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FRIDAY 28 JULY 2023 • LAUNCESTON

# RED MEAT UPDATES

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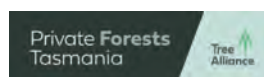
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# RED MEAT UPDATES

## TASMANIA

**PROGRAM** 8.45am – 5.45pm | Friday 28 July 2023 | The Tramsheds, Launceston

**8.00am** Registration desk opens, tea & coffee available

**8.45am** Proceedings commence

### Session 1: Welcome

**Welcome** – Sarah Cole, Red Meat Updates Working Group Chair

### Session 2: Industry Update

Chair: Stuart Whatling, Rabobank

**MLA update** – Jason Strong, Meat & Livestock Australia

**Farming under the spotlight – lessons from NZ** – Blake Holgate, Rabobank NZ

**10:20am – 10.50am Morning Tea**

### Session 3: Irrigated Pasture Updates

Chair: Heather Cosgriff, DLF Seeds

**Objective feedbase monitoring and management information for every livestock producer**

Phil Tickle, Cibo Labs

**Tasmania's energy market – what comes next?**

Marc White, Goanna Energy Consulting

**Perennial cereals for productivity**

Richard Hayes, NSW DPI

### Dryland Pasture Updates

Chair: Rob Winter, Barenbrug

**Serradellas for new environments**

Dr Rowan Smith, Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture

**Farming Forecaster in Tasmania – a decision support tool for graziers**

Tim Ackroyd, NRM South

**Sustainable wildlife management and primary production**

Robin Thompson, Game Services Tasmania

### Session 4: Sustainable Futures

Chair: Jessica Loughland, Greenham

**Carbon neutral or low emissions livestock production** – Professor Richard Eckard, University of Melbourne

**Synergies and opportunities for carbon in grazing operations** – James Downie, Dungrove Grazing Co

**1.15pm – 2.00pm Lunch**

### Session 5: Sheep Updates

Chair: David Findlay, Zoetis

**Investing in new sheep production infrastructure**

Dougal Morrison, An Cala

**Growing a sheep business through passion, hard work, and keeping it simple**

Alistair Leonard, Leonard Pastoral

**Managing internal parasites in sheep flocks**

Lexie Leonard, Leonard Pastoral

### Beef Updates

Chair: Frank Archer, Landfall Angus

**Systematic management of BVD**

Dr Enoch Bergman, Swans Veterinary Services

**Innovative technologies for a sustainable future**

Sarah Adams, Gallagher NZ

**Setting up heifers to succeed: integrating fixed-time artificial insemination into commercial heifer mating programs**

Dr Enoch Bergman, Swans Veterinary Services

### Session 6: Red Meat Champions

Chair: Will Downie, Red Meat Updates Working Group

**Private Forests Tasmania industry innovator: The Back Run – the story so far** – Sarah Clark, The Back Run

**Coles Supermarkets gate to plate: Managing risk for sustainable business growth and resilience** – Greg Gibson, Gibson Ag

**Tasmanian Angus Breeders Group & Angus Australia emerging leader: Doing more, with less** – Andrew Terry, Tasmanian Berries

### Session 7: Virtual Farm Tour

Chair: Kurt de Jonge, Nutrien Ag Solutions

**Nutrien Ag Solutions Virtual Farm Tour** – Circular Head Beef Producers Group

### Session 8: Conclusion

Chair: Sarah Cole, Red Meat Updates Working Group

Wrap-up, red meat raffle, networking drinks

**5.00pm** Networking drinks

**5:45pm** Event concludes





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# RED MEAT UPDATES WORKING GROUP

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**Sarah Cole, Chair**

Woodbourn, Cressy

**Richard Ellis**

Wetheron Pastoral, Bothwell

**Helen Baillie**

Wesley Dale, Mole Creek

**James Greenacre**

Rosemount Agriculture Pty Ltd, Cressy

**Will Downie**

Hazelwood Farm, Copping

**Richard Burbury**

RH and GH Burbury, Campbell Town

**Richard Sutton**

Darlot Downs, King Island

**Thomas Green**

The Glen, Cressy

**Ben Tait**

Riverlea Farming, Epping Forest

**Justin Cooper**

Gallagher Animal Management

**Andrew Morelli**

Meat & Livestock Australia

**Rowan Smith**

Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture

**Simon Vogt**

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**Conference coordinator:** Pinion Advisory

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## WELCOME

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**Sarah Cole, Chair**

Red Meat Updates Working Group

Sarah Cole is a producer from Cressy in the Northern Midlands of Tasmania where she owns and manages an intensive mixed farming operation with her husband and business partner, Lauchie. Sarah graduated from Marcus Oldham College and worked in a range of corporate agribusiness roles in marketing and finance nationally before returning to Tasmania in 2007. Sarah is always seeking opportunities to grow and improve their business, industry and community with a commitment to sustainability both economically and environmentally. She is passionate about agriculture and its future for Tasmania and Australia.

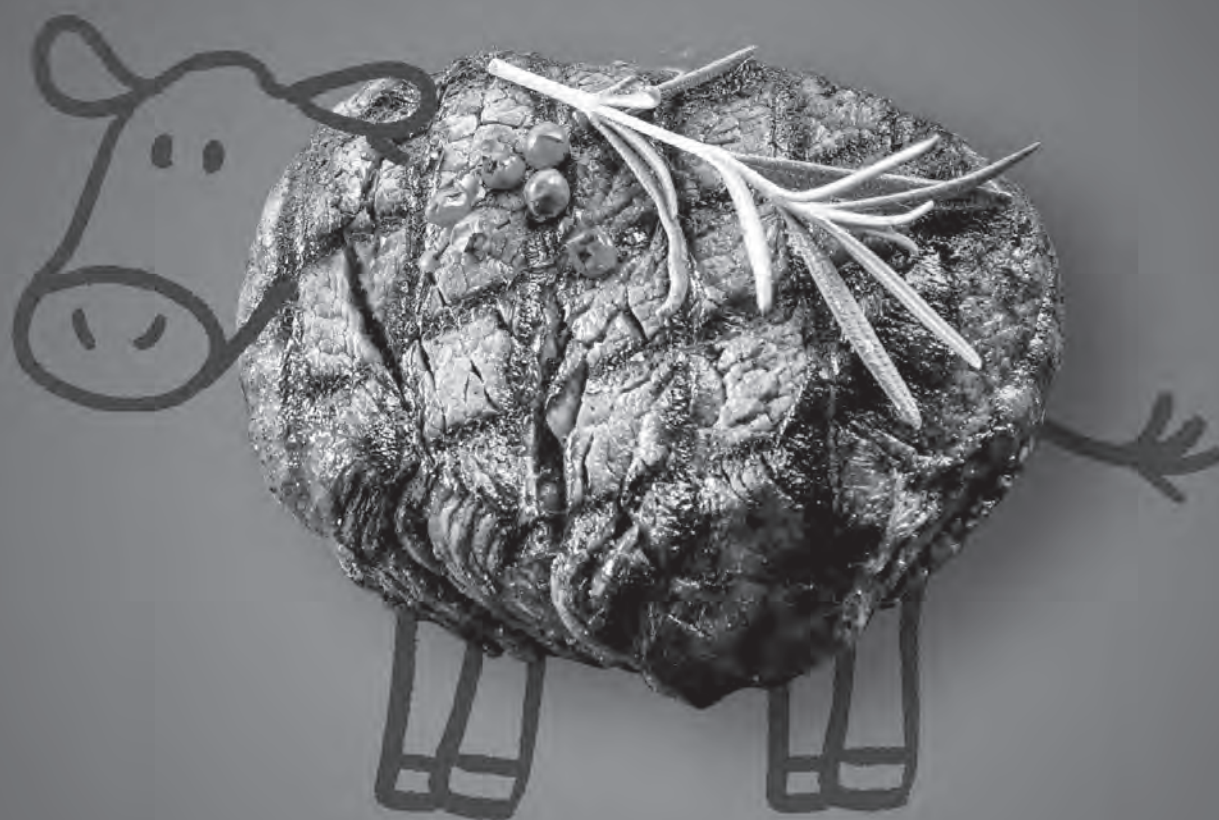
Along with her position as Chair of Red Meat Updates Working Group, Sarah has also been a Director of Toosey Aged Care and Tasmanian finalist and winner of the Encouragement Award at the AgriFutures Rural Women's Award in 2019.

