

RED MEAT UPDATES

T A S M A N I A

FRIDAY 31 JULY 2026 • LAUNCESTON



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PROGRAM 8:45am – 6:00pm | Friday 31 July 2026 | Tailrace Centre, Launceston

‘Making it count – optimising the farm system’

8:00am Registration desk opens, tea and coffee available

8:45am Proceedings commence

Welcome

Welcome to Red Meat Updates 2026 – *Matt Connellan, Red Meat Updates Working Group*

MLA Update

MLA update – *Michael Crowley, Managing Director, Meat & Livestock Australia*

Industry Champions

Supply Chain Spotlight: From farm to market – organic success story — *Matt O’Leary, Australian Organic Meats Group*

Angus Australia & Tasmanian Angus Breeders Group Industry Innovator: Australian beef, global purpose — *Tony Fitzgerald, Whyalla Beef*

TAS Farm Innovation Hub Emerging Leader: Cross-sector smarts: Dairy lessons for beef — *Andrew Marshall, Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture*

10:45am – 11:10am Morning tea

Pasture Update 1

Session sponsored by Incitec Pivot Fertilisers

Tackling waterlogging – modern drainage solutions for an age-old yield thief — *Dr Reuben Wells, Ag Logic*

Livestock Update 1

Session sponsored by Zoetis

Data direct from the paddock — *Dr Jillian Kelly, Animal Health & Nutrition Consulting*

Primary Session 1

Session sponsored by Rabobank

Global red meat markets and trends on the move — *Simon Quilty, Global AgriTrends*

1:30pm – 2:30pm Lunch

Pasture Update 2

Session sponsored by Barenbrug

Transitioning from dryland to irrigated pasture production – navigating the change — *Hanna McCreath, Montana Farming Co.*

Livestock Update 2

Session sponsored by Nutrien Ag Solutions

Getting bang for your buck in the pursuit of meat-eating quality — *Professor Peter McGilchrist, University of New England*

Primary Session 2

Balancing the system when integrating cropping and livestock — *Simon Vogt, Pinion Advisory*

Virtual Farm Tour

Session sponsored by Muirs

Virtual farm tour — *Ben Tait, Riverlea Farming*

Conclusion

Wrap-up, red meat raffle, networking drinks

5:15pm Networking event

6:00pm Event concludes

Red Meat Updates is proudly presented to you by the

Red Meat Updates Working Group

Matt Connellan, Chair
Warrington Ag, Longford

Emily Hall
Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture

Andrew Archer
Chester Partnership, Westwood

Will Lyon
Elverton Pastoral, Blessington

Helen Baillie
*Wesley Dale and Strowan Enterprises,
Chudleigh*

Chelsea Rayner
*Kidman Downs Simmentals & Short Horns,
Lower Beulah*

Hugh Bradley
Warrington Ag, Longford

Richard Sutton
Darlot Downs, King Island

Richard Burbury
RH and GH Burbury, Campbell Town

Elizabeth Thelander
Meat & Livestock Australia

Will Downie
Hazelwood Farm, Copping

Tom Youl
Quoin Trust, Flinders Island

Andrew Whipple
Clovelly, Bridport

Conference coordinator: Pinion Advisory

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Welcome



Matt Connellan

Chair, Red Meat Updates Working Group

Farm Manager, Warrington Ag, Longford TAS

Matt Connellan is a Farm Manager based in Tasmania's Northern Midlands, where he has recently taken on the management of a mixed enterprise farm business, comprising of crossbred sheep, cereal and seed cropping, as well as beef and dairy agistment cattle.

After completing his studies at Marcus Oldham College, Matt relocated from the Central Tablelands of New South Wales to the Fingal Valley to further his career in agriculture.

He is passionate about the long-term viability of Australian agriculture and is committed to implementing practices that promote sustainability, animal welfare, and resilient farming systems. Matt believes that continuous improvement, innovation, and collaboration,

particularly through events like Red Meat Updates, is essential to ensuring a strong and sustainable future for the industry.

In addition to his role as Chair of the Red Meat Updates Working Group, Matt recently completed Meat & Livestock Australia's Red Meat Ambassador training and actively encourages other producers to take part in opportunities to advocate for the industry.

