



26 July 2019

ASKBILL – forecasts to assist sheep management decisions

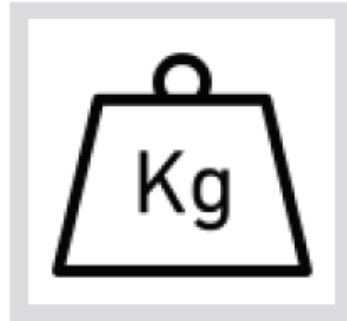
Lu Hogan

University of New England

ASKBILL



pasture



weight



flies



worms

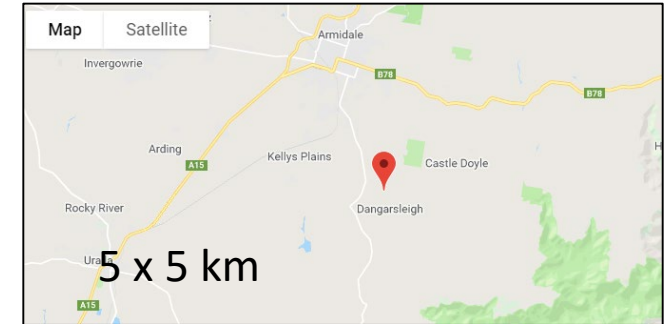



extreme weather

ASKBILL

Predictions rely on:

- Bureau of Meteorology
 - long-term average and forecast weather data, updated daily
- Models
 - pasture, animal, worms, flies, extreme weather



Farm data  Climate and Genetics data

Models

Forecasts and alerts



What-if scenarios

Management action

ASKBILL

- Live demonstration

ASKBILL — Tasmanian validation sites



ASKBILL — Tasmanian validation trials

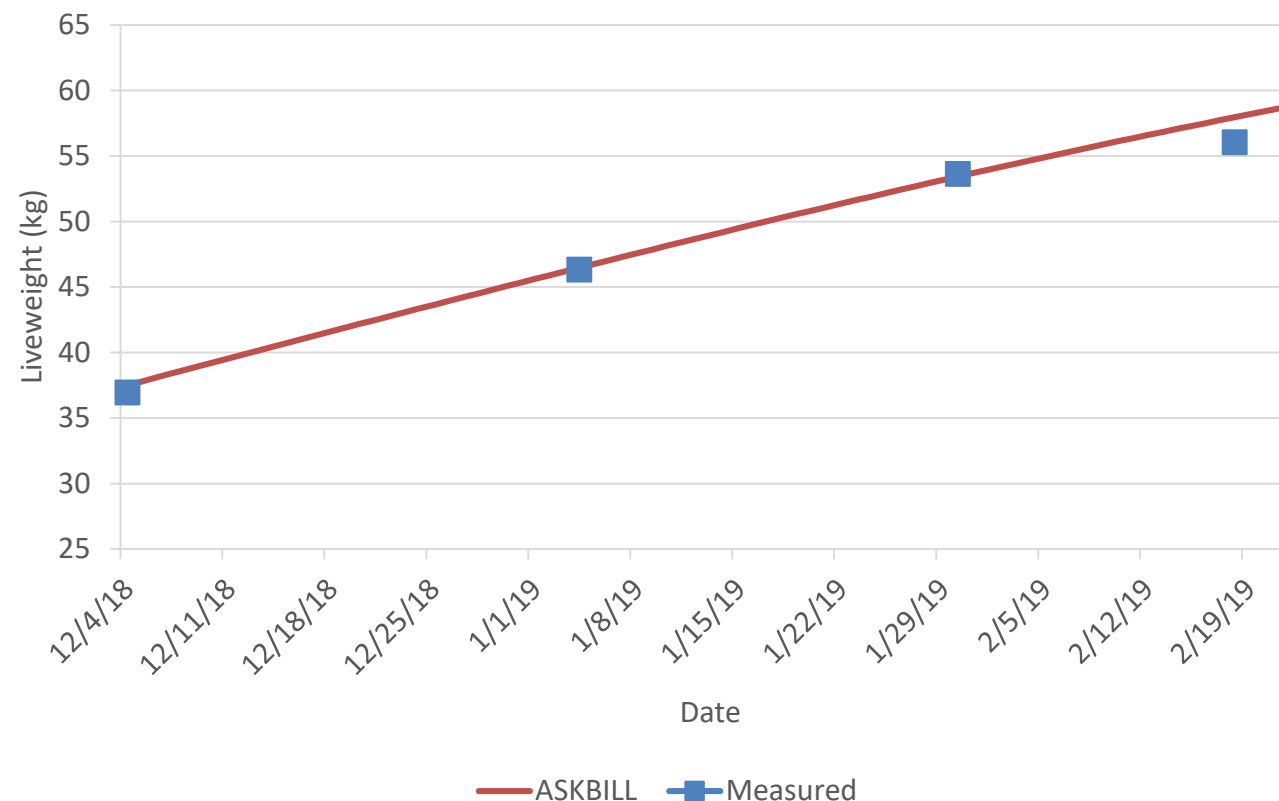
- On-farm monitoring of:
 - pasture quantity and quality (monthly)
 - liveweight (3–4 week intervals)
 - carcase (HSCW and GR depth)
 - livestock inventory and movements
 - worm egg count
 - animal health treatments
 - rainfall and irrigation
 - soil fertility
 - fertiliser applications
 - supplementary feed

How accurate was ASKBILL in predicting liveweight?