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# INDUSTRY UPDATE



**Chair: Stuart Whatling, Area Manager Tasmania**  
*Rabobank, Richmond TAS*

Stuart leads the Tasmanian Rabobank business that has dedicated agribusiness bankers servicing the needs of clients throughout the state. They have offices in Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Smithton, providing local service with the capability of a leading global specialist food and agribusiness bank behind them.

Originating from a small farming community in East Anglia in the UK, Stuart obtained an Honours Degree in Agribusiness from London University's Wye College before embarking upon a career in banking and finance that has stretched from the UK to Australia, when he emigrated twenty years ago.

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## Notes

**Jason Strong, Managing Director**  
*Meat & Livestock Australia, Brisbane QLD*

## Abstract

In this presentation, Jason Strong will provide an update on the latest investments and activities from Meat & Livestock Australia. He will provide insights from domestic and international marketing, innovation in the supply chain, and how MLA is improving the positioning of the industry through innovation communication and marketing methods.

Mr Strong will also talk through the industry's incredible sustainability journey, focusing on CN30, which is a goal that the industry has set to be carbon neutral by 2030.

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## Notes





## Farming under the spotlight – lessons from NZ

**Blake Holgate,**  
**NZ Head of Sustainable Business Development**  
*Rabobank NZ, Dunedin, New Zealand*

As the Head of Sustainable Business Development, Blake helps the bank ensure its clients are in the strongest position themselves to best manage increasing environmental, societal and market risk as well as seizing opportunities created by a scarcity of resources and a growing global population.

This includes contributing towards Rabobank policy submissions to government on regulation affecting the sector, producing reports and podcasts for our clients which examine issues linked to sustainable farming, and developing new products and services aimed at helping client's businesses be more commercially and environmentally sustainable.

Hailing from a sheep and beef farming family, Blake has an MBA from Otago University and practised as an environmental lawyer specialising in resource management before joining Rabobank in 2013.

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### Abstract

This presentation will provide Tasmanian producers with an insight into what New Zealand has experienced recently regarding regulatory risks including the key learnings from these experiences for facing societal, market, and environmental risks into the future. As part of his presentation, Blake will discuss:

- how producers can position their businesses to best manage regulatory risk including market, societal and environmental.
- insights into what is happening in NZ for the agricultural emissions reduction plans.
- what does placing a price on emissions look like and what are the key implications for producers?
- lessons and opportunities out of the current situation in NZ in regard to the proposed agricultural emissions reduction.
- what direction can producers anticipate for regulatory risks.

---

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### Notes

# IRRIGATED PASTURE UPDATES



## **Chair: Heather Cosgriff, Sales Agronomist**

*DLF Seeds, Deloraine TAS*

Heather has been with DLF Seeds as the Tasmanian Sales Agronomist since March 2022.

Hailing from a mixed dairy/beef farming enterprise in the foothills of the Otway Ranges, Victoria, Heather has spent over 25 years working in broadacre, horticulture and pastoral segments of the agricultural industry, with the last 15 years being in Tasmania.

While she may never truly qualify as a local, Heather's passion lies in helping Tasmanian producers optimise their profitability through the provision of good pasture species choices and sound agronomic and grazing management advice, supported by ground-truthed pasture research.

**E:** [hcosgriff@dlfseeds.com.au](mailto:hcosgriff@dlfseeds.com.au)



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# IRRIGATED PASTURE UPDATES

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## **Objective feedbase monitoring and management information for every livestock producer – introducing the Australian Feedbase Monitor**

**Phil Tickle, Managing Director**  
*Cibo Labs, Toowoomba QLD*

Phil is a co-founder and Managing Director of Cibo Labs. Phil grew up on mixed farming properties in southern NSW and has over 35 years professional experience in the application of geospatial and remote sensing technologies in agriculture and natural resource management. Phil has worked on farms, in research, the private sector and government in Australia and internationally.

He co-founded Cibo Labs with Dr Peter Scarth in early 2018 with the mission to bring new approaches to monitoring Australia's grazing lands, focused on more objective on-farm decision-making leading to more profitable farms and sustainable landscapes. In five years Cibo Labs have established commercial services delivering estimates of pasture biomass and ground cover to thousands of farms managing more than 100 million hectares on a weekly basis, in addition to supporting national reporting systems on behalf of the sheep and beef industries.

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### **Abstract**

Cibo Labs launched in early 2018 to bring a new approach to forage budgeting and monitoring which combines the latest satellite and data science technologies and traditional pasture assessment methods. Building on the framework of satellite assisted pasture budgeting, in 2022 Cibo Labs and MLA launched the Australian Feedbase Monitor (AFM). The AFM is a joint \$4.7M project aimed at ensuring every red meat producer in the country can access satellite information for every hectare they manage. The AFM is freely available to MLA members and is linked through their MyMLA portal to their existing LPA accounts. This allows users the opportunity to view their pasture and ground cover levels across every PIC associated with their operation. Non-MLA members can also access the AFM for a \$99/year subscription which allows land managers and others with LPA accounts to use the service.

The AFM is the first national platform designed to provide regular updates of pasture biomass and ground cover percentages. Users of the AFM are provided with updated data every five days for the total standing dry matter for every 1 ha within their PIC boundary. These updates are used to provide a 30-day rolling average which can be used to make decisions around pasture management in response to seasonal changes occurring across the property. The data provided by the AFM is based around land parcels within the PIC. This provides users with key insights on the variation in biomass across their property and can be used to make strategic decisions for grazing and livestock outcomes. AFM data can be used to make historical comparisons

against previous years, stretching back over a six-year period. These month-by-month comparisons highlight seasonal trends, as well as the variation in total standing dry matter. In accessing this data, producers can easily reflect on past events as well as on the effectiveness and timing of key decisions. These insights can help improve responsiveness and increase the effectiveness of future management strategies.

The AFM provides an entry level for graziers and all red meat producers seeking to incorporate more accurate and objective data into their decision-making process. Producers can choose to progress to the PastureKey subscription service, which offers paddock level information at a 10m<sup>2</sup> resolution. PastureKey offers users the opportunity to integrate with other farm software platforms including Agriwebb, CERES Tags other leading companies to make objective forage budgeting easier and provide new insights into animal behaviour and pasture utilisation.

This presentation will provide an overview of how producers can get the most out these exciting new capabilities, starting with the AFM, and opportunities for future development of the services in collaboration with producers.



*Scan the QR code for more information on the Australian Feedbase Monitor.*

---

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## Tasmania's energy market – what comes next?

