

2024–25

Producer Adoption Outcomes Report

Taking action for a more productive, profitable and sustainable future

MLA's investment in producer adoption initiatives aim to increase the uptake of outcomes from research and development (R&D) by producers that result in implementing on-farm practices that lead to improved productivity, profitability and ability to consistently meet customer requirements in the supply chain. The program also aims to increase the capacity and capability of service providers such as advisors and training deliverers to ensure the delivery of high-quality adoption programs.

For more information visit
mla.com.au/producer-adoption

Cover: Todd and Anne Woodard of Peel Pastoral, SA – Todd hosted an interactive virtual farm tour of their property at a Naracoorte MeatUp forum, sharing how data-driven grazing and feed planning help them manage the autumn feed gap and seasonal variability

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MLA acknowledges the matching funds provided by the Australian Government to support the research and development detailed in this publication.

 MLA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, work and care for. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, as we recognise their history, culture, connection to land and water, and share in their commitment to caring for Country.

Program manager's welcome

It's a pleasure to welcome you to Meat & Livestock Australia's (MLA) *Producer Adoption Outcomes Report* for the 2024–25 financial year.

This report highlights the diverse extension activities and adoption programs delivered by MLA throughout 2024–25, and the tangible, on-farm benefits and productivity increases experienced by producers participating in these initiatives.

During the year, producers involved in MLA adoption activities received an estimated \$81.6 million in net annual benefits. Our continued investment in Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (MER) processes has strengthened our ability to demonstrate the real impact of these programs at farm level. Enhanced integration of adoption pathways across research projects has also broadened the reach of extension activities – giving producers greater access to cutting-edge insights and innovation.

MLA's adoption programs are designed to support producers to implement improvements in productivity, profitability and sustainability. Through targeted extension initiatives, producers and

service providers are supported to build business capability and improve pasture and livestock management – leveraging the latest research, technologies and best-practice approaches. This publication presents the outcomes achieved by producers who took part in these services during 2024–25 and the value generated from their engagement.

It has been rewarding to see the return of the MLA adoption events BeefUp, MeatUp and Livestock Advisor Updates with the support of new partners including the Kimberly Pilbara Cattlemen's Association, the Northern Territory Government and animal health company, Zoetis. We also had the opportunity to welcome new partnerships with some of our fellow Research and Development Corporations (RDC) including Grains RDC for our Producer Demonstration Site (PDS) Program and Dairy Australia for their Grounds for Growth event in Warrnambool, Victoria. We also received support from seven partners

for delivery of MLA's Carbon EDGE workshops with new relationships formed across the supply chain.

We'd like to extend our sincere thanks to the 11,209 red meat producers and 177 service providers who participated during the past year and to our committed MLA team who helped deliver these impactful programs. We look forward to supporting even more producers in the year ahead as they continue to strengthen their operations and outcomes.

Sally Leigo

Program Manager – Adoption

During the year, producers involved in MLA adoption activities received an estimated \$81.6 million in net annual benefits.



From left to right: Sally Leigo – MLA Program Manager, Adoption; Sarah Hassall – MLA Project Manager, Northern Beef Adoption; Sarah Strachan – MLA General Manager Research, Development and Adoption; and Tamika Millhouse – ISC Senior Project Officer, NLIS Database Uplift at the Cloncurry BeefUp forum

2024–25 highlights



>11.8M

sheep influenced
by practice change
programs



>6.9M

cattle influenced
by practice change
programs



363,725

goats influenced
by practice change
programs



>139.5M

hectares of Australian
agricultural land influenced
by MLA adoption programs

Total benefits* delivered to producers via MLA adoption programs

MLA adoption programs have delivered \$1.34 billion* in total net benefits to participating producers who adopted a new practice between 2015–2025. In 2024–25 this was \$81.6 million in annual net benefits to participating producers.

*Calculated as net present value of adoption to 2045, discounted at 5% annually

Total net benefits since 2015 =

\$1.34B

2024–25 **\$81.6 million**



11,209

producers engaged in
MLA adoption programs



3,047

advisors engaged in
MLA adoption programs



177

service providers
engaged to extend MLA
adoption programs



88%

average value rating
of events across MLA
adoption programs

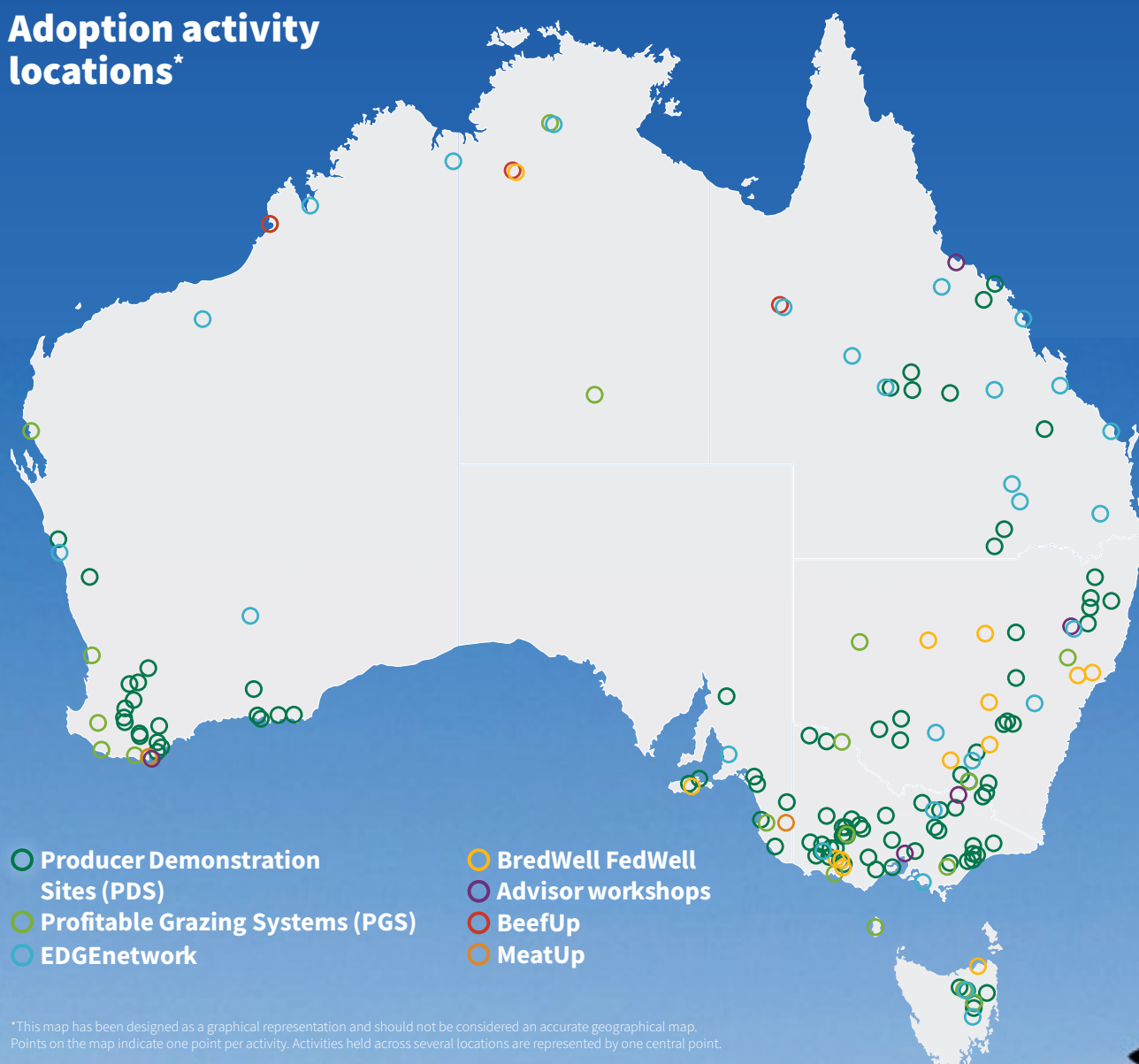


81%

of attendees indicated
intent to change
practices as a result of
MLA adoption programs

The economic benefits of participating in MLA adoption programs are presented in this report as a range for each individual program. This range is based on the average benefits producers received during 2024–25 across varying on-farm productivity changes. These numbers are based on case studies, modelling and estimates from comparable practice changes made in similar circumstances in previous years.

Adoption activity locations*



*This map has been designed as a graphical representation and should not be considered an accurate geographical map. Points on the map indicate one point per activity. Activities held across several locations are represented by one central point.