Notes

MLA Update



Michael Crowley

Managing Director

Meat & Livestock Australia

Michael was raised on a beef cattle property at Barraba in northern New South Wales, where his family run a stud and commercial beef cattle operation. He holds a Bachelor of Rural Science degree from the University of New England (UNE) and also has a Post Graduate Certificate in Business Administration from Queensland University of Technology (QUT). He has had a long association with the Australian Intercollegiate Meat Judging Association (ICMJ) going back to 1997 where he competed as a student before becoming the Australian coach for six years and President of the association until 2012.

Michael has held a range of commercial positions in the meat and livestock industry including livestock procurement, processing, plant quality assurance, supply chain management, sales and marketing. Michael ran his own business marketing livestock, running beef processing for branded beef exporters and he held his own meat export license.

Michael worked for Meat & Livestock Australia for 14 years. He joined MLA in 2009 where he managed the Meat Standards Australia program. In 2012 he moved with his family to Brussels taking on the role of International Business Manager for EU and Russia with MLA. He returned from Brussels in 2015 as the Program Manager of Meat Standards Australia and joined MLA's Executive Team in 2016 where he was the General Manager of Research, Development and Adoption. This business unit was responsible for investments in RD&A across the supply chain, including livestock genetics, on-farm productivity, eating quality, sustainability innovation, automation, objective measurement, market access science and product innovation.

More recently, Michael was the CEO of Herefords Australia where he worked with the seedstock sector to drive commercial outcomes for all customers along the beef supply chain.

He has been Managing Director of MLA since 2024.

Abstract

Delivering world leading outcomes is central to Meat & Livestock Australia's purpose. MLA is achieving this through the 2030 Strategic Plan and its five bold ambitions: Contributing to Australia's net-zero ambitions; Delivering value-based marketing; Establishing multibreed genetic evaluation and livestock credentials; Driving demand through marketing, market access and social capital; and investing in our industry's people.

12 months on from the plan's launch, MLA Managing Director, Michael Crowley, will share some of the exciting work and projects that are underway and how they are helping underpin the sustainability and profitability of our great industry.

Notes

[illegible]

Industry Champions



Chair: Will Lyon

Red Meat Updates Working Group

Farm Manager, Elverton Pastoral, Blessington TAS

Will is the Farm Manager at Elverton Pastoral and is responsible for the day-to-day running of the business. His role includes managing livestock, pasture, irrigation, machinery, and infrastructure projects. He has a strong focus on practical solutions and maintaining efficient farm operations. Will has extensive experience in beef cattle production and enjoys finding ways to improve systems and productivity. Outside of work, he enjoys taking on practical projects and spending time with his family outdoors.

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Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Supply Chain Spotlight

From farm to market – organic success story



Matt O'Leary

Director

AOM Group Pty Ltd, Dubbo NSW

Matt O'Leary is a Co-Director at AOM Group, specialising in organic and sustainable farming practices. A fourth-generation farmer, he has more than 35 years of experience producing high quality organic meat products. Matt is passionate about sustainable agriculture and building strong industry relationships.

Outside of AOM Group, he wears many hats, including farmer, father, and Fire Brigade Captain.

M: 0438 691 162

Abstract

Matt O'Leary is a co-director of the privately owned AOM Group, alongside Simone Tully. The business has operated in the organic industry for over 20 years, sourcing livestock from certified organic properties and working with certified processors to supply high quality organic beef and lamb to both domestic and export markets.

Our model is built on maintaining strong supply chain integrity and meeting strict organic and market requirements, ensuring consistent quality and long-term relationships with both producers and customers. The core values of AOM Group are integrity and traceability. These are fundamental to ensuring compliance with domestic and export standards while building trust across the supply chain. They also support the long-term success of the business by securing market access and reinforcing confidence in our products.

The business was originally catalysed in 1987 when Matt's father, Denis, transitioned into certified organic farming. As demand for organic meat grew through local butchers and the Sydney market, the business expanded beyond its own production to sourcing certified organic livestock from other farms, evolving into a broader supply chain operation.