**Marc White, Principal Consultant**  
*Goanna Energy Consulting, Hobart TAS*

Marc White (EMBA, GAICD) is a 40-year veteran of the Australian energy industry, spending the past 15 years as an independent consultant to Tasmania's large commercial and industrial energy users, including agribusinesses. Marc has saved his Tasmanian clients over \$25M in energy costs and in doing so, has earned their trust.

Marc is a keen surfer, hunter, and President of the Bruny Island SSAA T19.

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### Abstract

Tasmania's agribusiness sector is being increasingly exposed to electricity costs. This is because access to new irrigation schemes means water provided to the farm gate already contains a significant component of "embedded energy" and hence energy costs, even before being delivered to the crop or pasture.

Tasmanian 'intraday' spot prices during dark hours are rising at a faster rate than daytime prices, and the old peak and off-peak tariffs devised in the 1960's will no longer be fit-for-purpose. This will have a material impact on irrigators, who, for decades, have invested in systems to pump water in an overnight 9-hour window.

The Marinus Link project will add further costs to transmission transport in the state, plus moves away from c/kWh network tariffs, like TAS75 Irrigation and into Anytime Maximum Demand Tariffs, like TAS88/89 mean agribusiness is unlikely to avoid increased network cost exposures.

Tasmania is driving to become a major hydrogen and pumped hydro player. With pumped hydro and hydrogen plants, Tasmanian agribusinesses will have new voracious gorillas competing for low-cost energy, to either pump water back uphill or to convert to hydrogen.

Advances in technology that allow automated dispatch of irrigation pivots, along with moisture sensors and mapping technologies will soon become integrated with electricity price signals, to help canny operators avoid high price periods and maximise irrigation use during low price periods, when the wind blows and the sun shines.

Understanding these energy changes will allow you to plan strategically and invest wisely for your future success.

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# IRRIGATED PASTURE UPDATES

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## Perennial cereals for productivity

**Richard Hayes, Senior Research Scientist**

*NSW Department of Primary Industries, Wagga Wagga NSW*

Richard Hayes is a research agronomist working across southern and central NSW. Over the last 20 years he has conducted over 100 field experiments on topics including liming acidic soils, pasture evaluation, perennial wheat evaluation, cover cropping and species mixtures. He currently leads two industry projects; developing high performance pasture mixtures for acidic soils (with MLA), and Clover4Bees (with AgriFutures), and leads the NSW DPI component of the MLA-funded serradella for new environments project. Together with his brothers, Richard also runs a grazing enterprise on the 2000-acre family property at Goulburn.

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### Abstract

Perennial crops are seen as one way of improving the environmental sustainability of crop production. A perennial cropping system would see a lower frequency of fallowing, reducing negative environmental impacts such as soil erosion, deep drainage, and nitrous oxide emissions. However, the development of perennial grain crops is only relatively recent and there are still no perennial grain crops commercially available in Australia.

Researchers at the NSW DPI have been working since 2008 to evaluate perennial crops in Australia, primarily focusing on perennial wheat. Their previous research demonstrated that wheat hybrids, developed from crossing wheat with a perennial wheatgrass, could survive and yield grain in an Australian environment for up to four consecutive years. Perennial wheat in Australia is envisaged as a dual-purpose grain and graze crop, with a high level of forage production compared to conventional wheat. Recent grazing studies confirmed the suitability of perennial wheat as a forage alternative, maintaining comparable weight gains and carcass characteristics to lambs grazing traditional grazing wheat. Perennial wheat also exhibited a similar mineral profile to annual wheat with high levels of potassium and low levels of sodium, with potential to impair absorption of magnesium and calcium, requiring mineral supplementation in high-performing classes of livestock.

The key barrier to the broader utilisation of perennial wheat at this time is the poor persistence of the existing experimental lines. This has prompted researchers to examine a broader range of material in search of potentially viable perennial crops for Australia. The leading candidate is the perennial grass, mountain rye (*Secale strictum*), which was developed as a forage and bred in Australia in the 1980's for greater seed yields. This species persists under grazing and is well adapted to acidic soils. Preliminary testing showed the broad utility of the mountain rye grain in food and beverage products, highlighting large opportunity to develop end-use markets. With further selection to improve traits such as seed size and floret fertility, mountain rye may become a viable perennial cereal crop for Australia.

---

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# DRYLAND PASTURE UPDATES

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**Chair: Rob Winter, Regional Agronomist  
– Southern Australia**

*Barenbrug Australia, Longford TAS*

Rob is the southern (temperate seed market) agronomist working on research, sales and marketing. Rob helps to identify market needs and challenges, direct the research effort, and develop and deliver extension resources. Previous experience includes twelve years in technical sales, nine years in pasture and forage seed production agronomy, and three years in retail mixed-farm agronomy. Rob has also experienced four years in small-seed harvest operations and logistics.

Rob completed a degree in Agricultural Science from the University of Tasmania in 1999. Rob lives in Longford and his interests include travel, reading, languages, and anthropology.

---

**E:** [rwinter@barenbrug.com.au](mailto:rwinter@barenbrug.com.au)

A black and white advertisement for Barenbrug Renovator Pasture Mixes. The background shows a herd of cattle standing in a grassy field under a cloudy sky. In the foreground, a large bag of Barenbrug Renovator Premium Pasture Blend seed is visible. The text 'Renovator® Pasture Mixes' is prominently displayed in the lower left, followed by a description of the product's formulation and performance. Contact information for Dwayne Schubert is provided at the bottom left, and the Barenbrug logo is at the bottom right.

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## Serradellas for new environments

**Rowan Smith, Research Fellow – Pasture and Forage Science**  
*Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, Launceston TAS*

Dr Rowan Smith is a Research Fellow at the Tasmania Institute of Agriculture (TIA). Rowan leads the Feedbase and Environment Cluster within the Livestock Production Centre.

His research is focussed on improving the productivity of low-medium annual rainfall grazing systems through the use of perennial grasses and legumes. Rowan has a number of research projects focussed on pasture legumes and how to maximise their establishment and persistence in mixed pastures. He also has an interest in evaluating alternative forage species and resilient grazing systems.

Rowan supervises and co-supervises PhD, Masters and Honours students in the fields of plant physiology, pasture agronomy and agricultural systems.

### Abstract

Serradellas (*Ornithopus* sp.) are a group of pasture legumes native to south-western Europe and north-western Africa. Yellow serradella (*Ornithopus compressus*) and French serradella (*Ornithopus sativus*), also known as pink serradella, are the most used species in Australia. Serradellas have been used extensively in Western Australia and north-western NSW, and are known to grow well in sandy acid soils and have a lower requirement for phosphorus than subterranean clover (*Trifolium subterraneum*). However, there has been little work done on their suitability to other parts of south-eastern Australia for permanent pasture systems.

The 'Serradellas for new environments' project aims to test better adapted cultivars and address the key agronomic barriers to adoption of serradellas in these new environments. CSIRO, NSW DPI and TIA have tested a range of cultivars across environments in NSW and Tasmania. This has included recording flowering time, hard seed breakdown, compatibility with grasses, herbicide options, and persistence. The objective has been to identify appropriate cultivars for each region and develop agronomy packages to assist with adoption.