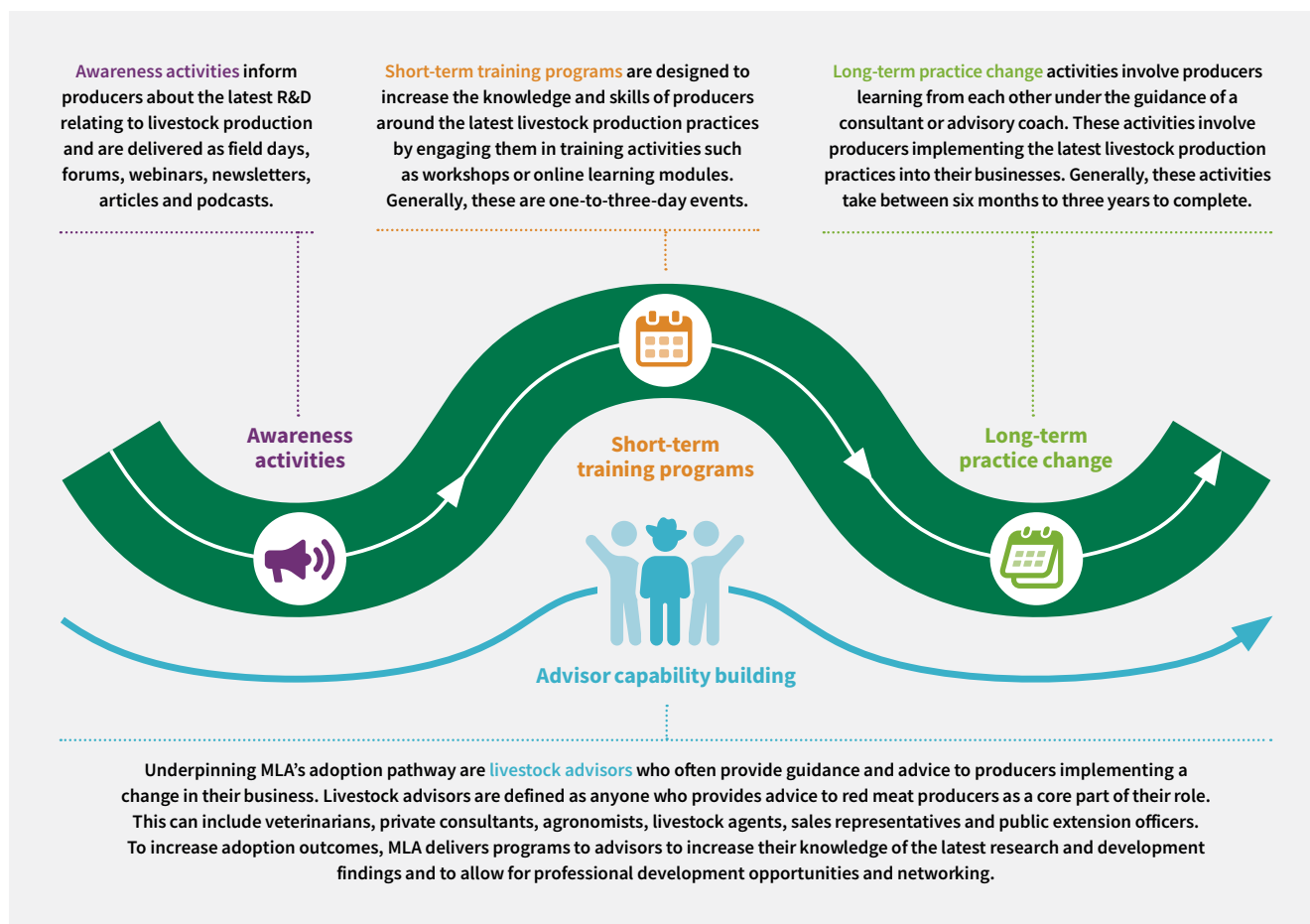


The benefit an individual producer receives is dependent on the type of practice change implemented, on-farm conditions such as soils, climate, breed or genetics, and the scale at which the change is implemented. Keep this in mind when reviewing the figures in this report and if you have any questions, please reach out to getinvolved@mla.com.au

Producer adoption strategy

The MLA adoption strategy aims to provide programs and activities that lead to an increase in the adoption of research and development (R&D) for the purposes of increasing productivity, profitability and sustainability for red meat producers.

The MLA adoption pathway is made up of three stepping stones: awareness activities, short-term training programs and long-term practice change activities. Underpinning the pathway is the upskilling and capacity building of livestock advisors to ensure delivery and uptake of change activities by red meat producers.



MLA adoption key strategic pillars

The MLA adoption strategy has four key pillars:

1. Awareness and short-term training programs
2. Long-term practice change
3. Capability building
4. Program approach to research, development and adoption (RD&A).

The MLA adoption strategy continues to evolve to deliver improved industry outcomes through the following key areas:

- ensuring all applied on-farm R&D has a pathway to adoption built into the project, or a robust mechanism to ensure adoption outcomes are achieved
- investing more resources into growing and developing programs that are based on long-term (>12 months) supported and experiential learning for producers
- working collaboratively across the company to develop and implement RD&A programs of work which result in greater focus on the areas that will have the maximum impact for industry
- partnering with industry stakeholders across the red meat supply chain to deliver greater adoption outcomes
- encouraging participation of the advisory network in MLA adoption programs and building the capability of existing and new advisors
- expanding the methods to reach producers to raise awareness and provide training, including eLearning modules, short videos and marketing campaigns
- utilising consistent methods to monitor and evaluate impact and the success of RD&A programs.



EDGE deliverer Désirée Jackson presenting on plant identification at a Nutrition EDGE workshop

Profitable Grazing Systems

Profitable Grazing Systems (PGS) is a group-based training program that uses supported learning packages (SLPs) to deliver training and coaching over several months to improve producer skills and knowledge. Through PGS, participants can develop and practice skills with small groups of like-minded producers to improve business performance. Each SLP aligns to at least one of the following curriculums: people, business, reproduction and genetics, value chain and feedbase.



PGS will deliver \$352.1 million* in total net benefits to participating producers as a result of SLPs attended between 2015–2024. MLA's investment in PGS since 2015 delivered \$19.7 million in annual net benefits to producers in 2024–25.

On average, and depending on the area of practice change, northern beef producers participating in a PGS SLP can expect an additional net benefit of \$1–\$16/km² annually. On average, southern producers can expect an additional net benefit of \$1.87–\$8.43/ha annually.

*Calculated as net present value of adoption benefits to 2045, discounted at 5% annually.



PGS supported learning packages available:

- **Benchmarking for Profit and Production:** Helps producers identify and connect their business goals to benchmarking performance and to utilise comparative analysis data in identifying future goals, current strengths and weaknesses.
- **Building Better Breeders:** Covers the A–Z of beef breeding in southern and temperate production zones and provides advice on the utilisation of electronic identification (eID).
- **Business Essentials:** Developed to upskill producers in the fundamentals of managing the business side of a livestock enterprise.
- **Dollar Making Decisions:** Producers learn the skills to take a disciplined and rational approach to capital allocation on farm.
- **Dry Time Ready:** Designed to help producers develop a drought management strategy focused on production and resource allocation.
- **Getting Goats to Market:** Builds the knowledge and skills of goatmeat producers, allowing them to effectively and efficiently grow and select goats to generate a profit. Producers develop a simple, customised production plan for their goatmeat enterprise to assist with planning and decision making.
- **Grass to Dollars:** Assists producers in assessing pastures grown across southern Australia, condition scoring livestock, managing pasture grazing and optimising pasture utilisation.
- **Grazing Matcher™:** Designed to improve the productivity, profitability and resilience of red meat producers by enabling them to better match grazing pressure, fertiliser application, animal requirements and market demands.
- **Heifers for Profit:** This package develops skills and confidence in managing heifer nutrition to improve animal welfare, increase future reproductive success, optimise stocking rates and increase whole farm profitability.
- **Improving Tactical Decision Making:** Designed to help develop grazing management programs which address feedbase productivity and resource sustainability in a southern rangelands environment.
- **Lead with Certainty:** Participants develop a better understanding of themselves and their teams, while learning more effective ways of creating a positive team culture through planning, goal setting and communication.
- **LevelUp:** Designed to coach producers how to take the family farm and turn it into the family business, covering topics of strategy, governance, investment and the road to succession.