Key profit drivers include currency management, strong customer relationships, and strong producer relationships. These elements help protect margins, secure reliable supply, and maintain consistent demand through long-term partnerships.

Being certified organic requires strict compliance and regular audits across the supply chain. While this presents challenges, it also provides a strong market point of difference and supports premium positioning. It strengthens relationships with customers seeking clean, green, and traceable food products.

Looking ahead, AOM Group is expanding into the European market and continues to pursue international growth. The outlook for organic meat remains strong, driven by increasing global demand for sustainable and traceable protein.

For producers, the key messages are to remain passionate about organic production, align with long-term programs where possible, and prioritise strong relationships with buyers and processors to ensure consistent market access and long-term success.

Industry Innovator

Sponsor Introduction



Carel Teseling
Chief Operating Officer

Angus Australia, Armidale NSW

Carel Teseling is Chief Operating Officer at Angus Australia with more than 35 years' experience in genetic improvement, research translation, operational delivery and industry innovation. His career spans leadership roles across Australia and South Africa, including Angus Australia, the Australian Wagyu Association, the WA Department of Agriculture and South Africa's Agricultural Research Council. He has led major breed-development, genomic implementation, data-platform and genetic evaluation programs, with a focus on translating science into commercial value for breeders, supply chains and the broader beef sector.

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Tony Fitzgerald
General Manager

Whyalla Beef, Texas QLD

Tony Fitzgerald is the General Manager and Director of NH Foods' Whyalla and Bective Feedlots. Tony oversees one of Australia's most significant feedlot operations, supplying 157,000 head annually into NH Foods' premium beef brands. He also leads the company's breeding and farming programs across King Island and Northern NSW, producing elite feeder cattle. Driven by a practical application of technology and evidence-based management, Tony is known for championing data, technology, and practical innovation to lift productivity and operational efficiency.

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Abstract

Tony's presentation will provide an overview of what makes Whyalla Beef one of the most advanced feedlots in the southern hemisphere, including:

- Current export markets, key profit drivers and business priorities for growth.
- The benefits and challenges of running F1 Wagyu breeding and finishing programs on King Island and in the NSW Riverina to produce weaned cattle for the feedlot and how this assists the business to meet market expectations.
- Whyalla Beef's breeding objectives and how this is achieved through genetic selection and refined breeding programs.
- The role data collection and technology have in supporting informed decision-making and management of the business at a strategic and operational level.
- Tailored feeding programs to meet multiple markets (short, middle and long-fed feeding programs).

Emerging Leader

Sponsor Introduction



Sandra Knowles

Director

TAS Farm Innovation Hub, Launceston TAS

Sandra is the Director of the TAS Farm Innovation Hub which supports farmers in preparing for drought and a changing climate.

The Hub is funded through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and hosted by the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture at the University of Tasmania.

As a long-term project manager with a legal background, Sandra has strong leadership experience and demonstrated ability to enable change and drive innovation through many roles within the University of Tasmania. Sandra has extensive knowledge of Tasmanian agriculture and helps manage a mixed-farming family enterprise.



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture,
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Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture

This program received funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.



Growing Climate Resilient Communities TAS FARM INNOVATION HUB

The TAS Farm Innovation Hub is dedicated to helping Tasmanian farm businesses and their communities thrive in the face of a variable climate.

OUR VISION

Tasmanian farm businesses and their communities are innovative, resilient, and prepared for the financial, social and environmental opportunities and impacts of climate variability.

WHAT WE DO

- **Collaboration:** Partnering with industry and community groups across Tasmania and interstate.
- **Innovation:** Providing farmers with critical information and driving advancements in agricultural practices.
- **Resilience:** Ensuring long-term financial, social and environmental stability for farms.

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Cross-sector smarts:

Dairy lessons for beef



Andrew Marshall
Farm Manager

Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, Elliott TAS

Andrew grew up in the Upper Hunter in NSW on his parents' hobby farm, before completing a Bachelor of Rural Science at UNE. Andrew had a variety of experiences, from school holidays working on a cow calf operation, to university holidays working in a feedlot and on harvest crews. With no plans, Andrew and his now wife Molly, moved to Marrawah on the North-West tip of Tasmania, before relocating to Wynyard.

