



26 July 2019

Tamar NRM

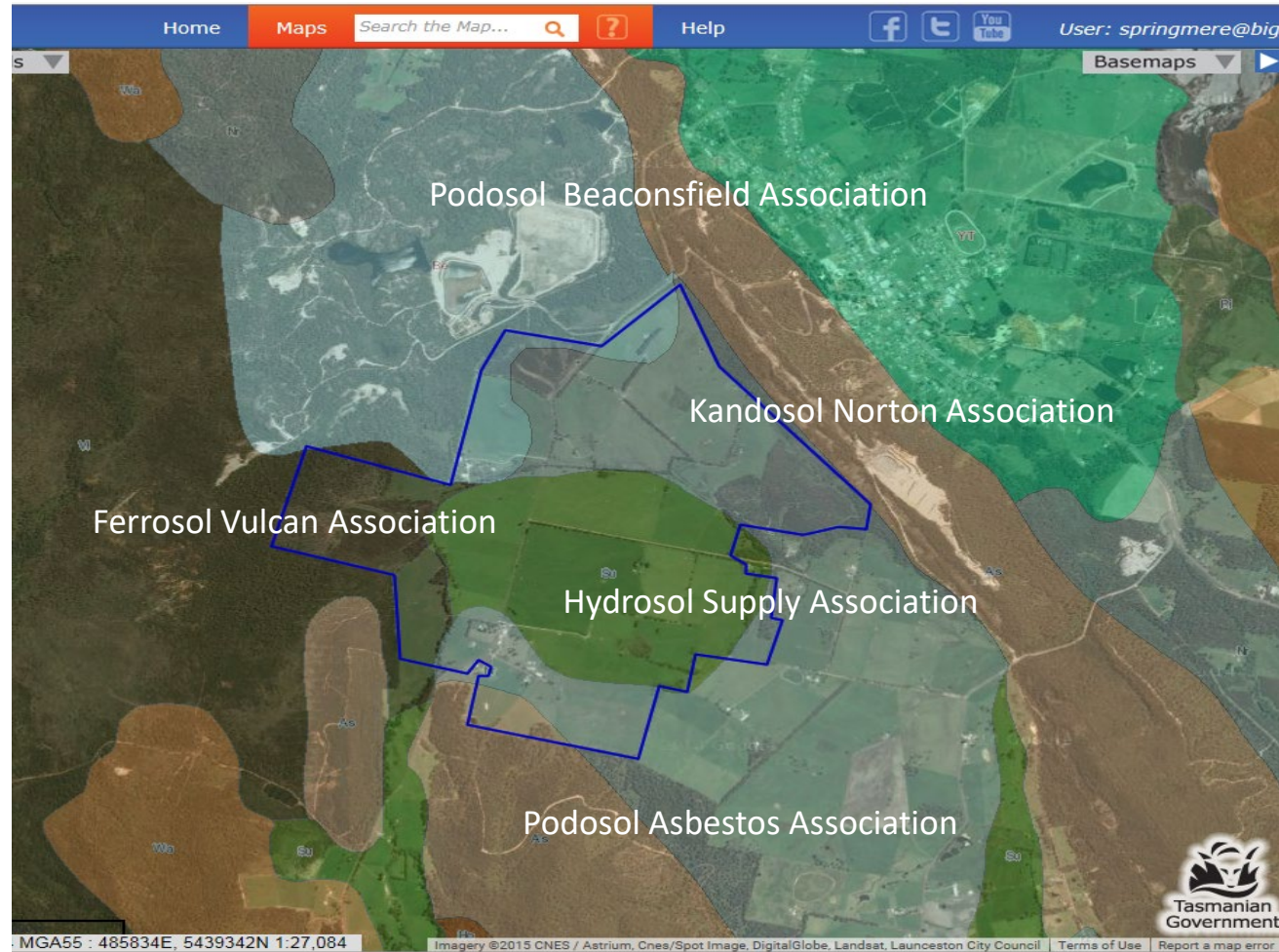
MLA Producer Demonstration Site (PDS)

Ben Hooper
Springmere Estate

Overview

- Undertaken by Tamar NRM
- A MLA-funded Producer Demonstration Site (PDS)
- Aim to encourage on-farm practice change by providing practical examples.