Project results:

Lead time (days)	Average absolute error (kg)
<25	2.0
25–49	3.0
50–80	4.1

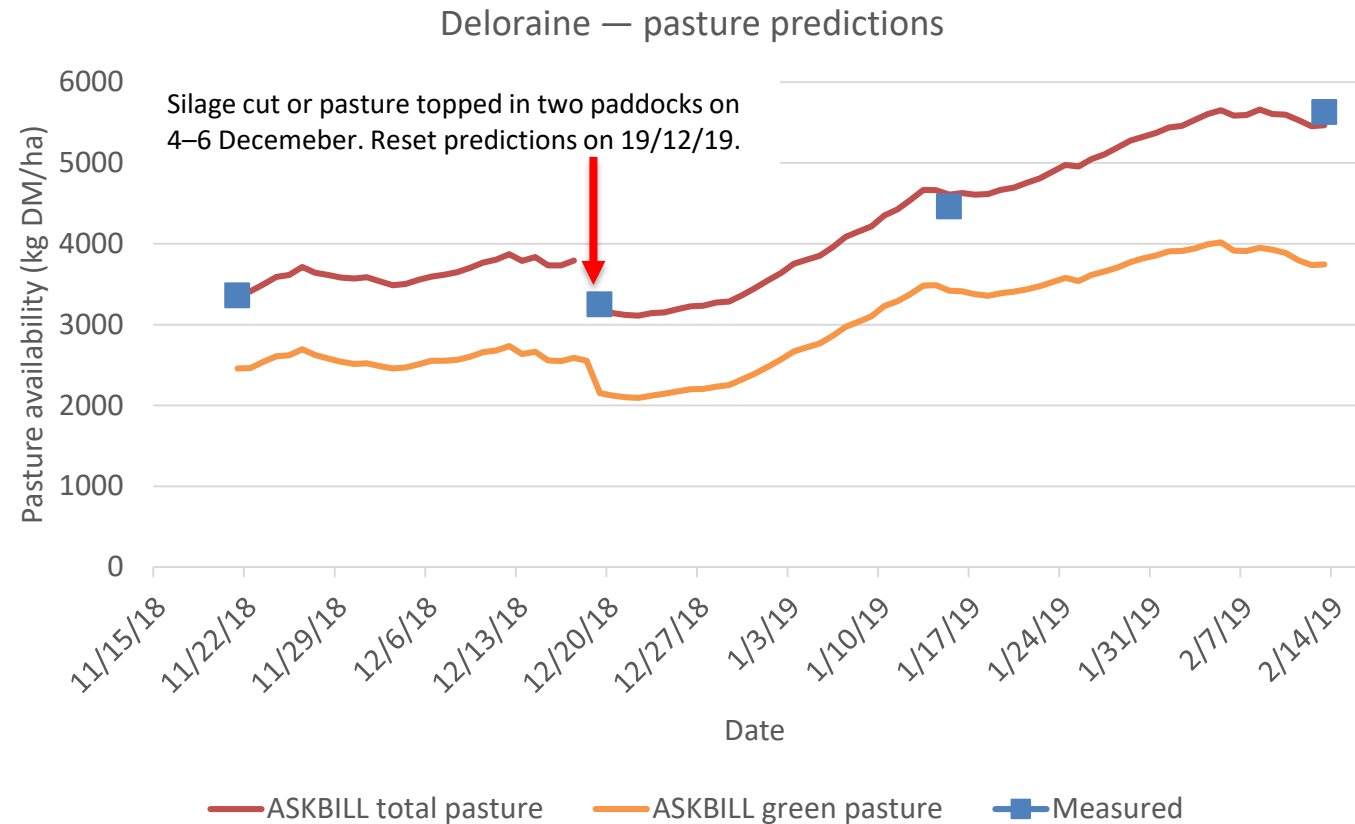
Ross — liveweight predictions made on 4/12/18



How accurate was ASKBILL in predicting feed availability?

Validation trials:

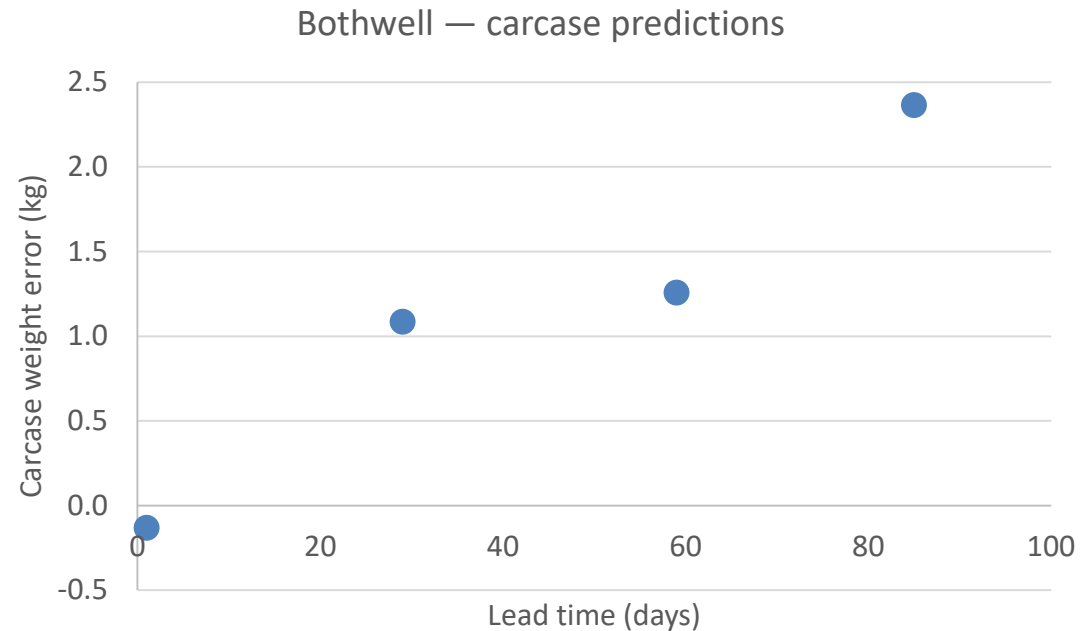
Average (mean) difference (\pm SE)
= 289 ± 82 kg DM/ha (excess).



How accurate was ASKBILL in predicting carcass weight?

Project results:

Lead time (days)	Average absolute error (kg)
<25	1.6
25–49	2.4
50–80	3.3



Carcass weight error = predicted HSCW – measured HSCW

Top three take-home messages

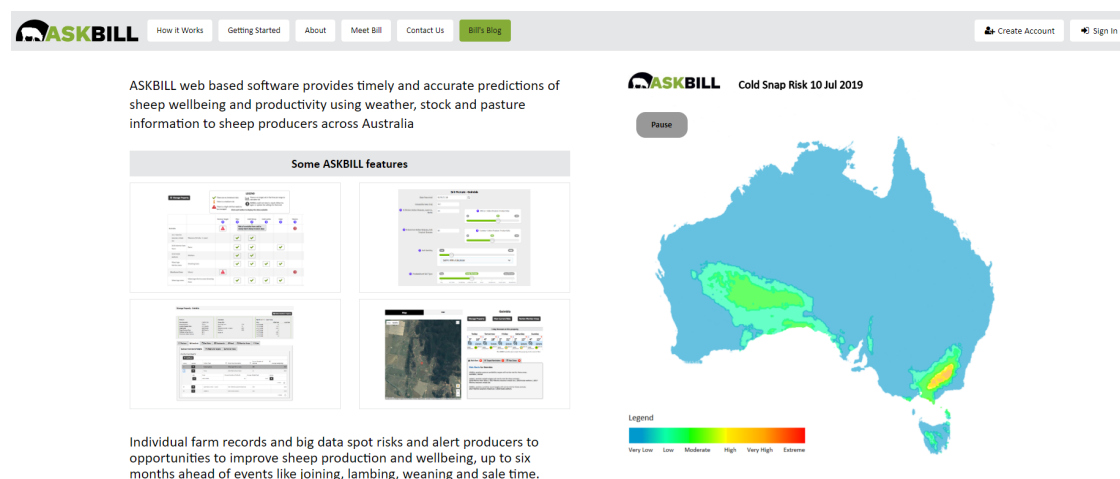
ASKBILL

1. Prediction of what's coming — the best weather data available.
2. Not perfect:
 - but will improve current decision making
 - validation data to improve models and predictions.
3. Information is 'KING' — plan and respond before the impact.

Tools, resources and training

ASKBILL.com.au
Subscription — \$110/year
Seven-day free trial

Online and 1800 number technical support



The screenshot displays the ASKBILL website. The top navigation bar includes links for 'How it Works', 'Getting Started', 'About', 'Meet Bill', 'Contact Us', and 'Bill's Blog', along with 'Create Account' and 'Sign In' buttons. The main content area features a description of the software: 'ASKBILL web based software provides timely and accurate predictions of sheep wellbeing and productivity using weather, stock and pasture information to sheep producers across Australia'. Below this, a section titled 'Some ASKBILL features' shows four thumbnail images of the software's interface. To the right, a map of Australia is shown with a color-coded risk overlay for 'Cold Snap Risk 10 Jul 2019'. A legend below the map indicates risk levels: Very Low, Low, Moderate, High, Very High, and Extreme, represented by a color gradient from blue to red.

ASKBILL web based software provides timely and accurate predictions of sheep wellbeing and productivity using weather, stock and pasture information to sheep producers across Australia

Some ASKBILL features

Individual farm records and big data spot risks and alert producers to opportunities to improve sheep production and wellbeing, up to six months ahead of events like joining, lambing, weaning and sale time.

ASKBILL Cold Snap Risk 10 Jul 2019

Legend

Very Low Low Moderate High Very High Extreme



Lu Hogan

University of New England

lhogan5@une.edu.au