In Tasmania, two years of flowering data has been collected at Mt. Pleasant in Launceston, a persistence experiment is in its second year at Merton Vale, Campbell Town, and a large

demonstration has also been sown at Merton Vale this year. The Tasmanian environment with its cool winters and long growing season, means mid-late season maturing cultivars are best suited. In addition, this and previous work has also identified some promising germplasm which may fill gaps in the current suite of available cultivars and may warrant commercialisation if they continue to show promise in ongoing evaluations.

This presentation will highlight the species suitability in Tasmania, along with reporting on results to date. A field day will be held in spring 2023 at Merton Vale for producers to look at serradellas growing, and we are seeking other producers who are interested in trialling some serradella on their farms.

Further information can be found at <https://www.utas.edu.au/tia/research/research-projects/projects/serradellas-for-new-environments>



Scan the QR code for more information on serradellas for new environments.

**E:** [Rowan.Smith@utas.edu.au](mailto:Rowan.Smith@utas.edu.au)

# DRYLAND PASTURE UPDATES

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## Farming Forecaster in Tasmania – a decision support tool for graziers

**Tim Ackroyd, Senior Agricultural Project Officer**  
*NRM South, Hobart TAS*

Tim works with the agricultural sector to improve production and environmental outcomes for farmers and their land. He has been doing this work through his role as the Senior Agricultural Project Officer at NRM South since 2012. Tim was previously a ranger in the UK where, as part of his role, he managed cattle grazing on public reserves to improve native grasslands and heathlands.

Tim is currently delivering the state-wide roll out of the Farming Forecaster project. Farming Forecaster has already demonstrated significant benefits for farmers in NSW and Tasmania. Tim is confident that it will continue to provide considerable value to Tasmanian graziers and the whole of the industry in managing challenging and variable climate conditions.

---

### Abstract

This presentation will introduce the Tasmanian Farming Forecaster project including the key benefits and practical application of the tool and the project for Tasmanian businesses.

With increasingly unreliable seasons, the earlier we can detect the direction that things are likely to head in, the better position we'll be in to manage our production systems. This includes minimising economic and environmental risk in low rainfall scenarios or capitalising on a potentially good season ahead.

The grazing decision-support tool Farming Forecaster assists graziers in forward planning around management of stock and pasture by providing soil moisture and pasture growth trends across the seasons at specific sites, helping realise the risks and potential of feed on offer.

Farmers do not need to host a site to benefit from the information. They can review trends at several relevant sites to make comparisons with their own farm. Each site has details on rainfall, soil type, pasture, the livestock enterprise and past management to assist the surrounding community to understand which sites are relevant. All Farming Forecaster sites are available for everyone to view at: <https://farmingforecaster.com.au/>.



*Scan the QR code  
for more information  
on Farming Forecaster*

Farming Forecaster is helping to address the increasingly challenging conditions for the agriculture and natural resource

management sectors. The tool was developed in NSW with Monaro and Tableland Farming Systems in close conjunction with CSIRO. It was recently introduced to Tasmania through NRM South's 2021-2022 Farming Forecaster pilot project.

So far, this tool has improved the commercial success of both NSW and Tasmanian farmers and through a new Tasmanian state-wide project, is being rolled out to all the major drought-prone regions in Tasmania. This includes establishing 30 or more new sites and providing opportunities for group training on the tool, and discussions on drought preparedness with support from technical experts.

### Take-home messages

1. Farming Forecaster offers the following benefits to producers:
    - Dynamic data to improve pasture and grazing decisions.
    - Soil moisture and pasture growth trends across the seasons.
    - Publicly available information on specific farms at your fingertips.
    - Assists producers with decision making support on achieving long-term sustainable landscape outcomes.
  2. Get involved in the Tasmanian rollout.
- 

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## Sustainable wildlife management and primary production

**Robin Thompson, Manager Game Services Tasmania**

*Department of Natural Resources and Environment,  
Launceston TAS*

As an agricultural scientist, Robin has delivered research, development and extension programs across most sectors of Tasmanian agriculture as well as leading an agriculture development program in the Falkland Islands. The area of scientific and applied interest for Robin is grazing systems and the interaction of grazing animals with the pasture resource. Robin manages a family farm at west Scottsdale which produces prime lamb and potatoes.

As manager of Game Services Tasmania, Robin leads a team of biologists and practitioners who manage the interaction between wildlife and primary production.

This involves understanding and using wildlife biology to ensure wildlife species are sustainably managed to achieve a balance between maintaining viable populations of wildlife species and maintaining their impact on primary production within a tolerable window. Game Services Tasmania is therefore responsible for administering wildlife take permits and conditions related to recreational hunting.

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### Abstract

Robin Thompson's presentation will include discussions explored in his paper titled "Sustainable wildlife management and primary production" which examines the impacts of wildlife on primary production and the tools available to keep this within an acceptable window. The paper and his presentation will discuss contemporary issues of wildlife management including the regulatory framework, social licence, and the emerging need to document management strategies and outcomes.

Wildlife populations have responded to changing agricultural practices. This has increased the tension between maintaining sustainable wildlife populations and maintaining their economic impact on primary production within an acceptable window. This presentation will examine this tension from the perspectives of "measuring to manage" and "right tool right place". Robin will discuss the importance and practicalities of monitoring wildlife populations and the damage they can cause to primary production. A whole range of tools are available to manage wildlife but many have

limited or specific situation effectiveness. The attributes of these different tools and how they can be applied for best results will be outlined in the presentation. In addition, social licence to manage wildlife is an emerging issue which will be discussed in the context of management strategies and tools.

Most wildlife species impacting on primary production have a legislated protection status, which this presentation will outline in the context of wildlife management. Management plans have been developed to provide high level state and property policy for management of wildlife, with examples including property-based wildlife management plans and the Tasmanian Wild Fallow Deer Management Plan.

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# SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

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**Chair: Jessica Loughland,**  
**Livestock Supply Chain Manager**  
*Greenham, Port Melbourne VIC*

Jessica Loughland is the Livestock Supply Chain Manager for Australian beef processor, Greenham, who operate three export beef plants across Victoria and Tasmania. In her role, Jessica is responsible for overseeing the company's natural beef programs, digital feedback systems, supply chain sustainability initiatives, and engagement with producers. Since joining the team in December 2020, she has successfully developed and delivered two new programs including the Greenham Beef Sustainability Standard (GBSS) and the Dairy Beef Program.

Jessica studied Agricultural Science at Charles Sturt University and, prior to joining Greenham, gained valuable experience working for Teys Australia in various roles across livestock, commercial analytics,

and project management, and at MLA, where she led the MSA Business Development team to help drive adoption and commercialisation of the Meat Standards Australia (MSA) program.

Jessica is a passionate advocate for Australian agriculture and is actively engaged in many industry initiatives including, the Australian Beef Sustainability Committee consultative committee and the advisory group for the 'Environmental Credentials for Australian Beef' project. Jessica was also recently appointed as a non-Executive Director for the Future Farmers Network (FFN) where she hopes to engage and inspire the next generation of industry leaders.

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**E:** [jloughland@greenham.com.au](mailto:jloughland@greenham.com.au)

**W:** [www.greenham.com.au](http://www.greenham.com.au)

## Notes

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## Carbon neutral or low emissions livestock production

**Richard Eckard, Professor**

*University of Melbourne, Parkville VIC*

Richard is Professor and Director of the Primary Industries Climate Challenges Centre at the University of Melbourne. His research focuses on carbon farming and accounting towards carbon neutral agriculture, managing extreme climate events and options for agriculture to respond to a changing climate.