- **Lifting Lamb Survival:** Gives producers greater control over lambing and reproduction outcomes.
- **Managing a Diverse Feedbase:** This package provides producers with the skills to manage a mixed farming feedbase to meet their livestock production goals.
- **Meat the Market:** With a whole-of-supply chain focus, this package trains producers in improving lamb processing compliance and optimising eating quality.
- **Pasture Principles:** Producers undertake this package for a 12-month pasture production cycle to learn a set of guiding principles to manage pastures confidently.
- **PayDirt:** Value adds to soil testing results, helping producers determine how to get the most bang for their fertiliser buck.
- **PayDirt North:** This package is the northern adaptation of the existing PayDirt program, tailored to help producers in the north value add to soil testing results and determine where they will get the most bang for their fertiliser buck.
- **Phosphorus for Profit:** Assists northern producers in managing and diagnosing phosphorus deficiencies in their cattle herds. Provides practical solutions for effective supplementation to improve cattle health and profitability.
- **Renovation Rescue:** Aids producers in transforming run down perennial pastures through the application of grazing, weed manipulation and improved soil conditions.
- **Satellite-Assisted Forage Budgeting:** Upskills producers in utilising satellite imagery to develop grazing budgets on a large scale.
- **Sowing for Success:** Helps producers determine where to invest their pasture dollars to successfully establish a perennial pasture.



Producers at a Hunter Valley, NSW Grass to Dollars PGS

Supporting learning packages in development:

- **Meat the Market Beef:** Designed to drive profitability by enhancing producer understanding around beef processing compliance frameworks. Producers will also learn about Meat Standards Australia (MSA) requirements and utilising feedback platforms to increase carcase data. This package will be available in 2026.
- **Managing Climate for Decision Making:** Designed to establish a fundamental understanding of the key climate drivers and processes that influence the timing and quality of the wet season in Northern Australia. Exploring how the information and tools can be implemented to improve decisions in the business.
- **Capitalising on Carbon:** Aims to support livestock producers to consider the options available for reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions from the farm business, coupled with improved productivity, profitability and natural capital. The program takes a whole farm systems approach and links the integration of carbon and natural capital considerations into farm business planning.



PGS deliverer Nikki Henderson of Henderson Livestock Consulting, takes producers through pasture utilisation techniques

Interested in becoming a PGS deliverer?

The PGS mentoring program is designed to upskill new deliverers and improve the confidence of service providers to deliver SLPs and make a measurable difference to participants' businesses. Mentees are teamed up with an experienced deliverer to assist them in building the skills and confidence to deliver the packages. All the mentees have gone on to establish their own PGS groups after participating in the program.

PGS is seeking deliverers who can work with producers using existing SLPs or packages they have developed themselves. PGS coaches come from a range of backgrounds and generally have advisory skills to also deliver supported learning packages to small groups.

📧 To find out more about becoming a PGS deliverer, email pgs@mla.com.au

📧 To find out what packages are offered in your state or territory or to make a request for a package near you, email pgs@mla.com.au

PGS 2024–25 highlights



204,392

sheep influenced by the PGS program



410,458

cattle influenced by the PGS program



12,435

goats influenced by the PGS program



246

active producers

25

active PGS groups



18

active deliverers

12

completed groups

\$1.87–\$8.43/ha

average annual net benefit for participating southern producers

\$1–\$16/km²

average annual net benefit for participating northern producers



94%

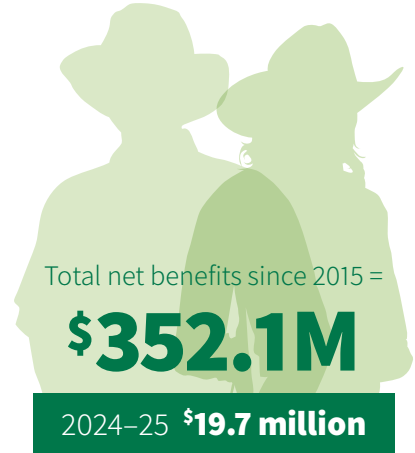
increase in knowledge and skills



91%

average value for participating producers

Total benefits* delivered to producers via PGS



*Calculated as net present value of adoption to 2045, discounted at 5% annually



>15.8M

hectares of Australian agricultural land influenced by the PGS program

PGS locations

Multiple PGS groups may be in the same location.

66 Really good sessions. Seeing our head stockmen learn about themselves and their leadership was fantastic. Very interactive. **Top End Leaders – Perth, WA**

66 Loved it. We are brand new to farming – have learnt so much – lots of great knowledge, advice and tools provided. Thank you. **Grazing Matcher™ – Roelands, WA**

66 Good balance between theory and practice. Taught us how we can apply the theory to our everyday jobs. Gave us good reminders at the start of every lesson that helps slow learners like me. Learning other people's experiences was very valuable too. **Grazing Matcher – South Coast, WA**

66 Thank you for making such courses available to the industry and their teams. **Pasture Principles – Chudleigh, TAS**



To find out more about PGS
email pgs@mla.com.au or visit mla.com.au/pgs

CASE STUDY

PGS grazing insights lead to productive pastures and more beef

Attending MLA's Profitable Grazing Systems (PGS) training program Grazing Matcher™ delivered key insights to help WA beef producer Paula Carroll maximise her operation's beef production, pasture productivity and feed consistency.

Her improved understanding of grazing management also helped her face the challenge of how to bridge the winter feed gap. Since attending the training program, Paula has implemented deferred grazing at 'Tirano Farms' at Nannup, which she runs in partnership with her husband and parents-in-law, giving pastures sufficient time to properly establish ahead of rotational grazing. Her shift to targeted fertiliser application has ensured nutrients are delivered where they are needed most, more cost-effectively. Paula's improved feed budgeting and analysis skills have also led to significant productivity improvements on farm.

Navigating challenges

The training program Paula attended was developed specifically for southern WA where, due to the Mediterranean climate, about 60% of pasture growth occurs in spring. Producers are given advice on how to navigate through poor feed quality, dry seasons and what paddock improvements will boost pastures and beef production. Producers in this area commonly rely heavily on preserved fodder to fill the feed gap from late summer through to early winter.

"I manage one of our farms by myself most of the time, and during the season I found I was guessing more than I should have been when it came to grazing management decisions," Paula said.

Deferred grazing boosts pastures

The PGS suggested trialling deferred grazing, which allows pastures to establish before commencing rotational grazing.

"Last year was the first opportunity we've had to try it," Paula said. "I've seen a huge difference in the paddocks which were given time to properly establish, even the paddock we held the cattle in has recovered beautifully too."

"There were a few moments where I wondered if holding the cows in the sacrificial paddock would be detrimental, but trusting the process and the knowledge of the industry professionals who run the Grazing Matcher™ workshop was a success."

The decisions of how, where and when to defer grazing were guided by calculation tools provided in Grazing Matcher™.

"The tools have helped me ensure our grazing rotations are down pat, and the cattle are in each paddock for the correct amount of time. I do a lot more pasture monitoring and measurement now."

Targeted fertiliser application

Following on from this success, Paula decided to make another change informed by the PGS to prepare for a change in season.

"We applied urea in July to select paddocks, which we haven't done in the past. After a long, dry summer, it really bridged the winter feed gap and ensured we had



Attending a PGS program has equipped Paula Carroll to endure the hard seasons and thrive in the good ones

"There were a few moments where I wondered if holding the cows in the sacrificial paddock would be detrimental, but trusting the process and the knowledge of the industry professionals who run the Grazing Matcher™ workshop was a success."

plenty of grass without having to slow down our grazing rotation or supplementary feed," she said.

"I've developed a better understanding of where the feed gaps are, and what we have to do to look after the grass ahead of time without compromising the pasture they're on."

Testing feed samples key to maintaining consistency

Paula always collects hay samples to conduct a feed analysis once it's baled so she knows what she's working with.

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“Over the past few years, high neutral detergent fibre (NDF) has been a consistent limiting factor,” Paula said. NDF is a measurement of feed quality, which estimates the percentage of total cell wall content of forage or other feeds. The foundation of the PGS supported learning packages is peer-to-peer learning, allowing producers to lean on each other to find solutions.

“We couldn’t pinpoint why NDF was high, but I brought the results along to a Grazing Matcher™ workshop, and as a group we brainstormed a few ideas to implement,” Paula said.

“Since then, we’ve gotten the NDF percentage back to the range it should be – it’s some of the best hay we’ve ever made.”

High moisture percentage and uneven drying of hay was another challenge Paula wanted to overcome.