Before becoming the Farm Manager at the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture's Dairy Research Facility at Elliott, Andrew had several farmhand roles on Tasmanian beef farms.

Andrew's role as Farm Manager includes the day to day operation of the farm, while also being directly involved in planning and delivery of industry-led research trials.

On his days off, Andrew and his partner have a beef herd across owned and leased land, utilising a share farming arrangement to increase herd numbers.

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Abstract

Andrew is the Farm Manager at the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture's Dairy Research Facility. His primary role is the day-to-day operation of the commercial farm, supplying milk to Lactalis Mainland Dairy, while supporting the ongoing industry led research trials. The trials add complexities to the role, managing several mobs and treatments at a farm scale. Andrew will highlight the technologies being used to do that and the level of detail and data recording needed to provide useful results.

Andrew's presentation will look at where it all started for him and what led him to the role he is in now. That journey involved working on beef farms, cropping operations and organic dairying, which has given Andrew a unique insight into what aspects of his current role can also be applied across the beef sector.

He will highlight the importance of young people understanding the reasons for decisions being made on farm and how that impacts an operation. He will also touch on the role that mentors, working groups and in-depth scientific research can play in the decision-making process as well.

Andrew's journey includes his own beef operation run on owned and leased property, while utilising a share farming arrangement to increase cow numbers.

Pasture Update 1



Chair: Lee Menhenett

Technical Agronomist – Pasture/Cropping

Incitec Pivot, Arcadia VIC

Lee has been part of the Incitec Pivot Fertiliser team for 30 years.

Lee has experience in sales, technical agronomy and liquid development across southern NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania.

Today, as a Technical Agronomist he is based in Arcadia, south of Shepparton, and specialises in summer and winter cropping and pasture agronomy across dairy, beef and sheep operations.

Lee holds a Bachelor of Applied Agricultural Science from the University of Melbourne.

Lee is both a Fertcare Trainer and a Fertcare Accredited Advisor.

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Dr Reuben Wells

Managing Director

Ag Logic, Longford TAS

Prior to establishing Ag Logic, Dr Wells had a diverse career including an undergraduate degree in Ag Science and PhD in Viticulture (both through UTAS), time in Western Australia's ag department, several years making wine in the US, and other roles around the country.

Ag Logic was set up in 2010 following his PhD, with the mission to help growers make better use of data in farm decision-making. Ag Logic has grown to be an eight-person business, working in several states and in a range of enterprises, from dryland grazing through to berry production in tunnels, and everything in between.

Local demand, technological advances, and expertise developed over time have pulled the business into two broad areas – agronomic sensing technologies (such as soil moisture probes) and precision agriculture services.

In Tasmania, waterlogging is a major cause of crop loss, so the precision ag side of the business is weighted towards services to improve drainage, and this is also Dr Wells' main focus. He now provides advice and designs for underground drainage, surface drainage and land forming activities.

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Abstract

Soil moisture levels are the primary determinant of plant productivity. While insufficient moisture from drought is always a threat, in Tasmania waterlogging is also a major cause of lost productivity.

Water levels in soil are a balance of how much is coming in, how much is leaving through either plant water use or drainage, and how much water the soil can contain before becoming saturated.

Plant growth is maximised when soil moisture sits in the ideal range. Modifying drainage is generally the most robust, long-term solution to altering soil moisture.

The aim of this presentation is to provide growers an outline of steps they can use to give their drainage system the best chance of success. Historically a task assigned to a grader blade on the back of a tractor and a dose of gut feel for location, modern tools available now are significantly more successful at getting the right type of drainage in the best location and installed correctly.

This presentation will:

- Help growers learn how to diagnose the cause of their drainage problems.
- Give growers an overview of the different drainage options (surface, subsurface and landforming), including how to decide what system is best for their site.
- Discuss the strengths, weaknesses and traps involved in the different implements available for surface drainage.
- Run through the planning process, covering the types of data that can be used, software options, and identify the best outputs for their needs.
- Help decide when to use on-farm equipment, and when to call a contractor.