Richard is a science advisor to the Victorian, Australian, New Zealand, UK and EU governments, the International Livestock Research Institute and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation on climate change adaptation, mitigation and policy development in agriculture.

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### Abstract

The Paris Climate Agreement set the world on a course towards climate neutral production systems by 2050, with the more recent Glasgow agreement setting interim targets for 2030. While governments have been relatively slow in their responses, we have seen a clear response from the multinational Agri-business supply chain companies in setting greenhouse gas emission reduction targets by 2030. As more than 70% of Australian produce is exported, plus of the 100 largest economies in the world 69 are companies not countries, the targets of our supply chains are therefore more consequential than government targets. In response, a number of industries have set targets for net zero emissions from agriculture, notably the CN30 target by Australian red meat industry. This was not done in isolation, as we have seen our competitors set similar targets; the State of Matto Grosso do Sul, Brazil has a net zero target that includes livestock, the New Zealand government has set net zero target (but notably, not a zero target for methane).

A number of tools and resources have been developed to assist producers to understand their emissions, with training courses available to guide producers towards carbon neutral production. The presentation will start by addressing who is asking us to be carbon neutral, what resources and tools are available to conduct carbon audits and addressing the key question – is carbon neutrality achievable? The presentation will end with a summary of the steps livestock producers can take now, and what is available from research in the near future to achieve low(er) emissions farming.

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**E:** [richard.eckard@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:richard.eckard@unimelb.edu.au)



## Synergies and opportunities for carbon in grazing operations

**James Downie, Managing Director**

*Dungrove Grazing Company, Bothwell TAS*

James and his wife Jess manage Dungrove Grazing Company which is a sheep and cattle grazing property in the Central Highlands of Tasmania. James and Jess aim to efficiently produce quality wool and red meat whilst managing the landscape to increase its productive capacity and overall health over time.

James has experience jackarooing and contract mustering in Northern Australia and working on cattle ranches in Montana in the United States. James also has a Bachelor Degree from the University of New England and has worked in agricultural consultancy in Queensland. James and Jess have three children aged 2-6 and enjoy the challenge of running a family farming business.

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### Abstract

James first discovered the concept of carbon movement through landscapes when jackarooing on a property in the New England region whilst studying at university. This sparked James' interest and since then he has kept a close eye on the science and government legislation around soil carbon and carbon trading.

James has recently registered a soil carbon project through the Emissions Reduction Fund using the 'measurement of soil carbon in agricultural systems method'. James will explain the reasons why he and Jess have chosen to pursue this project, whilst outlining the potential benefits and associated risks.

James will also discuss and explain the legislated requirements and process involved in carrying out and completing this project.

Whilst the presentation will primarily focus on soil carbon, James will also briefly explain other potential grazing carbon opportunities and existing forest carbon projects currently being conducted on Dungrove.

Synergies between carbon projects and supply chain initiatives for beef and wool will also be outlined in the presentation.

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**E:** [james@dungrove.com.au](mailto:james@dungrove.com.au)

### Notes

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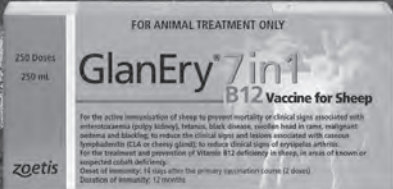
# SHEEP UPDATES



**Chair: David Findlay,**  
**Professional Sales Representative, Livestock**  
*Zoetis, Hagley TAS*

David manages the Tasmanian territory for the Zoetis Livestock team. His role covers animal health products and programs relating to sheep, beef and dairy cattle as well as genomics in both beef and dairy cattle for the company. David received his tertiary education at Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia (Muresk Campus). Livestock is a common thread throughout his career so far, having been involved in livestock (beef and sheep) farming as well as occupying buying, marketing and livestock cartage roles in the sector.

**E:** David.findlay@zoetis.com



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# SHEEP UPDATES

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## Investing in new sheep production infrastructure

**Dougal Morrison, Manager**

*An Cala, Oatlands TAS*

Dougal works alongside his parents, Cate and Askin, and brother, Fergus, to manage the 8000ha grazing property St Peters Pass, in Tasmania's southern midlands. Management of the business is currently transitioning between generations with Dougal and Fergus taking full operational management in the coming 2-3 years. Dougal manages the pasture production and cropping, along with development projects and the strategic direction of the business. Dougal has eight years of farming experience in Tasmania, New South Wales and Western Australia, and also has a Bachelor Degree in Farm Business Management from Marcus Oldham.

---

### Abstract

St Peters Pass recently completed the construction of new 10 stand shearing shed and undercover sheep handling facilities. After years of weighing up the pros and cons of renovating the existing shed versus a new build, the decision was made to go to a greenfield site. The two-year design process and the six-month construction time has resulted in a facility that is efficient and a pleasure to work in.

During the design process, several sheds and handling facilities (both old and new) were viewed, with the most suitable features for St Peters Pass being incorporated into the design. Particular attention was paid to improving labour efficiency, workplace health and safety, and reducing stress on livestock while handling.

Since the shed has been commissioned, there has been a number of very noticeable benefits, some of which have been unexpected. Not everything with this project went perfectly and Dougal will be the first to admit that some things could have been done differently.

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**E:** [dougal@stpeterspass.com](mailto:dougal@stpeterspass.com)

### Notes

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# SHEEP UPDATES

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## Growing a business through passion, hard work, and keeping it simple

**Alistair Leonard, Owner/Manager**

*Leonard Pastoral, Englefield VIC*

Alistair runs a 1st generation fine-wool Merino operation to a terminal lamb with his wife, Lexie, and two daughters in south-west Victoria. Prior to starting his business eight years ago, Alistair was travelling the eastern states of Australia as a stockman working for large grazing operations. This experience has proven invaluable to how he operates his own business today. His farming enterprise focuses on sustainability with high stocking rates, animal health and production. Alistair is passionate about building his own business and all the challenges that go with it, and has the goal of having 40,000 sheep by the time he is 40.

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### Abstract

Leonard Pastoral began nine years ago as a vision of having something to call their own. Starting with 300 ewes agisted on 120 acres in Mansfield, Victoria, it has now grown to 9,000 ewes lambing down in south-west Victoria over 1400ha. Alistair took a leap of faith and left his full-time job to start his own business, running sheep alongside stock contracting and crutching. This provided better cash flow and allowed the sheep enterprise to get up and running.

Starting a farming business from the ground up has meant Alistair had to 'know his numbers' from the beginning and ensure all purchases were making a return on investment. He has learnt over the years that genetics play a key role in the performance of his stock under the pressure of high stocking rates and grazing pressure. This is a key decision factor when sourcing ewes for purchase. Good management of animal health and welfare is vital, and balancing this with production goals is a main goal of the

business. Alistair has found over the years that simple systems work the best, and putting his main focus on nutrition, worm management and appropriate genetics means he can get the best from his stock in the most labour efficient way.

"Always be passionate about what you do, this is your biggest driver and will push you to want to learn more (haven't worked a day in my life)."

---

**E:** [al@leonardpastoral.com](mailto:al@leonardpastoral.com)





## Managing internal parasites in sheep flocks

**Lexie Leonard, Livestock veterinarian**

*Leonard Pastoral, Englefield VIC*

Lexie is a livestock veterinarian specialising in sheep medicine while also managing a Merino farming enterprise alongside her husband, Alistair, in south-west Victoria. They are currently running a flock of 9,000 head, comprising of fine wool Merino ewes lambing down to a White Suffolk ram. After graduating from Melbourne University in 2013, she has since gone on to achieve her Membership in Sheep Medicine in 2021. Using her veterinary knowledge combined with her farming experience, Lexie aims to help producers make practical decisions on animal health and welfare in the farming systems they are running.