“We purchased a tedder implement (used to aerate and spread hay) to help dry the hay evenly and used the microwave to test moisture content. Using the microwave was a game changer in getting an accurate measurement to decide when to start baling.”

Tools in action

While the tools gained in PGS programs can be used to help a business thrive, making the right decision can make or break a business in a tough period. Paula has seen promising results using her new knowledge to make improvements and build profit, but also to help the business through dry periods.

Maximising pasture production, quality of preserved fodder and better matching feed supply to stock are key to success, but in WA, where each year is different, calculations are difficult to get right.

“We always weigh several hay rolls after baling so that we understand how many kilograms of hay we have available to feed out over the season,” Paula said.

“We had a longer than anticipated dry spell and had budgeted our



“Before completing the Grazing Matcher™ program, I often found myself guessing when it came to grazing decisions. Now, I can confidently back every choice with data and tools that validate what I see in the paddock. It’s taken the uncertainty out of my management and given me the confidence to plan ahead, even when conditions are tough.”

hay for a typical year, where we normally have plenty of carryover.”

At a certain point, Paula realised the hay would soon fall short. From her PGS training, she learned to observe stock and field cues and adjust management depending on the season, rather than locked dates, giving her better control over seasonal challenges.

“There were a lot of discussions around the table about what we should do: destock, feed less or bring feed in.

“I was able to use a digital feed calculator and apply our scenario to include factors such as the cost of feed at the time, our stocking rates and the energy requirements of our cows and calves. We found the benefits would outweigh the cost and could justify buying pellets and hay,” Paula said.

The decision sustained the business through the season – and their calves even weighed more than previous years.

The business was awarded first runner up in Meat Standards Australia’s large beef producer category for 2022–23, an award which recognises beef producers in each state who consistently deliver beef of superior eating quality.

Paula believes their improved grazing management will help the Carrolls continue their positive trajectory, producing high quality beef for their local customers.

“As a producer, cost and affordability can be such a barrier, but when you make use of the knowledge gained from the Grazing Matcher™ program, you have the confidence to make informed decisions each season.”

🔗 To find out more about the Grazing Matcher™ PDS program visit mla.com.au/pgs

Producer Demonstration Sites

MLA's Producer Demonstration Site (PDS) program aims to increase the rate of adoption of key management practices and commercially available technologies that improve business profitability, productivity and sustainability. MLA supports livestock producers working in peer-to-peer groups to pursue new skills, knowledge and management practices applicable to their own commercial livestock production systems.



Demonstration sites are commercial farms where producers implement and showcase new management practices or technologies in real-world conditions. These sites are designed to directly involve a core group of producers in hands-on learning, while also engaging a broader audience, known as observer producers, through field days and extension activities.

The primary aim of a PDS is to build producer confidence in adopting proven practices that can improve profitability, productivity and sustainability. By working in peer-supported groups, producers not only gain practical skills but also see first-hand how research outcomes can be successfully applied on farm.

MLA invites industry to submit producer-led applications for funding for levy and co-contributor PDS projects through an open call. Producer priorities are identified through consultation with the Southern Australia Livestock Research Council (SALRC), North Australia Beef Research Council (NABRC) and Western Australia Livestock Research Council (WALRC), which help formulate the terms of reference for the levy-funded PDS call. A producer panel reviews preliminary levy PDS project applications to ensure they align with producer priorities and will deliver meaningful impact to their region.

MLA partnered with Grains Research & Development Corporation (GRDC) in 2025 to deliver a joint PDS program targeted at mixed farming businesses producing both livestock and grain across Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia.

The strong alignment between MLA's PDS program and GRDC's National Grower Network on delivering impactful, locally relevant, on-farm projects, created a valuable opportunity to develop this partnership.

The goal of the MLA–GRDC partnership PDS projects is to demonstrate to producers how new or alternative management practices, alongside key learnings from scientific research and development, can benefit commercial mixed farming operations. The MLA–GRDC PDS Partnership is commencing with five PDS projects.

In 2024–25, 10 PDS projects commenced including the GRDC partnership.

The PDS program has delivered \$242.2M* in total net benefits to participating producers as a result of projects completed between 2015–2024. MLA's investment in the

PDS program since 2015 delivered \$15.2M in annual net benefits to producers in 2024–25.

On average, and depending on the area of practice change, producers can expect an additional net benefit of between \$0.30–\$3.22/ha annually due to their involvement in the program.

*Calculated as net present value of adoption benefits to 2045, discounted at 5% annually.

Producer Demonstration Site framework

Levy	Co-contributor				
Producer-driven projects to address regional PDS priorities set by the Regional Research Advisory Councils (RACs)/Regional committees.	Producer group-driven projects aligned with industry priorities and targets.				
Offers producer groups the opportunity to receive funding of up to \$30,000/year for the life of the project.	Offers producer groups the opportunity to receive funding of up to \$60,000/year for the life of the project.				
100% funded by producer levies.	<table> <tr> <th colspan="2">Funding options</th></tr> <tr> <td> 50% levies 30% producer cash contribution 20% MLA Donor Company (MDC). </td><td> 45% levies 33% external contribution (producers and non-producer) 22% MDC. </td></tr> </table>	Funding options		50% levies 30% producer cash contribution 20% MLA Donor Company (MDC).	45% levies 33% external contribution (producers and non-producer) 22% MDC.
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50% levies 30% producer cash contribution 20% MLA Donor Company (MDC).	45% levies 33% external contribution (producers and non-producer) 22% MDC.				

🔗 To find out about PDS activities in your region, sign up to the PDS mailing list. To receive quarterly updates and key information on the annual PDS project call, visit mla.com.au/pds

PDS 2024–25 highlights



3.1M
sheep influenced by
the PDS program



363,320
cattle influenced by the
PDS program



1,288
core producers



341
active
demonstration
sites

66 active
projects

15 new PDS projects
approved



65
facilitators
engaged

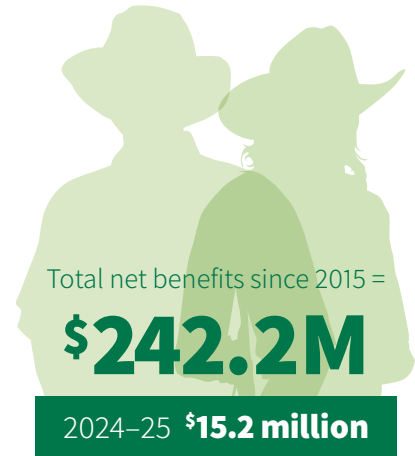
2,044
observer
producers

\$0.30–\$3.22/ha
average annual net benefit
per producer



74%
of 2024–25
core PDS
producers
adopted new
practices

Total benefits* delivered to producers via PDS



*Calculated as net present value of adoption to 2045,
discounted at 5% annually



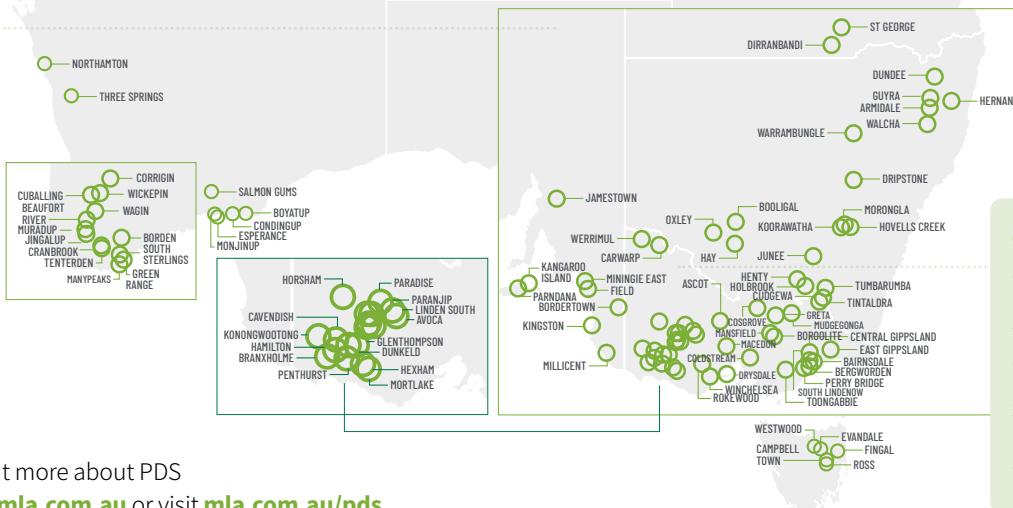
4.5M
hectares of Australian
agricultural land influenced
by the PDS program

PDS locations

A PDS may have been held in the
same location multiple times.