Livestock Update 1



Chair: David Findlay
Area Manager – Livestock

Zoetis, 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 attended Curtin University of Technology WA (Muresk Campus). Livestock is a common thread through 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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Data direct from the paddock



Dr Jillian Kelly
Managing Director

Animal Health & Nutrition Consulting, Coonamble NSW

Jillian Kelly is the founder and managing director of Animal Health & Nutrition (AHN) Consulting. Jill has a Bachelor of Veterinary Science from the University of Sydney and her Memberships in Ruminant Nutrition. After six years in private mixed veterinary practices and 11 years with the NSW Government veterinary service, she could see the opportunity for proactive livestock management. AHN was launched in 2022 and is a multifaceted business supplying livestock health and nutrition services to sheep, cattle and goat farms across eastern Australia. In 2024, Jill was awarded the SALRC Communications Professional of the Year award. She sits on several boards and steering committees and works closely with industry bodies on research and extension projects. In her spare time, Jill likes trading cattle, campdrafting and painting watercolours.

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Abstract

This presentation will outline how in-paddock weighing units are used in our business, and the interesting production issues we have identified using them over the past three years.

AHN owns five Optiweigh units and hires them out to clients. We are also observers of another 14 units owned by clients, so we get to see a broad range of data every day.

For cattle, these are commonly used for home-bred or trade cattle on crop, pasture or in feedlot pens to ensure the cattle are reaching their daily gain targets. For sheep, these are commonly used in lamb containment feeding systems to monitor average daily gain and make drafting and trucking decisions. We also see the units used on pasture to assess if animals are truly on a rising plane of nutrition during joining, or if cows or ewes are gaining or losing weight during lactation.

In both cases, the technology allows monitoring of weight gain performance, the influence of things like change of diet, weather, water cleanliness or temperature, worms and supplementation, and has reduced the need for animal handling. It also allows us to make supplementary feeding decisions in a very timely way.

We will share some case studies from producers of how they have used in-paddock weighing, and how the outcomes have helped them justify the investment.

Like all pieces of technology, in-paddock weighing needs to be used as part of the whole farm or whole mob picture. The volume of data we get to see has certainly helped us learn to “read the tea leaves” over the past few years!



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Leigh Barker, Rural Manager 0428 105 467

Helene Gunn, Rural Manager 0400 771 195

Tom Brown, Rural Manager 0447 149 206



Primary Session 1



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 20 years ago.

E: stuart.whatling1@rabobank.com

M: 0427 331 115

Notes

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Global red meat markets and trends on the move



Simon Quilty
Managing Director

Global AgriTrends, VIC

Simon produces market updates each week, including a podcast and written updates. These are done jointly with his US counterpart, Brett Stuart.

The focus is on global markets and how these impact livestock prices in Australia, both cattle and sheep. In recent times, US tariffs have played a significant role in his analysis.

Simon has traded meat worldwide for 35 years and applies his knowledge of global markets to simplify complex markets for his subscribers.

Simon's subscriber business has a diverse group of listeners and readers, ranging from meat processors in Australia to large feedlot operators, backgrounders, pastoral houses, and farmers worldwide.

In addition, Simon brokers meat from India into North America, which gives him unique insights into the Indian buffalo market, which he visits regularly.

Simon recently completed a Churchill Fellowship to investigate how to reward farmers for lowering methane emissions. This study took him to 13 countries around the world in search of answers to this question. He met with scientists, innovators, farmers, meat processors, supermarkets, and industry representatives as he sought a solution.

Simon has a degree in Agricultural Science and a Churchill Fellowship.

M: 0411 199 433

Abstract

Simon's presentation will look at global supply and demand factors that impact livestock prices in Australia. This session will cover the following key areas:

- Tariffs impact – 18 months since introduction.
- Managing Iran's war – Australia found a way forward.
- What are the key driving factors impacting US demand - how its impact is being felt globally.
- Plant-based proteins – how big a threat?
- Australia's livestock prices – they are going from strength to strength, how sustainable is this?
- Where do prices go from here?