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### Abstract

Managing worm burdens in sheep flocks is vital from both an animal health and animal production perspective. To gain maximum efficiency from your drenching program, a sound understanding of your farm worm burden and flock health status is necessary.

There are several factors which go into developing a farm's drenching program; drench selection and resistance status, flock profile, and farm profile being the most important. Seasonal changes will determine a farm's annual plan in setting your sheep up for the next 10-12 months. The production loss associated with unchecked worm burdens can be dire, but overuse of drench is both a resistance risk and an inefficient use of labour. A sound worm management plan will combine drenching with other practices as tools to help address worm burdens and will differ depending on individual farm environments and management systems.

Managing your stock throughout the year is just as important as a good drench program. Practical tools include regular worm egg counts, monitoring sheep condition and energy levels, and pasture management.

Having a solid understanding of your own flock and farm is the foundation for managing your worm burdens throughout the year. Setting in place simple and practical techniques can help streamline this management.

### Relevant tools and resources

Paraboss ([www.paraboss.com.au](http://www.paraboss.com.au)) is a great resource for any producers looking to learn more about worm management and drenching options.



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**E:** [lexie@leonardpastoral.com](mailto:lexie@leonardpastoral.com)



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# BEEF UPDATES

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**Chair: Frank Archer, Co-Principal**  
*Landfall Angus, Launceston TAS*

Frank is a Co-Principal of Landfall Angus, working alongside his brother Ed and the rest of the Landfall team. Landfall's focus is to produce genetics that are relevant for commercial beef production systems. Frank has a passion for improving productivity and profitability through improved grazing management, refined cattle management, human resource management and the use of appropriate genetics. Landfall supplies bulls to its client base across most states of Australia with two on-property sales annually and private treaty offerings.

---

**E:** [frank@landfall.com.au](mailto:frank@landfall.com.au)



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## Systematic management of BVD

**Dr Enoch L Bergman BVM, Veterinarian**

*Swans Veterinary Services, Esperance WA*

Enoch Bergman is a practicing veterinarian and part owner of Swans Veterinary Services located in Esperance WA. Enoch almost exclusively provides bovine veterinary services, consulting to a range of beef producers, from cow/calf enterprises to lot feeders, as well as to other veterinarians. He has spoken broadly throughout Australia as well as overseas on a range of bovine topics, but is possibly best known for his work pertaining to Bovine Pestivirus, also known as Bovine Viral Diarrhea

(BVD), or his “Building a Better Cow” series, which focuses on the proactive management of heifers to improve lifetime breeding success including strategies to improve reproductive efficiency through the integration of fixed-time artificial insemination (FTAI) in their breeding programs. He is a passionate advocate for the Australian beef sector and a vocal proponent of the veterinary industry’s role in supporting it.

### Abstract

Bovine Pestivirus, or Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) is elegantly host adapted to remain within individual beef and dairy production systems or to move between properties. Researchers around the globe believe BVD to be one of the most financially significant diseases affecting both the profitability and welfare of beef and dairy cattle.

BVD is transmitted almost exclusively by Persistently Infected (PI) animals. PI animals were exposed to the virus whilst in utero, gestating within their mothers. Either their mother herself was a PI, or she met a PI whilst her unborn calf’s immune system was still developing. Specifically, if an unborn calf is exposed to the BVD virus from between one and four months of gestation, if the calf survives the infection, it will usually be born Persistently Infected, meaning that its own immune system believes BVD to be “normal”, allowing the PI to shed enormous amounts of virus for its typically shortened life. Furthermore, these PI animals tend to be more prone to succumbing to other infectious diseases.

In this way, BVD is propagated. PI animals are born, and if they should meet another animal without prior immunity to BVD, they will infect that animal with the virus. The exposed animal will not become a PI, however, they may become unwell directly as a result of the virus, or more commonly, may succumb to a different disease, as exposure to BVD results in impaired immune function for up to a couple of months. Further, if the exposed animal is trying to conceive, or is already pregnant, then infertility, embryonic loss, abortion, or the production of another PI calf can occur.

The cumulative impact of endemic BVD exposure can be significant, and the consequences of introductions of PI animals at inopportune times can be devastating.

A number of countries around the globe have chosen to eradicate BVD completely. The keys are quite simple: seek out and eliminate PI animals and vaccinate animals without adequate immunity when appropriate.

As a veterinarian consulting to other veterinarians and producers across Australia, Enoch urges all producers to understand (measure) the immune status of their heifer replacements prior to joining annually, allowing them to intervene in the most cost-effective way possible. In a nutshell: if immune, ear notch; if naïve, vaccinate. By ensuring that each new group of replacement heifers is immune and PI free, producers can control BVD instead of leaving the fate of their animals to chance.

For links to a number of publications designed to assist producers to manage BVD, visit: [http://www.swansvet.com/services/bvdv\\_lab.html](http://www.swansvet.com/services/bvdv_lab.html)



Scan the QR code  
for more information  
on BVD

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## Innovative technologies for a sustainable future

**Sarah Adams, GM Global Strategy and New Ventures**  
*Gallagher, Hamilton NZ*

Sarah has worked in innovation, business development and management roles within the agricultural industry for over 25 years. She has grown small start-up agricultural companies in genetics, ultrafine Merino wool and arable foods into substantial, globally recognised businesses. Creating added value products and transitioning businesses from selling products to solutions has been key to the success. When not at work, Sarah is a 'hands on' farmer on their hill country sheep and beef property on the north side of the Raglan Harbour in New Zealand. This 'grass roots' farming experience enables her to clearly understand the problems farmers are trying to solve.

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### Abstract

This presentation will explore the technologies which will enable producers to bring their innovation to life for a sustainable farming future, including:

- The latest advancements in agritech and how they are likely to transform pastoral livestock farming.
- What are the key technologies and applications in farming right now, and what might be possible in the near future.

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**E:** sarah.adams@gallagher.com

### Notes

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## Setting up heifers to succeed: integrating fixed-time artificial insemination into commercial heifer mating programs

**Dr Enoch L Bergman BVM, Veterinarian**

*Swans Veterinary Services, Esperance WA*

Enoch Bergman is a practicing veterinarian and part owner of Swans Veterinary Services located in Esperance WA. Enoch almost exclusively provides bovine veterinary services, consulting to a range of beef producers, from cow/calf enterprises to lot feeders, as well as to other veterinarians. He has spoken broadly throughout Australia as well as overseas on a range of bovine topics, but is possibly best known for his work pertaining to Bovine Pestivirus, also known as Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD), or his “Building a Better Cow” series, which focuses on the proactive management of heifers to improve lifetime breeding success including strategies to improve reproductive efficiency through the integration of fixed-time artificial insemination (FTAI) in their breeding programs. He is a passionate advocate for the Australian beef sector and a vocal proponent of the veterinary industry’s role in supporting it.