66 Being involved within a
group enables peer-to-peer
discussions which challenge your
current thought processes around
management decisions and
motivate you to look closely at what
changes are practical within your
business and that can improve your
productivity and profitability.
Producer – South Australia

66 Being involved in
a producer
demonstration site allows
you to watch and learn
from others (both
presenters and producers)
so that you don't always
have to trial everything
yourself. **Producer –
South Australia**



66 The demonstration
project was a great
opportunity to benchmark
the trace mineral levels of
our sheep and evaluate the
effects of different
treatments. It also allowed
us to develop systems to
weigh sheep and determine
growth rates across the
growing season. This was a
worthwhile use of our time
and resources and I
recommend this program
to other producers.
Producer – Victoria

To find out more about PDS
email pds@mla.com.au or visit mla.com.au/pds

CASE STUDY

Worm control increases weight gain

South-west Victorian Merino producer Edward Blackwell's involvement in the MLA-funded 'Transitioning Towards Non-Mulesed Sheep' producer demonstration site (PDS) project gave him the opportunity to further improve management of his non-mulesed flock.

By implementing a refined drenching program and a more strategic worm egg counting regimen, he achieved a 10% increase in weight gain over five months in weaners and hoggets that received the long-acting worm treatment approach, and a 30% reduction in dag scores.

Having run a non-mulesed flock for close to a decade – Edward was in a prime position to help his fellow PDS participants embark on their own non-mulesed journeys.

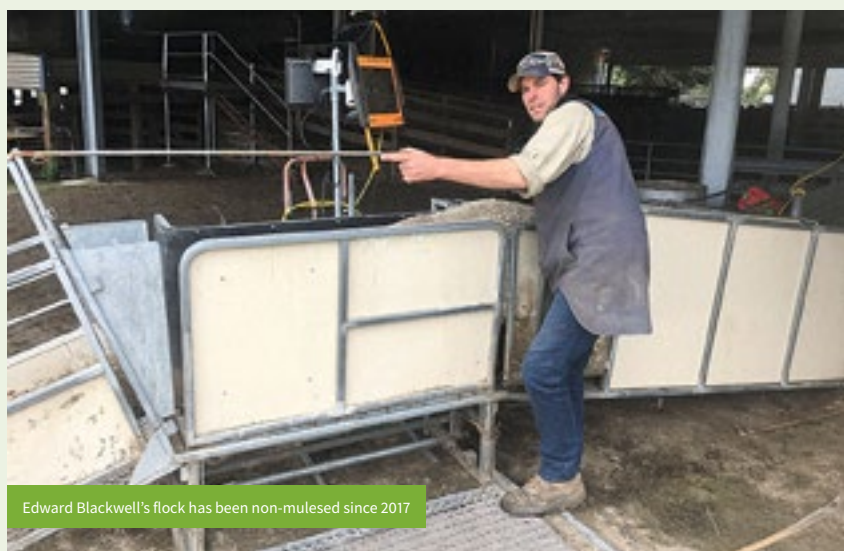
The PDS looked at factors which could be contributing to dag and the effectiveness of improved worm control during winter and early spring. Results showed that with effective worm control, increased daily weight gain and lower average dag scores could be achieved – with an improved annual net benefit of \$5.18/head within the long-acting worm treatment group.

Exploring alternatives to mulesing

The Blackwells began their non-mulesing journey in 2007, when they participated in an Australian Wool Innovation breech clip trial as an alternative to mulesing. The following year, they ceased mulesing on a small group of lambs as a trial but continued to tail strip before ceasing mulesing on their entire 2009 drop. However, Edward said it wasn't until 2017 that they felt confident they could manage the welfare of the flock without the aid of tail stripping.

Making the decision to run a demonstration site

With a breeding objective that included lowering breech wrinkle, the Blackwells have been purchasing plain-bodied rams and classing out ewes with high dag and wrinkle to ensure they can keep their flock non-mulesed.



Edward Blackwell's flock has been non-mulesed since 2017

"With dag, crutching takes longer, adds to flystrike pressure and loss of wool value," Edward said.

"We crutch our own sheep and readily identify ewes that are too wrinkly or flystruck, and we put them into a terminal mob along with any 'daggy' ewes.

"Even though we were a long way down the path of non-mulesed and thought we were pretty good at completing regular worm egg counts, dag was still an issue, and we felt that we weren't being consistent enough with managing it," he said. "We considered worms, lack of fibre or other pasture factors being the cause of dag but we weren't sure where to begin with our investigations.

"So, we decided to join the PDS as an opportunity to investigate the impact of worms on dag in our weaners and fine tune our flock management."

On-farm changes

The Blackwells hosted a demonstration site that aimed to investigate factors which could be contributing to dag and the effectiveness of improved worm control during winter and

early spring. The demonstration was relevant to both flocks which are no longer mulesed and those still being mulesed (which have a high incidence of dag during the winter and spring, particularly in weaners).

In June 2022, 630 ewe weaners from the Blackwells' 2021 drop of lambs were randomly drafted into three treatment groups.

They were shorn, so they entered the trial dag-free. At the start of the trial, the weaners were all weighed and their worm egg count (WEC) determined. Their electronic identification (eID) was used to identify and track their progress.

Commencing application on 23 June 2022, the treatment groups focused on comparing the effectiveness of:

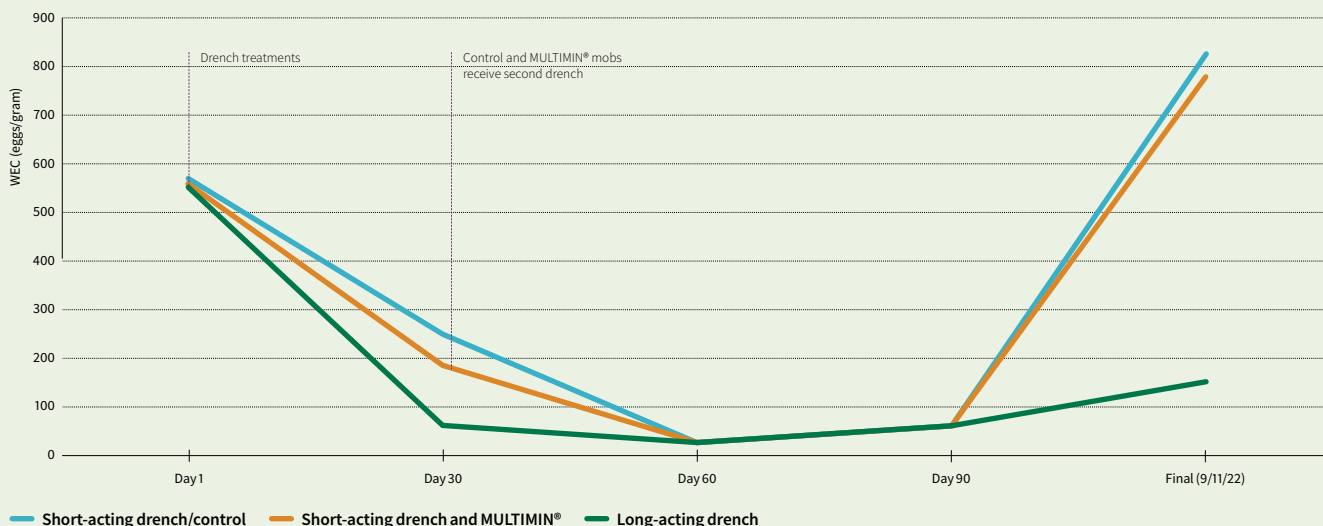
- the normal practice short-acting drench
- a long-acting injection drench with an oral primer drench
- a short-acting drench with a mineral supplement injection.

"The long-acting drench was used with

continued next page

continued from last page

Figure 1: Worm egg counts over 90 days (23/06/2022–26/09/2022)*



the aim of possibly ruling out worms as a contributing factor for dag, leaving bacterial infections as a potential cause of dag to investigate,” Edward said.

The Blackwells ran the sheep as one mob and continued their standard practices of rotational grazing and providing fibre (hay) in the paddocks during winter.

After drench treatments were applied, the Blackwells tracked the progress of each treatment option by recording their WECs and weights every 30 days.

Results

During the trial, the decision was made based on the day 30 WEC results to drench both short-acting treatment groups a second time on 1 August (see Figure 1).

“By the end of the trial (early November), the WECs for the two short-acting treatment mobs were substantially higher than they were for the long-acting treatment mob,” Edward said.

