

# FACT SHEET

## Beef cattle herd management

An abatement method under the Emissions Reduction Fund



The Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF) allows producers to generate extra income by storing carbon in vegetation and soils, or reducing greenhouse gas emissions from their operations.

Participants can earn carbon credits by setting up a project under an approved ERF abatement method, which specifies the rules for the activity.

This fact sheet provides an outline of the ERF method for [Beef cattle herd management](#).

### What is the method about?

Beef cattle are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions within the agriculture sector. Research has shown these emissions can be reduced through a range of actions that improve the diet, or by improved breeding efficiency or structure of cattle herds.

The method is about rewarding herd management activities that lead to a reduction in emissions per kg of live weight produced, in any or all of the following ways:

- increasing the ratio of weight to age of the herd
- reducing the average age of the herd
- reducing the proportion of unproductive animals in the herd
- changing the ratio of livestock classes to increase total annual live weight gain of the herd

A range of activities can be implemented to achieve these outcomes. For example, producers might improve feed quality, provide feed supplements, improve reproduction management, or a combination of all three.

### How does it work?

In order to assess the extent of emission reductions as a result of new activities, producers must first determine the historical level of emissions from their herd.

Historical emissions are calculated from records about the number and live weight gain of animals in three of the past seven years. This three-year period is called the *emissions intensity reference period*. Records may be sourced from both the producer (e.g. a tax records) and from a third party (e.g. receipt of sale). Producers should consider whether they have the necessary historical data before applying to register a project under this method.

Once a producer establishes the baseline level of emissions, they then implement their project activity, record the required data and calculate the corresponding reduction in emissions using the Herd Management Calculator.

Australian Carbon Credit Units are awarded when producers demonstrate that emissions from their herd are lower than they would have been if the activity or activities were not undertaken.

## Who is eligible?

This method is available to Australian producers of pasture-fed cattle. It does not apply to herds managed in feedlots.

Producers who decide to implement a project under this method must first register their project with the Clean Energy Regulator:

<http://www.cleanenergyregulator.gov.au/ERF/Want-to-participate-in-the-Emissions-Reduction-Fund>

## For more information:

Visit the Department of the Environment website for more information about the draft Beef cattle whole herd management method:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change/emissions-reduction-fund/methods/beef-cattle-herd-management>

Visit the Clean Energy Regulator website for more information about how to participate in the Emissions Reduction Fund:

<http://www.cleanenergyregulator.gov.au/ERF/About-the-Emissions-Reduction-Fund>



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture**



**This fact sheet was developed by the National Livestock Methane Program (NLMP). The NLMP aims to provide Australian livestock producers with practical strategies and tools to help them increase productivity and profitability and at the same time lower methane emissions. It is managed by MLA and supported by funding from the Australian Government.**

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