### Abstract

In 2017, Swan Veterinary Services and their local producer group, ASHEEP, were approved to host a Producer Demonstration Site (PDS), funded by MLA. The aim of the PDS was to demonstrate the measurable financial benefits of integrating fixed time artificial insemination (FTAI), including synchronisation, into commercial heifer mating programs. The project recognised that synchronising heifers in order to mate them to FTAI at the beginning of a producer’s chosen breeding season would provide the enrolled heifers more breeding opportunities within a controlled breeding season, potentially and beneficially improving both their pregnancy rates as well as their eventual calving distribution.

Heifers that calve early within their scheduled calving season, and with less need for calving assistance would be more likely to wean more and heavier calves and have improved rebreeding outcomes when rejoined for their second mating and beyond. Fixed time AI can also provide access to bulls with both higher accuracy and superior BREEDPLAN estimated breeding values (EBV’s) for calving ease, shortened gestation lengths, birth weights and growth. Lastly, it was postulated that due to the AI sire’s superior EBV’s and the inherent and obvious advantage conferred by synchronisation, the proportion of heifers that conceive to AI would be expected to enjoy a reduction in dystocia, calf mortality, and heifer mortality, as well as calve earlier and produce heavier calves for their age than the calves sired from most of the bulls used for natural service within both groups enrolled in the PDS.

Over three years, involving close to 2,500 heifers on 10 properties, enrolled producers randomly choose half of their replacement heifers and synchronised them to be AI’d by FTAI on their preferred mating start date whilst simultaneously introducing bulls to the remaining heifers. The AI’d heifers were then reintroduced to their naturally mated siblings 10 days later for the duration of the natural mating season. Data was collected, where available, for pregnancy rate, dystocia rate, heifer mortality, calf mortality, calf weaning rates, and heifer rebreeding rates. The cost or value of each category was estimated and the cost/benefit of integrating FTAI was calculated.

In summation, the project demonstrated that producers were in front, after all costs were considered, by an average of \$89 per calf weaned by integrating FTAI into their commercial production systems.

### Results can be found at:

<https://www.mla.com.au/extension-training-and-tools/search-pds/pds-data/improving-heifer-productivity-by-integrating-ftai-into-commercial-cow-enterprises/>



Scan the QR code  
for more information  
on FTAI

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# RED MEAT CHAMPIONS



**Chair: Will Downie, Red Meat Updates Working Group**

*Hazelwood Farm, Copping*

Will runs a 500ha family farming business with his daughter Sarah at Copping in south-east Tasmania.

Hazelwood Farm runs a mix of sheep, wool & cattle enterprises, with 2400 first cross ewes, finishing 2900 prime lambs under irrigation, and 100 breeding cows.

Will was brought up on the family farm, and has a diverse background, starting in accounting and finance, then expanding to General Manager roles in optometry businesses, and CEO of a national retail chain.

Will also has extensive experience as a Director on several boards, both government and private businesses, and advisory committees, but his passion has always been farming and he is always looking for new ideas and better ways to farm.

## Notes

## 2. Absorb and store CO<sub>2</sub>

## Private Forests Tasmania

# INDUSTRY INNOVATOR

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## The Back Run – the story so far

### **Sarah Clark, Owner**

*The Back Run, Westerway TAS*

Sarah, together with husband Tom and their three young children farm The Back Run in the upper Derwent Valley. The Back Run includes property at Westerway and Ellendale; they produce fat lambs, Angus cattle and in recent years have incorporated agroforestry.

Sarah grew up in the Huon Valley and after completing her Bachelor of Agricultural Science at University of Tasmania moved to the northern midlands whilst completing a Masters research project. Sarah and Tom have been farming together in Tom's hometown of Westerway since 2011. In addition to the farm, Sarah also teaches Agribusiness at the University of Tasmania.

---

### **Abstract**

The Back Run started out with what could best be described as a baptism of fire, and from there it has steadily grown in both size and capacity. Beginning in its present iteration in 2011 Sarah and Tom have been producing fat lambs and Angus cattle on their Derwent Valley property. Working alongside the wider Clark family farm has enabled Sarah and Tom to establish their own farm and fulfil their life ambition of producing quality livestock whilst nurturing the land they manage.

A focus on breed and genetic selection, together with selection for temperament and handling to maintain calm cattle are helping make The Back Run sheep and cattle well-rounded stock. Improved vegetation management as well as riparian zone protection, tree plantings, and careful land

management are undertaken with the aim of improving the landscape.

In 2021, they began integrating plantation tree production through the establishment of radiata pine plantings at the Ellendale property. Sarah will share their insights into integrated tree plantings including their experience in the carbon farming space.

Sarah and Tom are always looking for ways in which they can improve their practices. Ongoing training, involvement in discussion groups, and a questioning nature are all part of their continual improvement strategy.

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**E:** [thebackrun@bigpond.com](mailto:thebackrun@bigpond.com)

## Notes

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## Notes

# GATE TO PLATE

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## Managing risk for sustainable business growth and resilience

**Greg Gibson, Owner Manager**  
*Gibson Ag Pty Ltd, Hagley TAS*

Greg manages an intensive cropping and livestock operation at Hagley in the Northern Midlands of Tasmania. Since leaving high school, Greg completed a farm hand apprenticeship and has worked in the family business alongside his late father. Greg's passion for operating

machinery has taken him to NSW, QLD and the USA harvesting grain, and to Western Australia sowing wheat and canola – all whilst still working on the family farm when possible.

Managing risk is an important part of running the farm business for Greg. Risk management for the business has ranged from addressing issues such as waterlogging, through to preparing for extreme conditions including drought.

In 2014, after discovering most of their farms' crop losses were attributed to waterlogging, Greg was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship to investigate ways of managing irrigation and drainage to mitigate losses. On returning from his travels, he purchased machinery out of the USA and started a sub-surface drainage contracting business.

After being in a partnership with Greg's parents for five years, Greg and his partner Sarah bought a property near Bishopsbourne in 2015 and went out on their own. The home blocks were leased off his parents' property until recently being purchased to allow for succession.

An extensive irrigation development has allowed a multitude of high value, intensive crops to be grown with a complex crop rotation that encompasses lamb trading. The lamb trading enterprise has now grown into a very important part of the business, trading 6,000–9,500 lambs per year. As a Coles GRAZE participant, Greg and his livestock team aim to buy top quality lambs from reputable Tasmanian producers to ensure the lambs suit the production goals of the business.

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### Abstract

By taking the time to identify, manage, and resolve risks, Greg and his team have been able to grow the business and improve the overall resilience of the different enterprises. Greg will share his experiences of running a cropping and livestock business, including how the different enterprises fit together to continue to meet both his goals for the business and to meet market expectations for high quality products, and the importance of identifying and managing risks to enable business success, growth and resilience.

The Gibson Ag team has a strong focus on attention to detail to ensure the business continues to produce high value vegetable crops, seed crops, and trade lamb. The business aims to select specific crop types to ensure each commodity grown complements each other and is well suited to the production system. The lamb trading enterprise is successfully incorporated into the overall production system through thorough planning and management. For example, simple feed budgets are used to ensure feed

is managed throughout the season, and the current market conditions such as the availability of lambs and required funds to make purchasing decisions are thoroughly considered. This has helped contribute to the ongoing suitability and success of this enterprise for the business.

Risk management is a vital aspect of farm business management for Greg. This includes identifying risks and then understanding the relevance and severity a risk could pose for a specific enterprise or for the business. Greg has also learnt the importance of seeking good advice from a team of skilled and knowledgeable experts including agronomic advice, livestock agent, bank manager, accountant, and business partner to support your goals and to help overcome the challenges the business may encounter along the way.