“This indicated these mobs may have required a third drench at day 90 to keep their WEC in check.

“Overall, it was quite clear that the long-acting treatment was successful in reducing worms and allowing for a

higher daily weight gain and a lower average dag score.

“We also saw an improved annual net benefit of \$5.18/head within the long-acting treatment group.”

Importance of regular WEC monitoring

Edward said the results highlighted two opportunities to fine-tune dag management in his flock.

“The PDS methodology we used with the three trial groups meant we could identify the main cause of dag that year was, in fact, worms,” he said.

“It also highlighted the importance of monitoring WECs every 30 days during winter to early spring – something we didn’t realise we were a bit behind the eight-ball on.

“We had been monitoring WECs every five to six weeks, but we really needed to be doing them every four weeks.

“This can make a big difference in the middle of August as weaners can quickly pick up worms and dag can accumulate,” Edward said.

Following their involvement in the PDS, the Blackwells made the decision to stick with short-acting drenches – particularly for their weaners and hoggets – as they didn’t want to risk drench resistance occurring from the blanket use of long-acting drench.

“Running weaners and hoggets into the yards to drench as necessary is something I’m confident we can do at any time, and that more frequent monitoring of WEC will enable us to be timelier with that decision making.”

Table 1: Weaner weight gains and dag scores

Treatment	Weight gain (kg) 23/6/2022–9/11/2022	Dag score (9/11/2022)
Control drench Short-acting triple drench	15.6	2.6
Short-acting triple drench and MULTIMIN® injection	15.3	2.3
Long-acting drench, moxidectin and Zolvix™	17.2	1.8

To find out more about PDS visit mla.com.au/pds

EDGEnetwork

MLA's EDGEnetwork (EDGE) gives producers the opportunity to develop skills to improve their livestock enterprises through one- to three-day workshops.



These practical learning opportunities encourage producers to expand their current expertise through group learning and hands-on activities, applying the concepts to their own businesses as they go. Producers work in small groups that enable them to receive personalised training. The EDGE workshops have been developed by industry specialists and tested by producers Australia-wide to guarantee their quality and relevance.

There are eight courses currently available including:

- **Breeding EDGE:** A three-day workshop designed to help beef producers evaluate how breeding program is currently performing and to consider opportunities for improvement.
- **Business EDGE:** A two-day financial and business management training workshop for cattle, sheep and goat producers that aims to enhance participant knowledge and skills in financial and business management.
- **Business EDGE Young Guns:** A two-day workshop for up-and-coming cattle, sheep and goat producers who are ready to build their business skills and confidence to manage a modern agricultural enterprise.
- **Carbon EDGE:** A two-day workshop for red meat producers that upskills participants in their understanding carbon in agricultural systems, emissions reduction activities and carbon storage activities. The workshop helps producers develop an action plan to implement emissions reduction and sequestration strategies in a productive livestock grazing business.
- **Grazing Fundamentals EDGE:** A one-day workshop that gives cattle, sheep and goat producers a broad understanding of their operating environment and the core principles behind successfully maintaining grazing land condition and long-term productivity.
- **Grazing Land Management EDGE:** A three-day workshop to give producers a thorough understanding of the grazing land environment in which they operate – to learn how to strategically manage their grazing business, so they can optimise their land condition and productivity in the long-term.
- **Nutrition EDGE:** A three-day workshop providing a comprehensive look at ruminant nutrition to assist cattle, sheep and goat producers to better match pasture and feed options to their livestock needs.
- **Southern Rangelands Grazing Fundamentals EDGE:** A one-day workshop that gives producers in the southern rangelands a broad understanding of ruminant nutrition, grazing management and the environmental systems in which they operate. The core principles behind successfully maintaining grazing land condition and long-term productivity are a key focus.

EDGE has delivered \$559.9M* in total net benefits to participating producers as a result of workshops attended between 2015–2024. This includes \$48.3M* of additional net benefits identified in 2024. MLA's investment in EDGE since 2015 has delivered \$35.8M* in annual net benefits to producers in 2024–25.

On average, and depending on the area of practice change, northern beef producers participating in an EDGE workshop can expect an additional net benefit of between \$1–\$50/km² annually. Likewise, on average, southern producers participating in an EDGE workshop can expect an additional net benefit of between \$1.54–\$3.37/ha annually.

*Calculated as net present value of adoption benefits to 2045, discounted at 5% annually.



Livestock advisor Désirée Jackson delivering Nutrition EDGE to producers in northern Australia

🔗 To find out more about the EDGEnetwork email edgenetwork@mla.com.au or visit mla.com.au/edgenetwork

EDGEnetwork 2024–25 highlights



408,814

sheep influenced by the EDGEnetwork



1.5M

cattle influenced by the EDGEnetwork



21,800

goats influenced by the EDGEnetwork



491

producers engaged



42

workshops delivered



92% value rating



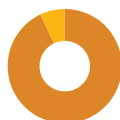
94% intend to change

\$1.54–\$3.37/ha

average annual net benefit for participating southern producers

\$1–\$50/km²

average annual net benefit for participating northern producers



93%

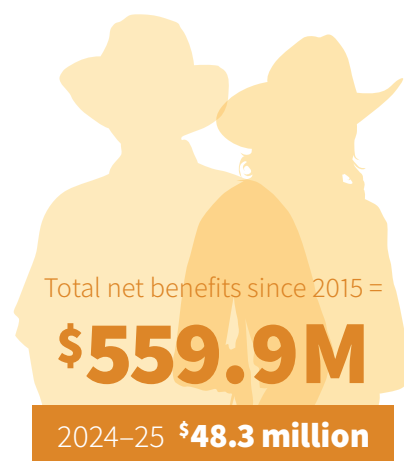
of producers planned to make changes following workshops



31M

hectares of Australian agricultural land influenced by the EDGEnetwork

Total benefits* delivered to producers via the EDGEnetwork



*Calculated as net present value of adoption to 2045, discounted at 5% annually

EDGE workshop locations

An EDGE workshop may have been held in the same location multiple times.



This will have a big impact on helping us achieve our goals.”
Participant – Grazing Land Management EDGE



Excellent benefits – ability to understand a farming business in a more professional way.” **Participant – Business EDGE**



Implementing practices of this workshop will see a more profitable long-term improvement of the property.”
Participant – Grazing Fundamentals EDGE

To find out more about the EDGEnetwork visit mla.com.au/edgenetwork



KATHERINE Producers learn how semen quality is assessed at a Breeding EDGE workshop



ROMA Rob Young leads a discussion on the grazing benefits of different plants at Grazing Fundamentals EDGE workshop



KATHERINE Breeding EDGE attendees after an action packed three days



LONGREACH Nutrition EDGE participants undertake plant identification to determine feed availability with livestock advisor Désirée Jackson

CASE STUDY

Nutrition EDGE offers great returns, weight gains

Fifth generation beef producer Ben Simpson's investment in carefully tailored nutrition is paying dividends at his 22,000ha property 'Thistlebank', 100km north of Aramac, Queensland – with improved productivity leading to weight gains and ultimately, more kilos of beef.

Attending a three-day Nutrition EDGE workshop in Longreach prompted Ben to tailor his supplementation program using dung testing – enabling him to better meet the needs of his 1,900 Simmental-cross cattle herd. The return on investment has been significant, with **cows bouncing back more quickly after birth and trade steers showing improved body condition scores and an average daily weight gain of 0.2kg.**

"Seasonal constraints and poor pasture conditions have meant supplementation has become a necessity to our production system," Ben said.

"Based on my herd's responses to different lick blocks over the years, I knew heading into the workshop that I needed better insights on determining the best supplementation ratio for our herd groups, especially regarding how breeders and weaners might vary from other herd members."

Implementing workshop learnings on-farm

Following the workshop, Ben's first step towards improving his herd's nutrition was sourcing the skills and knowledge of a local nutritionist.

"First thing I did was employ the help of Désirée Jackson, who's not only one of the facilitators behind the Nutrition EDGE workshop but a Longreach-based livestock management consultant," Ben said.

"The insights I gained from the workshop told me dung testing was the best way to determine what nutritional constraints



Ben Simpson's new supplementation program has improved the body condition scores of his herd

my pasture was dealing with, so I completed that and asked Désirée to help interpret the best course of action from the results that came back.

"I even took things a step further and asked Désirée to visit us on-farm to look at our landscape, pastures and cattle, and act as a second set of eyes as I took the time to review how my current and previous supplementation ratios had performed over the past few years, looking at which combinations were well received, and which ones weren't."