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- Any property with cattle, sheep, goats or pigs must have a Property Identification Code (PIC).
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- These movements must be recorded on NLIS or PigPass within two days by the receiving PIC (unless sold through a saleyard), even if the PICs relate to the same entity.
- From 1 January 2027, all sheep and goats must have an approved eID before leaving a PIC.



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Pasture Update 2



Chair: Dwayne Schubert
Territory Manager Tasmania

Barenbrug, Derwent Valley TAS

Dwayne is the Tasmanian Territory Manager for Barenbrug Australia.

Growing up on a cattle property in Northern NSW, Dwayne studied a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga. He has had 19 years' experience as an agronomist focused on pasture and livestock production whilst dabbling in cotton and broadacre crops across NSW.

Since moving to the Derwent Valley in 2015, Dwayne's role has been providing sound agronomic advice to growers across Tasmania in the pasture and animal production space.

Outside of his work as an agronomist, Dwayne has been a representative water polo player for many years.

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Transitioning from dryland to irrigated pasture production – navigating the change



Hanna McCreath

Farm Manager

Montana Farming Co., Montana TAS

Hanna McCreath is a beef producer and pasture manager in her family's farming business in the Meander Valley, Tasmania. The business runs a self-replacing herd of 200 Angus cows, finishes progeny for the grass-fed beef market, and finishes trade and agistment cattle. Hanna has worked in the business for three years and for the past two years has led pasture management for the finishing enterprise. Her role focuses on feed budgeting and grazing rotation planning to optimise production of pasture and beef.

E: hmccreath@gmail.com

Abstract

In 2024, Hanna and her husband Lachlan partnered with her parents, Rob and Sally, to purchase a neighbouring property, adding 120 hectares of irrigated pasture to their Meander Valley beef business. This expansion required a more intensive approach to pasture management, with a focus on growing high-quality feed and converting it efficiently into grass-fed beef.

Hanna will share how the business adapted its feed budgeting, grazing rotation planning and pasture monitoring to manage the shift from dryland to irrigated pasture production. She will discuss the data they collect, how it informs day-to-day and seasonal decision-making, the challenges they have faced, and the key lessons learnt so far. The presentation will also explore where the business is focusing next to continue to improve overall performance.

Notes



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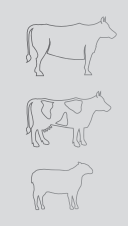
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Livestock Update 2



Chair: Georgia Gorham

Livestock Agent/Auctioneer

Nutrien Ag Solutions, Bridgewater TAS

Georgia is a livestock agent and auctioneer who has spent the past seven years specialising in the marketing of sheep and cattle across southern Tasmania. Prior to this she worked in and managed export yards in the Northern Territory, giving her extensive knowledge of large-scale livestock handling, welfare compliance, and northern production systems.

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Getting bang for your buck in pursuit of meat-eating quality



Peter McGilchrist

Professor of Meat Science

University of New England, Armidale NSW

Peter is a Professor of Meat Science at the University of New England in Armidale, NSW. His research revolves around ensuring global consumer satisfaction of Australian red meat. This research covers all aspects of beef, sheep and goat supply-chains, focusing on critical control points which affect the eating quality of meat, from genetics, to on-farm management, processing through to the consumer.

Peter is also president of the Australian Intercollegiate Meat Judging (ICMJ) Association and a passionate educator of the next generation at UNE.

Peter grew up on a beef cattle property in north-west NSW and is very passionate about everything from soil to scotch fillets!

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Abstract

Red meat producers continue to invest heavily in improving eating quality, which has afforded Tasmania the crown for the best Aussie beef. However, the most profitable pathway is not always the one that maximises individual quality traits. This presentation will explore how producers can achieve the greatest return on investment by aligning production decisions with the drivers of carcass value and market demand in Tasmania.

Using examples from both the beef and sheep industries, we will examine how carcass value is created and how changing price signals have influenced genetic selection and breeding objectives over the past two decades. As premiums emerge for traits such as marbling and eating quality, genetic trends inevitably follow.