Location



Current property situation

- 336ha improved pasture; mainly ryegrass, clover and cocksfoot
- 9.2km of game fencing
- Approximately 60ha of harvested plantation area to put back to pasture
- 2700 crossbred ewes (609 ewe lambs)
- 131% ewes joined to lambs weaned last season
- 40 Angus heifers and seven steers on agistment

TARGET: 4000 – 4500 ewes

Maximise lamb survival

Why renovate?

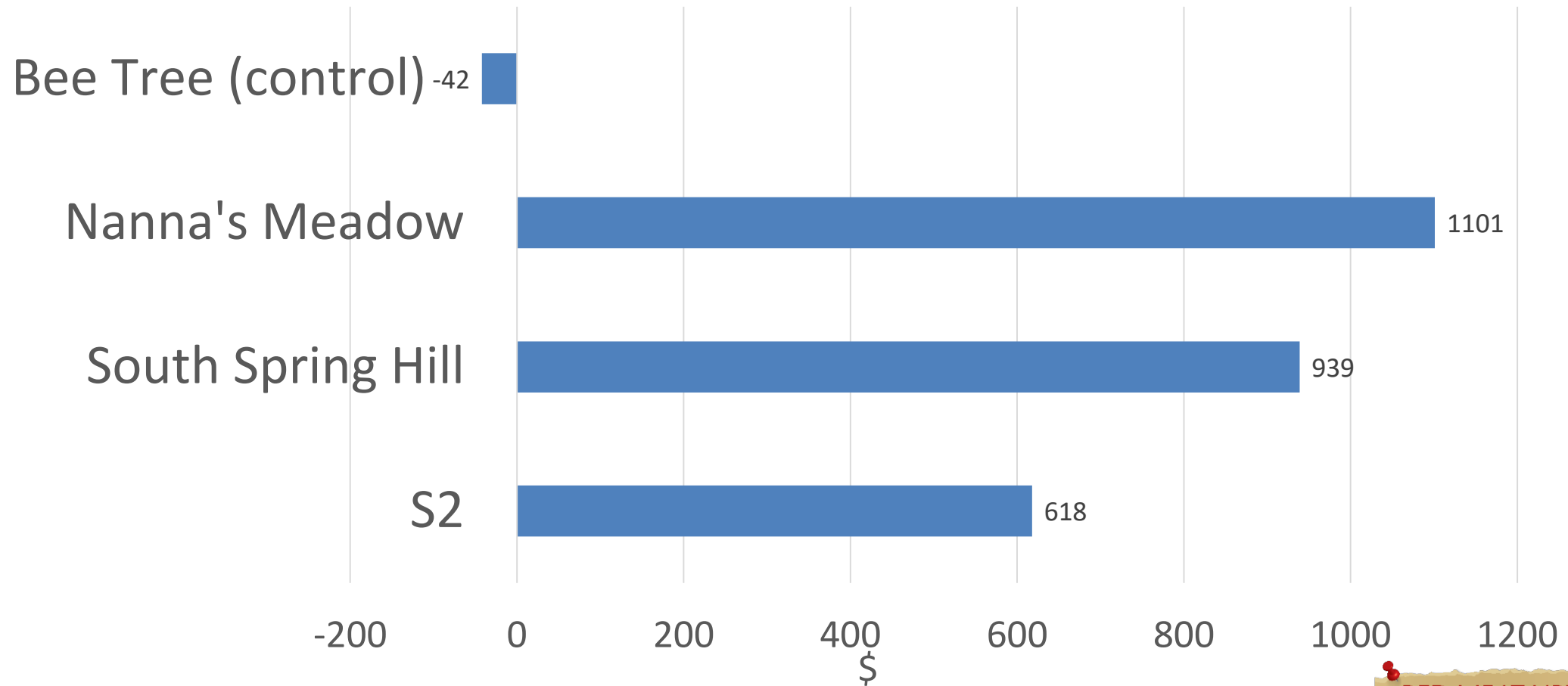
...to maximise productive potential of physical assets

- Wealth creation and debt servicing motivates business expansion.
- What is the maximum production potential?
 - How much business growth (scale) is possible?
 - Key finding of the MLA PDS
 - Market opportunities

Outcomes so far...