---

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- Tasmanian Angus Breeders bursary to attend the Total Assessment school



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## Notes



# EMERGING LEADER

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## Doing more, with less

**Andrew Terry, Managing Director**  
*Tasmanian Berries Pty Ltd, Exton TAS*

Andrew is the Managing Director of Tasmanian Berries, a family-owned company he established in 2014 at the age of 29. The company started as a four hectare in-ground strawberry farm on one site and a nine hectare mixed berry operation on a second site, both located in central northern Tasmania.

Andrew holds a Bachelor of Business and a Bachelor of Viticulture, and has been working in the Tasmanian viticulture and berry industries for 15 years. He is a board member of Fruit Growers Tasmania and Raspberries and Blackberries Australia (RABA), and he enjoys sharing knowledge with visiting schools and industry groups.

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### Abstract

Starting a mixed cropping and cattle farming business at the age of 26 while working in full time employment located 50 kilometres away, and studying a second Bachelor Degree remotely from an interstate university, is just an example of how Andrew Terry, fourth generation farmer, gets things done.

"Doing more, with less" is Andrew's motto. Having a smaller landholding than the farm where he grew up, inspired him to make the most of the land by growing more intensive crops which yield higher returns from a smaller footprint than traditional broad acre cropping. This was the driver behind achieving his goals of running a successful and innovative business as well as being an employer of choice in the ag industry.

After running his Exton property while managing a 60-hectare vineyard in the Tamar Valley for a couple of years, Andrew pursued his goal to 'do more with less' and took up an opportunity to become an independent grower for Driscolls Australia, to produce commercial berries for consumption by the domestic Australian market.

Now in 2023, the business has grown to approximately 50 hectares of commercial berry production, all hydroponically grown under poly tunnels or gothic style hot houses in Tasmania. Andrew has recently expanded operations in Queensland, to increase production during the Tasmanian winter.

The business currently employs approximately 500 employees, including locals and seasonal workers. The business employs a wide range of professions and is an approved employer of the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) Scheme, which provides employment opportunities to workers from Timor Leste and Samoa.

The business has not only grown in size and numbers, but also diversified over the last few years. The business has invested in a hydronically heated trial hot house as well as establishing a large plant nursery producing raspberry canes and blueberry plants. Further, the business has established a beekeeping department for pollination, is a labour hire company and has developed four accommodation sites to accommodate up to 450 workers in Tasmania.

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Kurt is an Agronomist and Branch Manager at Nutrien Ag Solutions Smithton. With qualifications in natural resource management and over ten years' experience in the industry as an agronomist, Kurt has a strong passion for agriculture in Tasmania.

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# VIRTUAL FARM TOUR

## Circular Head Beef Producers Group

*Featuring Western Plains Beef and Pilkington Pastoral*

This year's Red Meat Updates virtual farm tour is sponsored by Nutrien Ag Solutions and will showcase the significant impact the long-standing Circular Head Beef Producers Group has on its producer members. The VFT dropped in on the Circular Head Beef Producers Group March 2023 discussion day to experience first hand the value the discussion group offers. The VFT also captures the stories of two of the group's member businesses; Western Plains Beef and Pilkington Pastoral.

The Circular Head Beef Producers Group have operated continually since 1975, beginning as a discussion group facilitated by the local Department of Agriculture officer. Since its establishment, the group has held field days, farm visits and study tours in addition to undertaking an MLA funded Producer Initiated Research and Development (PIRD) trial focussing on optimal grazing management, participating in business benchmarking and grazing management programs such as ProGraze and Pasture Principles.

The Circular Head Beef Producers Group currently hold discussion days approximately 3-4 times a year, to visit a member of the group's property and discuss seasonally relevant topics. There is always a focus on grazing management for specific seasons but past sessions have also focused on topics such as fodder production, insect and pest management and supplementary feeding to fill the winter feed gap. As well as the focus on learning, an important objective of the Circular Head Beef Producers is to provide a social interaction for local producers to connect and network.

Western Plains Beef and Pilkington Pastoral are two north-west Tasmanian beef businesses who are actively involved in the Circular Head Beef Producers Group. Both are innovative family businesses with multiple generations contributing to the running of their operations. Linking to the Red Meat Updates 2023 theme of 'managing risks and exploring opportunities' and the key learnings and benefits they have experienced through



their involvement with the producer group, the Bruce and Pilkington families will discuss how they operate their businesses in the Circular Head region.

The Bruce family run Western Plains Beef in Stanley. The original farm block was purchased in 1975, with the property now running across approximately 1540 acres. Western Plains Beef has been breeding and finishing cattle for the Greenham Cape Grim brand for 12 years. They currently run a self-replacing breeding herd of approximately 350 cows, and finish a total of approximately 500 young stock per year. John and Iain Bruce will discuss their overall business and how they operate their breeding and finishing herds, diversification of pastures, climate and rainfall, business record keeping and auditing, and running a family business and the succession experience.

Steve Pilkington and his two sons, Andrew and David Pilkington, operate Pilkington Pastoral. The Virtual Farm Tour will feature their

property 'Killara' in Redpa. Steve purchased the original block of land in 1982, and today Pilkington Pastoral now includes three blocks of land totalling approximately 4200 acres. The business runs a self-replacing breeding herd of 1,150 head, and they also finish young stock to be sold to processors or on for further finishing. Steve, David and Andrew will share the history of the business, the land development and pasture improvements they have made, record keeping, and how they all work together to run the business including their succession experience.

*If you are a beef producer in the Circular Head Region and would like to become a part of the Circular Head Beef Producers Group, please email [gmccarthy@pinionadvisory.com](mailto:gmccarthy@pinionadvisory.com).*



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# RED MEAT UPDATES SPONSOR INDUSTRY CATALOGUE

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Our sponsors are involved in the red meat industry, working on the ground to support producers with on-farm management decisions. You can explore each of our sponsors and the expertise and resources they offer through the Red Meat Updates Sponsor Industry Catalogue.



## RED MEAT UPDATES BURSARY RECIPIENT

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### **Sarah Young**

***Tamar Valley Rural Youth***

*The Red Meat Updates working group is excited to offer a current Tasmanian Rural Youth member the opportunity of a bursary to attend this year's event. Sarah Young is the successful recipient of the 2023 bursary.*

My name is Sarah Young, I'm 19 and I live in the beautiful Tamar Valley. I'm president of the Tamar Rural Youth club and have a huge passion for all things agriculture! I have done seasonal work on farms that produce red meat products and have loved every minute. I attended RMU last year as a student at Exeter High School and I am extremely grateful to have the opportunity to attend again this year!



# Tasmanian Primary Produce Traceability Strategy

*protecting livestock, producers and export markets*

With the development of Biosecurity Tasmania's five-year Tasmanian Primary Produce Traceability Strategy 2023-2028, the government is setting an aspirational target to implement sheep and goat eID by 1 January 2025. This includes the tagging of sheep and goats born from 1 January 2025 and also animals who move from their property from 1 January 2025. There will be ongoing opportunities for industry participants to provide feedback on the development and implementation of Sheep and Goat eID in Tasmania.

## *Are you prepared for eID?*

Enhancing traceability can improve:

- Management of Emergency Animal Diseases, by providing accurate and timely animal locations and movement, helping to protect Tasmania's agricultural industries;
- Market access both domestically and internationally;
- Supply chain information; and
- Protection from counterfeiting and brand protection

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