However, biological performance alone does not determine value. Consumers often make purchasing decisions based on brand, provenance, sustainability credentials and trust, highlighting the importance of aligning production systems with the extrinsic values promoted by red meat brands.

The presentation will also discuss practical on-farm levers that influence carcass value, including genetics and time in lairage. By understanding which traits are genuinely rewarded by processors, brands and consumers, producers can make more informed decisions about where to invest their resources.

Ultimately, achieving “bang for your buck” in meat-eating quality is about balancing biological performance, market specifications and production costs to produce the right animal for the right market at the greatest profit.

Notes

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Primary Session 2



Chair: Richard Rawnsley

Senior Consultant

Pinion Advisory, Devonport TAS

Richard Rawnsley has over 20 years of experience in the Tasmanian livestock sector. Richard has recently joined the Pinion Advisory team, as a Senior Consultant, based in northern Tasmania.

Richard has extensive experience as the Academic Lead for the Livestock Production Centre at the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture (TIA), where he has led research focused on practical, science-based solutions to enhance animal performance and improve the sustainability of livestock systems.

Richard has a strong track record in leading major research initiatives, including national contributions to projects addressing the sustainable use of critical inputs such as nitrogen and water, climate change mitigation, and the adoption of emerging technologies.

He is recognised for his ability to work closely with commercial farms and industry partners to evaluate and implement innovative solutions, a strength reflected in his successful, industry-supported research portfolio.

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Notes

Balancing the system when integrating cropping and livestock



Simon Vogt

Partner

Pinion Advisory, Kapunda SA

Simon has a strong and practical understanding of the key profit drivers in cropping, beef, lamb, wool, and mixed enterprise businesses.

Simon enjoys applying this skill set to the farm business clients that he works with to enhance profitability, business model resilience, and long-term wealth creation.

Simon currently chairs 20 advisory boards for family farms and family corporates across South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales. These businesses collectively manage more than \$1 billion in agricultural assets and operate across cropping, mixed cropping and livestock, beef only, specialist prime lamb, and pastoral enterprises.

Simon enjoys working with these businesses to unlock any internal capacity for greater levels of profitability and productivity from their available resource base. This then leads to opportunities to support these clients in their growth and long-term wealth creation aspirations.

Through Pinion Finance, Simon also creates value for these clients by optimising capital structures, facilitating access to cost effective finance, and building strong working relationships with their banking partners of choice.

Outside of work, one of Simon's weaknesses is a strong appreciation for KTM dirt bikes, and the resulting camaraderie and bravado that comes with riding shoulder to shoulder with family and friends!

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Abstract

Is mixed enterprise the secret sauce to agricultural success? Or have its merits been oversold? Or is it simply a practical reality we have to learn to manage well, given our available land classes?

Simon is looking forward to unpacking these questions and more during his presentation. Simon's presentation at Red Meat Updates will include exploration of some of the following themes:

Is mixed enterprise right for you?

- The practical reality that mixed enterprise requires a higher degree of implementation excellence.
- The link between simplicity and effectiveness.
- Understanding that complexity is the enemy of execution.
- Making your business model as simple as possible...but no less simple!
- Thinking more deeply, running your own race, and avoiding the pitfalls of anecdotal evidence.
- Avoiding optimising a process that should never be done.
- Understanding the importance of EBIT profit and Net Profit per hectare when designing your business model vs gross margin profit per hectare when making decisions within your chosen business model.
- Recognising the very real costs of capital duplication.
- Understanding the importance of 'highest and best land use'.
- The representation of single enterprise amongst high performing farm businesses.

How do we go about doing mixed enterprise well?

- Meshing together like a well-oiled machine rather than grinding the gears and breaking off teeth.
- Reducing enterprise conflict to enhance margin capture.
- The encouragement of ‘win : win’ thinking and choices rather than ‘win : lose’ thinking and choices when managing the integration and overlap between cropping and livestock enterprises.
- Not letting the concept of ‘perfect’ get in the way of ‘very good’.
- Embracing uncertainty and not over-reacting (i.e. the world is a surprising place).
- Playing the long-game and using long-term pricing rather than spot pricing when making enterprise and/or crop type choices.
- Thinking rationally.
- Balance and the inverted U concept.
- Applying partial budgets.