According to Ben, the findings from the dung tests showed a large gap between what his cattle needed to what his current lick blocks had been supplying them with.

"Our nitrogen, sulphur and salt levels were way off, so I made use of the math formulas we covered in the workshop to make those required adjustments before beginning to monitor our herd's intake," he said.

"As the season progressed, we had to make some minor adjustments to suit changes in pastures and the status of our different herd groups, but the dung testing proved to be an excellent foundation for determining ratios."

Seeing a return on investment

While there was a bit of trial and error to meet the needs of pregnant and lactating cows, as well as weaners

during different points of the year, Ben said it was all worth it.

"Across the board, our cattle are holding condition and maintaining good weights," he said.

"In our cows, this has been an important improvement as it's allowed them to bounce back quicker after birth – something I hope will translate to improved pregnancy rates and weaner weights in the future.

"In our trade steers, improved body condition scores have increased their market value with body condition scores sitting at a 3 and an average daily weight gain of 0.2kg."

Recently, Ben conducted a follow-up dung sampling test to confirm no further changes were needed to the current supplementation program.

"I was pleased to see a significant improvement in the quality of the dung, reinforcing the importance and benefits of supplementing," Ben said.

"Looking back on the year, it's been quite phenomenal to see not only the benefits this supplementation program has had on the cattle but also the benefits it's had on the wallet."

"My cattle are showing greater productivity, and their increased weights are more profitable, but I'm also no longer putting money into minerals my cattle don't need."

BredWell FedWell

BredWell FedWell (BFWF) is a practical, one-day introductory workshop on how productivity and profitability can be improved through good breeding and feeding over the livestock production cycle, with a specific focus on profit drivers.



Producers can use the outcomes of the workshop to develop a genetics and nutrition plan suited to their environment and markets to boost profitability.

Workshop structure

The structure of the workshop utilises the breeding production cycle which covers pre-joining and joining, pregnancy, calving/lambing, weaning and beyond, and selection. Each 'wedge' in the cycle represents a major decision point in a producer's commercial enterprise, where consideration of both breeding (genetics) and feeding (nutrition) is required.

Workshops are hosted on farm and aim to improve the knowledge and skills of producers so they can:

- develop a customised breeding plan for their livestock enterprise aligned to their profit drivers
- identify sires and select animals that help them meet their objectives
- feed animals well to achieve their genetic potential and production objectives.



Delivery of workshops

The workshops are designed for a range of sheep production systems, as well as northern and southern beef. They are rolled out nationally via a network of trained and accredited deliverers.

BFWF has delivered \$25.2M* in total net benefits to participating producers as a result of workshops attended between 2015–2025. This includes \$1.3M* of annual net benefits returned to producers in 2024–25.

On average, sheep producers participating in a BFWF workshop can expect an annual net benefit of \$0.55–\$0.77/ewe. On average, beef producers participating in a BFWF in southern Australia can expect an annual net benefit of \$7.58–\$8.45/cow and in northern systems \$0.66–\$2.28/cow.

*Calculated as net present value of adoption benefits to 2045, discounted at 5% annually.



Producers learn theory behind genetic and nutritional decisions on farm as part of a BFWF in Singleton, NSW, delivered by Naomi Hobson of Local Land Service



Producers learn how to assess Angus sires visually and by studying estimated breeding values as part of BFWF Singleton, NSW, hosted by Pentire Angus

BredWell FedWell 2024–25 highlights



403,710

sheep influenced by
BredWell FedWell



62,737

cattle influenced by
BredWell FedWell



288

producers engaged



35

deliverers engaged



13

workshops delivered

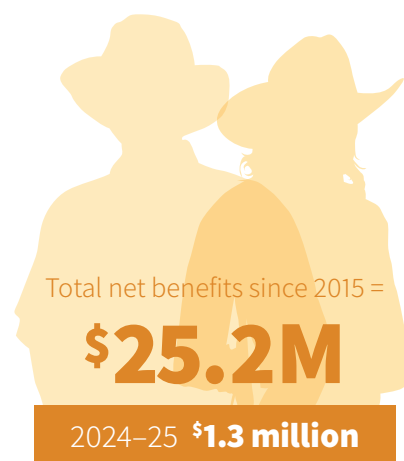


84% value rating



76% intend to change

Total benefits* delivered to
producers via BredWell FedWell



*Calculated as net present value of adoption to 2045,
discounted at 5% annually

\$0.55–\$0.77/ewe

average annual net benefit for
participating producers

\$0.66–\$8.45/cow

average annual net benefit for
participating producers



90%

of producers
planned to
make changes
following
workshops



590,579

hectares of Australian
agricultural land
influenced by BFW

BFWW workshop locations



“ After going on the course David and I recognised the ‘fed well’ was an area we needed to focus on.
Producer – Central Victoria

“ Tim has exceptional working knowledge, it's been a privilege to use his knowledge through the day's syllabus to explain the ongoing links to the theory he was delivering.
Producer – Cobar, NSW

“ A wonderful and informative workshop, for all skill and knowledge levels.
Producer – Waterhouse, Tasmania

Find out more about attending or hosting a workshop at mla.com.au/bfwf

CASE STUDY

Finding the gold in your beef business

Producers across the country are reaping the rewards of hosting – and attending – MLA’s BredWell FedWell (BFWF) workshops, with a focus on how to tailor nutrition to maximise their investments in genetics.

Attendees are upskilled in strategies such as matching feed demand to supply and monitoring pasture quality and quality – good news for both pasture and livestock productivity. In south-west WA, Lex and Kim Gandy opened the gates to their ‘Diamond Tree Farm’ and welcomed local beef producers to attend a BFWF workshop.

Workshop insights

The one-day workshop includes a mix of presentations, classroom and in-yard activities. While all attendees benefit from the nutrition and management information, hosts have an advantage, as their own bulls are used and their management plan is analysed throughout the workshop, so they can directly apply learnings from the day to their business.

“Alongside the opportunity to improve our business, hosting presented a really good opportunity to have highly-skilled people come to our area,” Lex said.

Presenters at the Gandys’ BFWF workshop included Scott Wright, CEO of Angus Australia, and his colleague Jake Phillips.

“As an Angus breeder – which many people in the area are – it was great to have them here and for everyone to have the opportunity to meet and learn from them,” Lex said.

He also found value in networking with attendees.

“Because we’re breeding for other producers as a stud, I always really like to understand what they’re looking for and the challenges they’re having,

which we can help solve with our seedstock.

“Since the workshop, we’ve been working to improve how our pasture matches our production goals for our cattle. We’ve installed centre pivots and are on an ongoing journey to match our production system to our property.”

Lessons continue to deliver profits

BFWF covers how to develop a customised breeding plan, identify and select sires to meet objectives, and maximise genetic investment through nutrition.

Fellow WA Angus stud owners Spencer and Penny Knight, ‘Gumnut Downs’ Kirup, have already seen benefits to their bottom line from actioning lessons learned at the BFWF workshop hosted by the Gandys.

“We’re paying a lot more attention when matching feed demand to feed supply. This has significantly improved our bottom line. It was that little bit of gold we took away from the event,” Spencer said.

“We’re monitoring our pasture quantity and quality very closely now so we’re able to maximise the most out of a plant’s nutritional value. By doing this, we can maximise growth



WA producer Spencer Knight has implemented changes on farm as a result of attending a BredWell FedWell workshop

rates in our cattle across all ages, even in less-desirable seasons.”

On the back of the success they’ve seen in their own enterprises, Spencer recommends BFWF to anyone looking to improve their business.

“There were bits of gold in this workshop for everyone, from the beginners to the professionals farming full-time.”

BFWF workshops are available for all sheep types, southern cattle and northern cattle production systems.

“Since the workshop, we’ve been working to improve how our pasture matches our production goals for our cattle. We’ve installed centre pivots and are on an ongoing journey to match our production system to our property.”

MeatUp

MeatUp forums are MLA's flagship awareness events for southern Australia and deliver the latest information in red meat research, development and adoption (RD&A).



MeatUp forums are individually developed with input by red meat producers on behalf of beef, sheep and rangeland goat producers via regional producer working groups.

MeatUp forums have been delivered since 2021, with 83% of attendees indicating they plan to make a practice change following attendance. On average, participants scored the value of attending the events at 8.5/10.

Held predominantly throughout southern Australia, these forums introduce producers to the outcomes of MLA research and development projects and what steps to take to drive profitability and productivity on farm.

MeatUp has delivered \$16.6M* in total net benefits to participating producers as a result of forums delivered since 2021.

