating presentations. I encourage you to enjoy the conference, participate in the conference tours, and gain from the fellowship and company of your fellow members and Armidale hosts.

This has again been a difficult year financially for our members. Continuing low commodity prices, especially in the wool industry, see many producers struggling to survive. Improved prices have seen the beef industry make some recovery during the past twelve months. Our northern NSW cropping cousins have not fared any better with rain downgrading the quality of the 1999 winter crop harvest. One consolation for livestock producers across the state has been a year when pasture production has been bountiful, with only small areas in NSW suffering from long running drought. It is rather ironical that some of these producers have experienced the greatest hardship and losses with the recent flooding.

The need for off-farm income and investment strategies has never been more evident to ensure the financial survival and well being of many of our current producer families and farm businesses. The drift of our younger generation to the larger cities has long term implications for the agricultural industries in Australia. Take the time to meet and encourage the students and younger members of our Society at this conference. They are the future of the grazing industry and agriculture in general.

The papers presented at this conference will be given by profit driven beef, lamb and wool producers, scientists, and specialists from a number of diverse backgrounds. The standard of invited papers is again very high. I want to mention particularly the papers being presented by producers. The enthusiasm and ideas of our rural producers are outstanding. Thanks also to the authors who have taken the time to contribute papers and posters. They add greatly to the atmosphere and mood of Conference.

On your behalf, I want to take the opportunity to thank our many sponsors, whose continued support is essential for the success of both the Society and annual Conference. The tremendous support of NSW Agriculture into the Society and Conference is



acknowledged. In addition to monetary support, many of our sponsors also contribute through the assistance of their representatives in helping to organise and run local branch activities. Take the time to visit the sponsor displays, discuss the issues and receive the latest information on pastures.

I represented our Society at the Grassland Society of Victoria 1999 Conference at Geelong. It was a great opportunity to see the organisation and structure of their very successful Society in operation. Fellow NSW members certainly enjoyed the Victorian hospitality.

This is my first conference as your president. It has been an honour to follow in the footsteps of Haydn Lloyd Davies. I thank Haydn for his continued support and guidance and members of the central committee for their enthusiasm and support during the year.

Enjoy the conference, make new friends and may the next twelve months be a prosperous one.

Frank McRae
President



FELLOWSHIP AWARD – Dr ALF ANDERSON



The Society has honoured Dr Alf Anderson as the first fellow of the Grassland Society of New South Wales, for his outstanding contribution to pasture based industries both in Australia and overseas.

Each year when applying superphosphate to our legume-based temperate pastures or particularly when establishing a new pasture we consider using molybdenum enriched superphosphate. The discovery of the essentiality of molybdenum for the establishment of clover on millions of hectares of our impoverished soils has been worth literally billions of dollars to our sheep and cattle industries.

The scientist who discovered in 1942 that as little as 70 grams per hectare of molybdenum trioxide was sufficient to ensure effective establishment and improved growth of subterranean clover was Dr Alf Anderson who has been retired since 1976.

The outstanding contributions of Dr Anderson to the grasslands of temperate Australia have never been adequately recognised. From 1946 onwards he led the Plant Nutrition section of the CSIR (later CSIRO) Division of Plant Industry and extended his studies to include the role of sulphur, phosphorus, minor elements and lime. Lime pelleting was developed by Emeritus Professor Jack Loneragan while he was part of Alf Anderson's section.