What really moves the needle in long-term agricultural wealth creation?

- Exploration of beyond ‘measure to manage’ to extend this principle to ‘measure and compare to know what is truly possible and to unleash the next round of elite performance potential’.
- The capacity for high performing farm businesses to retain 40% of income as Earnings Before Interest and Tax (or EBIT) profit.
- Total business return thinking (i.e. total business return = operating return + capital appreciation in assets under management).
- Ensuring your business model is scalable and enjoyable.
- What Year In Year Out (or YIYO) truly means and how this can be used to enhance decision making and access to finance.

Notes

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Chair: Yannik Heller

National Fertiliser Manager and Key Account Manager

Muir, Longford TAS

Yannik is the National Fertiliser Manager and Key Account Manager at Muirs, responsible for overseeing fertiliser procurement, pricing, and supply strategy across the business while managing key client relationships. He works closely with suppliers and internal teams to navigate market conditions, manage product availability, and provide strategic direction. In his key account role, Yannik partners with leading farming clients to deliver tailored fertiliser and agronomic solutions aligned to their production goals. Combining technical knowledge with commercial insight, he supports growers to optimise input use, improve productivity, and achieve strong business outcomes.

Yannik's background is in large-scale farm management, with most of his experience gained in the Wimmera/Mallee region before relocating to Tasmania in 2014 to manage a property in the Cressy area. In 2016 he moved into agricultural retail and has been with Muirs for the past five years. Born in Denmark and raised in Gippsland, Victoria, Yannik returned to Denmark after leaving school in 1998 and spent 18 months working on a cropping farm, where he discovered his passion for agriculture.

Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on its right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Riverlea Farming Co



Ben & Steph Tait

Fairfield, Epping Forest TAS

Ben Tait grew up farming in Ashburton, New Zealand, where he spent more than eight years developing an irrigated farming operation. Rising input costs and the increasing expense of irrigation water made the long-term future of the business more difficult to justify. Looking for new opportunities, Ben and his wife, Steph, turned their attention to Tasmania.

In February 2018, they purchased Fairfield, an 800-hectare property near Epping Forest. Since then, Riverlea Farming has expanded to 1,200 hectares through the addition of a neighbouring leased block and a second farm. Over the past eight years, Ben and Steph have developed a highly integrated mixed farming enterprise encompassing beef, prime lamb production, cropping, winter dairy agistment and straw production, while progressively upgrading the property's irrigation infrastructure.

Cropping forms the backbone of the business. Across 400 hectares of arable land, the Tait's grow ryegrass, carrot, beetroot and chicory seed, along with seed oats and productive pastures for livestock. Weed management is one of the farm's greatest ongoing challenges and is addressed through carefully planned crop rotations integrated with livestock grazing.

The livestock and cropping enterprises work hand in hand. Weaner cattle grazed on fodder beet gain around 100 kilograms over a 100-day period, while steers consistently reach a 610-kilogram slaughter weight at just 20 months of age. The farm also breeds and finishes prime lambs, with an August lambing program designed to have all terminal lambs sold by 30 June each year. During winter, Riverlea agists up to 1,500 dairy cows, lifting stocking rates to approximately 23,000 DSE at peak and averaging around 17,000 DSE across the year.

The business is managed by Ben and his wife Steph. While Steph oversees the administration and accounts, she is equally helping in the yards and on the farm when required. A small team of permanent staff is supported by seasonal employees during irrigation and harvest, including students from Lincoln University in New Zealand, who bring enthusiasm, practical skills and a willingness to contribute to the business.

The support of Ben's family and dedicated team has been pivotal in Riverlea's journey from establishment to a developed and continually evolving enterprise. With the foundations now firmly in place, his focus is increasingly shifting towards long-term sustainability, including building a farming business that continues to thrive, while creating the flexibility to spend more time with family and friends, and to explore more of the country that he and Steph are proud to now call home.



Notes

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Red Meat Updates 2026 Event Feedback Survey

*Please complete this survey at the end of the day and show your completed screen to a team member for entry into the red meat raffle.



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