



From Feast to Famine

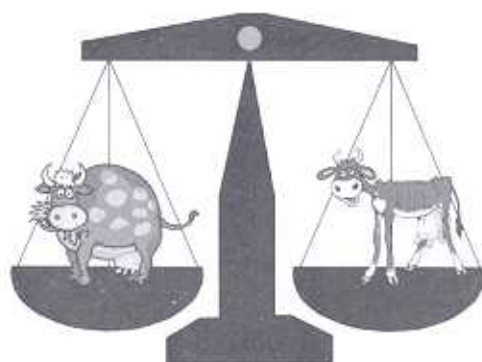


Balancing the Pasture Feed Supply



Gundagai, July 2001

From Feast to Famine:



Balancing the Pasture Feed Supply

Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Conference of the Grassland Society of NSW



Invited papers and poster papers
Gundagai District Services Club, Gundagai, NSW
25 July, 2001

Edited by Kirrily Condon, NSW Agriculture, Cootamundra

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Conference Program	
Time	Speaker
8am – 8.50am	Registration
8.50am – 9am	<i>Welcome</i> – Frank McRae
9am – 9.30am	Managing the impacts of change to farming enterprises – <i>David Sackett</i> , Holmes Sackett & Assoc.
9.30am – 10am	Successful adoption of change in a wool enterprise – <i>Roger Strong</i> , “Dropmore”, Seymour, Vic.
10am – 10.30am	Tools available to aid management decisions – <i>Greg Meaker</i> , NSW Agriculture, Goulburn
11am – 11.15am	Putting the tools into practice (beef) – <i>Rodney Purcell</i> , “Elouera”, Brungle
11.15am – 11.30am	Putting the tools into practice (wool) – <i>Charlie Sheahan</i> , “Weatherall”, Coolac
11.30am – 12 noon	Putting the tools into practice (lamb) – <i>Tony Lehmann</i> , “Hillside”, Illabo
12 noon – 12.30pm	Benchmarking with high performance producers – <i>Matthew Monk</i> , Technical Mgr, Richardson’s, Armidale
2pm – 2.30pm	Pasture quality affects performance - <i>Hutton Oddy</i> , Mgr. Sth’n Beef Program, MLA
2.30pm – 3pm	Resource Management – <i>Graham Houston</i> , “Burrowye Station”, Corryong
3pm – 3.30pm	Making better grazing decisions - <i>Jenny O’Sullivan</i> , Director of Farm Business Consulting; beef/sheep producer, Tarwin Lower, South Gippsland
3.30pm – 3.45pm	<i>Wrapping it up</i> – <i>Trish Murphy</i> , Wagga Wagga

Office Bearers of the Grassland Society of NSW – 2000/2001

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<i>AV Presentations</i>	Kirrily Condon
<i>Trade displays</i>	Greg Condon
<i>Catering</i>	Brett Upjohn

Acknowledgments

<i>Publicity</i>	Brett Fifield
<i>Referees</i>	Peter Orchard
	Brian Dear
	Kirrily Condon
<i>Eastern tour</i>	Mark Lucas

Preface

Welcome to the 16th Conference of our Society which for the first time will be held outside a country city. Gundagai and the 'dog on the tucker box' are synonymous with the grazing industries. The title of this year's conference, 'From Feast to Famine: Balancing the pasture feed supply', typifies the cyclical nature of the Australian climate. After two good seasons and abundant pasture, southern and central NSW, at the time of writing, are facing a difficult winter and the prospects of drought. How many producers are putting the skills learnt in Prograze and the information and knowledge gleaned at previous conferences to the test? Hopefully by July 25th good soaking rains will have been received across NSW and prospects have been revived for an excellent spring.

The conference this year has a producer friendly format in an endeavour to encourage more producers to attend. The one-day conference program preceeded by the field tours and conference dinner will hopefully allow many producers in close proximity to Gundagai to participate. The tours are a great opportunity to see the practical skills, technology, marketing, and business management that will assist successful grazing enterprises to thrive. The role of consultants or advisors and agribusiness in providing sound up to date information will be clearly evidenced. An excellent blend of successful producers speakers interspersed with technical speakers makes for an exciting conference. Time is a valuable commodity in today's world and information is readily available from a large number of sources. However the debate and discussion generated throughout the speaker presentations, tours and social activities is vital for the future of our grazing industries.

Sustainability, especially in the areas of salinity and acidification, are at the political forefront. Recent press indicates that many policy and decision-makers are just beginning to realize the importance of pastures in the prevention and correction of degradation. Is it time the Society was rewarded with some National Heritage Funding for its efforts in promotion and adoption of more sustainable grazing systems?

The past year has finally seen producers rewarded financially for their efforts through better livestock prices. The value of the SA has certainly been a contributing factor in the better prices received for beef, lamb and wool. The word has gone around that some producers may even have a problem with taxation. This time last year we were bracing ourselves for the introduction of the GST. The introduction of better record keeping and analysis of costs and returns ultimately will lead to better business management for a lot of producers.

On your behalf, I want to take the opportunity to thank our many sponsors, whose support is essential for the success of both the Society and annual Conference. The support of NSW Agriculture into the Society and Conference is acknowledged. To those running the branches and branch activity thanks for your continued support. Without you the Society would not function. The conference organizing committee has put in a tremendous amount of work and delivered a program that meets not only producer needs, but will also stimulate advisors and consultants.

The 2001 conference committee welcomes you to Gundagai, enjoy the conference, become involved in the debate and may the next twelve months be a prosperous and rewarding one.

Frank McRae, President