

# BulkUp

PASTURE • PRODUCTION • PROFIT

## BulkUp

BulkUp is a long term (six year), peer supported learning program, utilising group-based coaching and facilitation methods. It targets improving on-farm production efficiency, with a particular focus on feed utilisation.

With a range of adoption products available to participants within the program, it offers a structured learning pathway while maintaining the flexibility to choose particular products of interest.

## Vision

Australian red meat producers are proficient in management accounting which allows for productivity and profitability targets to be identified and met. This will be achieved through the development and implementation of production focused technical knowledge and skills.

## Outcome

Optimise production efficiency for increased productivity, profitability and sustainability.

## Background

Within the Australian red meat industry there is a significant disparity in profitability between the top 20% of businesses and the industry average. Top performing businesses are successfully making 80% more profit per hectare<sup>1</sup>. When analysed, the primary driver is a variation in production efficiency, whereby saleable product is produced from the natural resources that are managed by a business. This can be expressed as kilograms liveweight produced, per hectare managed, per 100mm of rainfall received (kg/ha/100mm). While the level of production efficiency achievable across agro-

ecological zones varies, this measure can be used consistently as a benchmark ratio within regions.

Production efficiency is the culmination of technical, production-based factors. Foundational to these is the establishment of a productive feedbase that is optimally utilised.

Producers' ability to identify opportunities for business improvement and track progress, is often limited by their use of sound management accounting and livestock production records. Therefore, upskilling producers in these areas is a key component of driving practice change.

This initiative contributes to the MLA *Strategic Plan 2030* priority of *Drive profitable, productive and sustainable growth*.

## A new approach

The MLA Producer Adoption Program provides a range of adoption products in discrete technical areas, made available to producers and advisers to engage with in a self-directed manner. While this approach is of good merit and has achieved significant impact to date<sup>2</sup>, it likely selects for a particularly self-motivated demographic.

BulkUp provides a new delivery mechanism for MLA's proven and effective adoption packages. By bringing together technical content streams, it creates a whole farm systems approach to adoption and provides a learning pathway for participants to follow from business management, to feedbase, to livestock. Delivered within a long-term, peer supported learning environment, BulkUp offers a powerful avenue to drive practice change. This will increase overall engagement with MLA adoption products and expand the demographic engaged.

## Adoption principles

- peer-to-peer learning
- group-based coaching
- supported skills and knowledge development.

## Delivery

BulkUp will be available nationally but delivered locally. Coaches will be engaged to facilitate local groups moving through the program, providing a consistent and trusted group resource. Quarterly technical workshops will be delivered by existing accredited deliverers for each product. Additionally, agribusiness analysts will deliver annual economic benchmarking and associated workshopping of results.

A program coordinator will manage the administrative delivery of the program on a national basis and will provide support to group coaches.

## Business model

BulkUp will be funded through three key funding sources:

1. Private investment – to be met through industry partnership and participant fees.
2. MLA Donor Company (MDC) – private investment will be matched by MDC investment at a 1:1 rate.
3. MLA levy investment – producer levy funds will be used to finance the remaining program cost.

The entire program is valued at \$8,000 per annum (p.a.) for each business. Participants will pay \$500 p.a. for the first two years, and \$1,500 p.a. for years three to six. This equates to an approximately 15% contribution from participants.

## Target audience

This program will be open to all red meat producers however will be targeted at young producers, producers new to the industry and those whose businesses fall within the 50–75th percentiles for profitability.

## Impact

In the pilot stage (years one to four) it is intended that six to eight groups will be established p.a. From that point, delivery will only be limited by funding partnerships and deliverer availability. Based on the industry profitability data that underpins this project, it is reasonable to expect participants to achieve a 20% increase in profitability within the

program lifetime. Adoption products delivered within the program have demonstrated participant returns of the following:

- BredWell FedWell: \$2.98/cow mated or \$2.48/ewe joined annual net benefit<sub>2</sub>.
- EDGE network: \$0.14–\$6.21/ha or \$10–\$100/km<sup>2</sup> annual net benefit<sub>2</sub>.
- Profitable Grazing Systems: \$5.53–\$7.52/ha or \$6–\$26/km<sup>2</sup> annual net benefit<sub>2</sub>.

## Program outline:

### Annual activities:



- economic and production benchmarking (from year two)
- monthly facilitated meetings
- quarterly technical training
- ongoing coaching to implement learnings.

### 1. Baseline:



- establish management accounts and herd/flock performance recording in business
- develop carbon account
- baseline business performance and capture 'entry' monitoring data.

### 2. Farm systems:



- match animal production system with regional feed curve
- through benchmarking, identify opportunity of continuing in program.

### 3. Feedbase:



- best practice pasture management implemented (including grazing management)
- carrying capacity increased
- stocking rate optimised to carrying capacity.

### 4. Livestock:



- animals bred, fed and finished to meet market specifications
- reproduction efficiency maximised
- carcase feedback understood and used to inform management.

## Adoption products

The below table outlines existing MLA adoption products that will be available through the BulkUp program

BulkUp Module	Product	Program
<b>Baseline</b>	Business EDGE	EDGE network
	Carbon EDGE	EDGE network
	Business Essentials	Profitable Grazing Systems
	Dollar Making Decisions	Profitable Grazing Systems
<b>Farm systems</b>	BredWell FedWell	BredWell FedWell
	Making More from Sheep	Making More from Sheep
	More Beef from Pastures	More Beef from Pastures
	Grazing Fundamentals	EDGE network
<b>Feedbase</b>	Grazing Land Management	EDGE network
	Grass to Dollars	Profitable Grazing Systems
	Pasture Principles	Profitable Grazing Systems
	Grazing Matcher	Profitable Grazing Systems
	PayDirt	Profitable Grazing Systems
	Satellite Assisted Feed Budgeting	Profitable Grazing Systems
	Renovation Rescue	Profitable Grazing Systems
	Sowing for Success	Profitable Grazing Systems
<b>Livestock</b>	Breeding EDGE	EDGE network
	Nutrition EDGE	EDGE network
	Lifting Lamb Survival	Profitable Grazing Systems
	Building Better Breeders	Profitable Grazing Systems
	Meat the Market	Profitable Grazing Systems
	Lamb it Up	Profitable Grazing Systems
	myFeedback	myFeedback

## References

1. Meat & Livestock Australia, (2018) Situation analysis of productivity and profitability in southern beef/lamb production systems 2017. Holmes Sackett. [mla.com.au/research-and-development/reports/2018/situation-analysis-of-productivity-and-profitability-in-southern-beeflamb-production-systems-20174](https://mla.com.au/research-and-development/reports/2018/situation-analysis-of-productivity-and-profitability-in-southern-beeflamb-production-systems-20174)
2. Meat & Livestock Australia (2025) Producer Adoption Annual Outcomes Report 2023–24, [mla.com.au/research-and-development/producer-adoption](https://mla.com.au/research-and-development/producer-adoption)
3. Meat & Livestock Australia (2025) BredWell FedWell, [mla.com.au/extension-training-and-tools/bredwell-fedwell](https://mla.com.au/extension-training-and-tools/bredwell-fedwell)