- Positive returns
- Highlighted the importance of potassium (K) in pasture system (driven better management of soil health)
- Better pasture utilisation and grazing decisions:
 - Easy to grow
 - Focus on utilisation
 - Lost opportunity if not harvested effectively

Springmere returns to date (\$/ha) 4/6/17 – 28/9/18



Results

- Days grazing
 - Trial 174 days (89 – 95% grazing by lambs or ewe lambs)
 - Control 90 days (90% grazing by ewe mob)

Dry conditions



Surface run-off

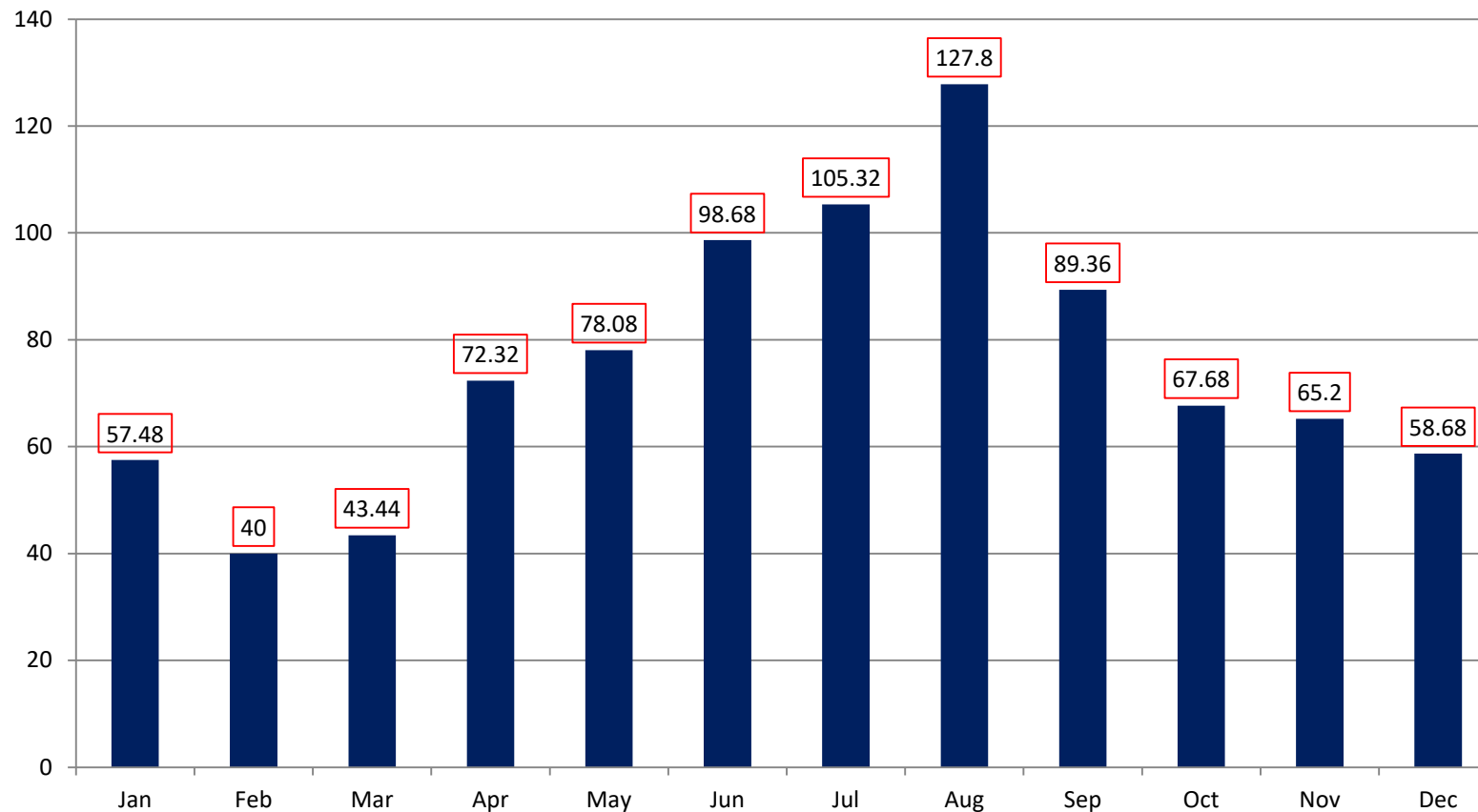


Pasture composition

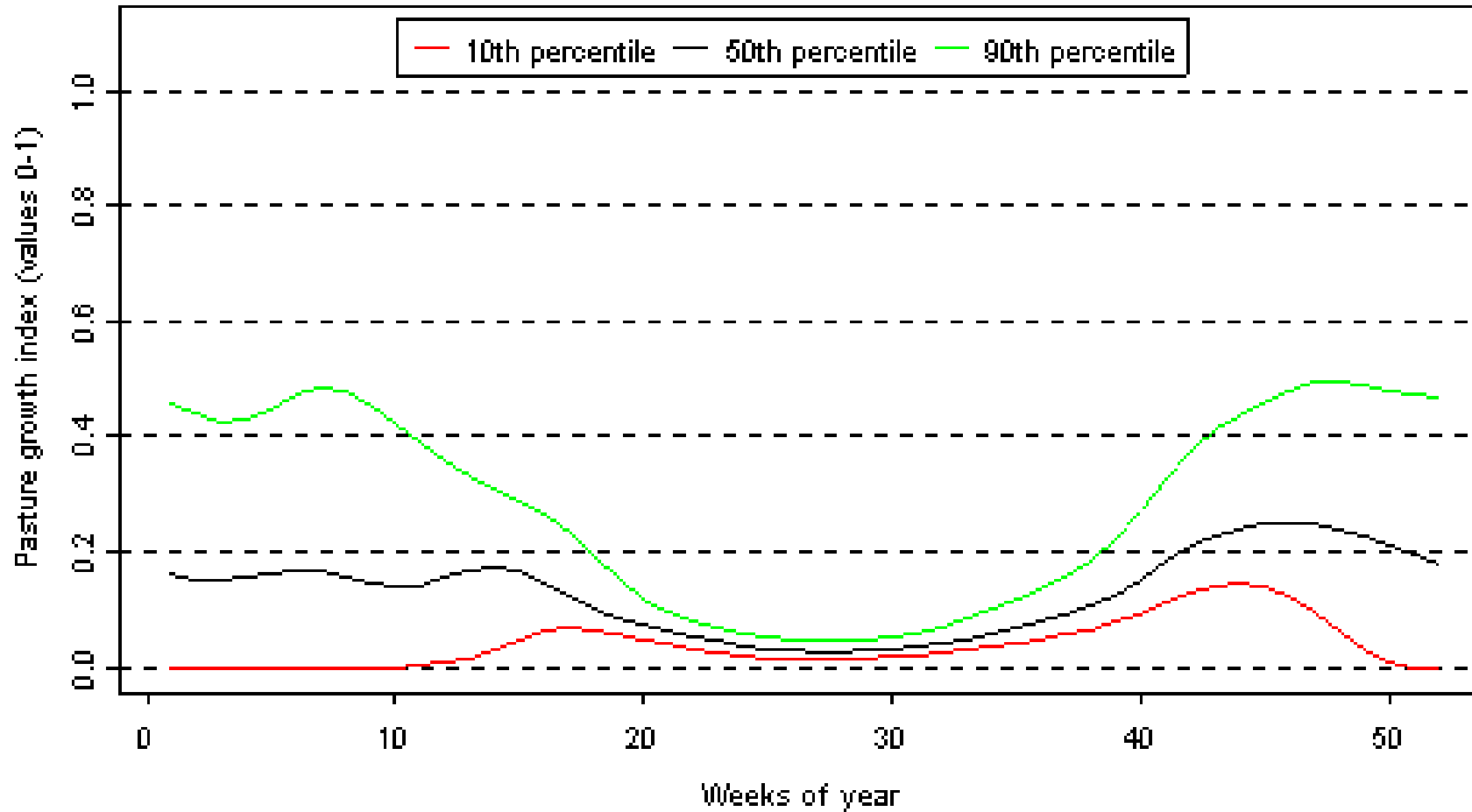


Monthly average rainfall

Springmere records (1989 – 2014)



Pasture growth curve



Pre-lambing pasture



Lambing ewes



Game pressure — fencing



Game pressure — impact



Impact of potassium (K)



Top three take-home messages

1. Game fencing: it is not worth the effort if game is an issue.
2. New pasture establishment is worth it — but effective utilisation is the key!
3. The importance of potassium in the system for clover persistence and production:
 - Focus on managing soil health.
 - Don't overfeed crossbred ewes!

Tools, resources and training

Education and training:

- UTAS MBA — Ag Innovation
- Marcus Oldham Grad. Cert.
- Business benchmarking (Holmes & Sackett)
- LTEM
- Tamar NRM

Management tools:

- Rising pate meter
- Excel spreadsheet and DropBox

Websites:

- Beef & Land NZ
- MLA
- BoM
- LIST maps



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