



The Grassland Society of NSW Inc.



Grass Roots & All

19-21 July 2005



ORANGE NSW 2005

20TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE





Grass Roots & All

*Proceedings of the 20th Annual Conference of the
Grassland Society of NSW Inc.*

*Invited papers and posters from the conference held
at the Orange Ex Services Club, Tuesday 19 July to
Thursday 21 July 2005*

Edited by Haydn Lloyd Davies



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 600 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 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. Ordinary (including family or farm units), student and corporate memberships are available.

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Preface

A very warm welcome to all members attending this, the 20th annual conference of The Grassland Society of NSW.

A similarly warm welcome to delegates who are not members of this Society. I encourage you to join and participate fully in the privileges of membership. Applications to join forms are available from the registration desk or can be printed from our internet site www.grasslandnsw.com.au

Orange is the traditional home of the Society, springing from the very first meeting that resulted in the formation of the Society in 1985. Numerous conferences have been held in Orange, all with stimulating, informative and well planned programs. This year is no exception, with a range of relevant topics to be covered, expert speakers, farm tours and a great conference dinner featuring Kerry O'Keefe of cricket and ABC fame as the guest speaker.

Plant and animal production depends heavily on new and developing technology as well as sound principles of agricultural science. The Grassland Society has established a forum to bring together producers, agronomists, agri-business firms, animal scientists and teachers of agriculture to review and exchange high quality information of relevance to grassland farming. The objective is the promotion of animal and plant production systems that embrace improved efficiencies and environmental responsibility. Pastures, native and introduced, are the powerhouse of agriculture in all its forms across Australia. They provide for the grazing animal and the needs of microbial activity under the ground. In turn, pastures depend on the health of soil to sustain production without exhausting nutrient reserves.

This conference examines above and below ground action within it's theme of "grass roots and all".

The organizing committee has put much time and effort into selecting expert speakers to cover topics of interest that will bring delegates up to date with

soil, plant and animal systems. It is interesting to note the increasing emphasis on what happens under the ground, where so much activity takes place, but with less profile than above ground action. Conferences prior to the 1990's rarely paid much attention to soil microbial activity. In more recent years, attention has shifted to this vital aspect of agriculture and attempts to explore linkages between landscape features and plant performance with soil health on a whole catchment basis. The conference convener, Michael Uttley, and his team are to be congratulated and thanked for putting together such a stimulating program.

I would like to acknowledge our many sponsors from the corporate and government agency world who regularly support the Society. Needless to say, conferences of this nature do not happen without the substantial assistance of our sponsors. I encourage all conference delegates to visit the well prepared commercial displays and exhibits. They are full of current information on new pasture varieties, fertilizer products, herbicides and management strategies to assist producers and their advisers. Please take time to talk with representatives of the trade exhibits. They are an excellent source of information and are always happy to discuss product developments with conference delegates.

Finally, I thank all those who are here to enjoy and learn from this conference. The Grassland Society through its committee is keen to maintain the high standards and tradition of previous years. We willingly accept suggestions that may improve future activities. Please feel free to let any member of the committee know of your thoughts in this regard. After all, the Society is only as effective as its membership and depends on individual members for its continued existence.

Best wishes for a most enjoyable conference.

Mick Duncan
(President)