On average, producers can expect an annual return of between \$0.14–\$14.88/head as a result of implementing new tools or practices learnt from their attendance.

*Calculated as net present value of adoption benefits to 2045, discounted at 5% annually.

MeatUp 2024–25 highlights

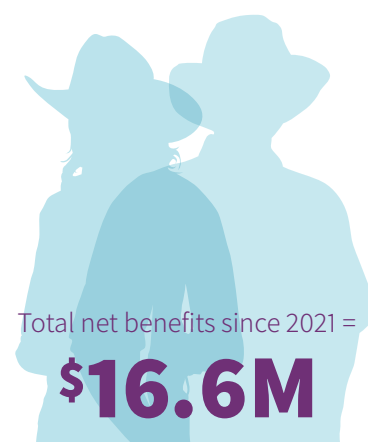


583,534
sheep influenced by
MeatUp forums



14,528
cattle influenced
by MeatUp forums

Total benefits* delivered to
producers via MeatUp forums



Total net benefits since 2021 =
\$16.6M

*Calculated as net present value of adoption to 2045,
discounted at 5% annually



93
producers
engaged



149
forum
attendees



2
forums
delivered



84% value
rating



79% increased
knowledge



93,184
hectares of Australian
agricultural land influenced
by MeatUp forums



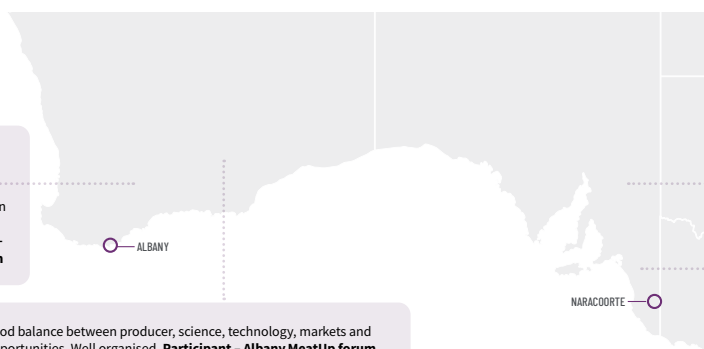
83%
of producers plan
to make changes
after a forum

MeatUp forum locations

MeatUp forums were held in WA and SA. MLA supports and participates in existing producer awareness programs in Tasmania and Victoria.

66 Came to learn. There is paddock learning, book learning and then there is this type of learning. **Participant – Albany MeatUp forum**

66 Well done – good balance between producer, science, technology, markets and networking opportunities. Well organised. **Participant – Albany MeatUp forum**



66 It was great, practical, informative and enjoyed producers from area sharing their stories and methods of farming in the various aspects (e.g. feeding, lambing, paddock uses). **Participant – Naracoorte MeatUp forum**

66 It was fantastic. Great interaction with audience and providing adequate question time for discussion, plus time for networking during breaks. Loved it! **Participant – Naracoorte MeatUp forum**

To find out more about MeatUp forums visit mla.com.au/meatup



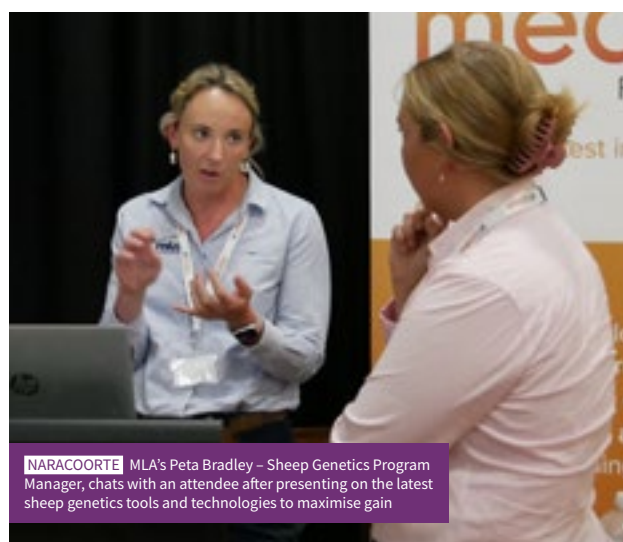
ALBANY Stewart West of Fecpak demonstrating the technology they have developed that allows producers to undertake worm egg counts on farm as part of the MeatUp Forum panel discussion on new technology



NARACOORTE Attendees ask questions after a full day learning about the power of on-farm data, the latest in genetics, ewe performance and containment feeding



ALBANY MLA's David Beatty - Group Manager Productivity & Animal Wellbeing, gives attendees a market update



NARACOORTE MLA's Peta Bradley - Sheep Genetics Program Manager, chats with an attendee after presenting on the latest sheep genetics tools and technologies to maximise gain

BeefUp

BeefUp forums are an opportunity for northern Australian beef producers to:

- hear about the latest red meat research, development and adoption programs
- interact with expert speakers including leading producers, advisors and researchers
- access tools and insights tailored to the needs and interests of producers in the local area
- identify the next steps they can take to drive profitability and productivity on-farm.



BeefUp has delivered \$58.4M* in total net benefits to participating producers as a result of forums delivered between 2015–2024. MLA's investment in BeefUp since 2015 has delivered \$3.6M in annual net benefits to producers in 2024–25.

On average, and depending on the area of practice change, this means producers can expect an annual benefit of between \$0.31–\$3.24/head when implementing new tools or practices as a result of their attendance.

*Calculated as net present value of adoption benefits to 2045, discounted at 5% annually.

BeefUp 2024–25 highlights



955,790
cattle influenced
by BeefUp forums



232
forum
attendees



103
producers
engaged



3
forums
delivered



87% value
rating



88% increased
knowledge/skills

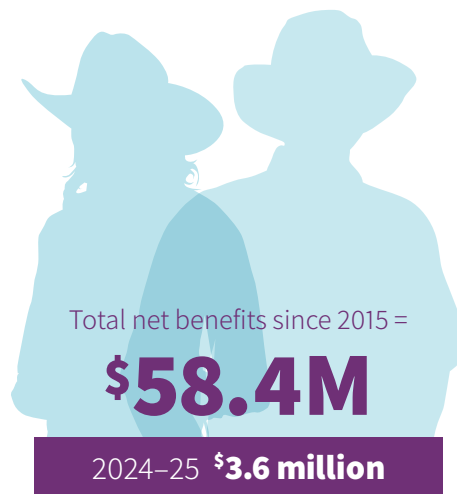
**\$0.31–
\$3.24/hd**
average annual
net benefit
for participating
producers

15.8M
hectares of
Australian
agricultural land
influenced
by BeefUp forums



85%
of producers
plan to make
changes after
a forum

Total benefits* delivered to
producers via BeefUp forums



*Calculated as net present value of adoption to 2045, discounted at 5% annually

BeefUp forum locations

66

I loved catching
up with everyone
at the networking drinks
and dinner. **Participant –
Broome BeefUp forum**

— BROOME

— KIDMAN
SPRINGS

— CLONCURRY

66

A fantastic and
informative event.
**Participant – Cloncurry
BeefUp forum**

66

A really engaging
day, with lots of
great topics and
presentations. **Participant –
Cloncurry BeefUp forum**

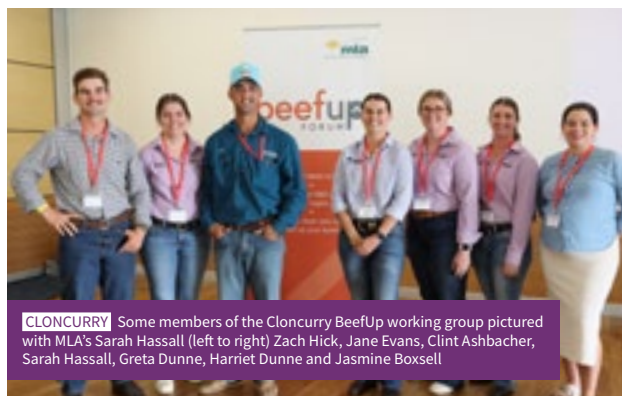
To find out more about BeefUp forums visit mla.com.au/beefup



CLONCURRY Jenny Milson conducted a practical demonstration of grazing land management principles and plant identification



KIDMAN SPRINGS Attendees out in the paddock for a live technology demonstration session



CLONCURRY Some members of the Cloncurry BeefUp working group pictured with MLA's Sarah Hassall (left to right) Zach Hick, Jane Evans, Clint Ashbacher, Sarah Hassall, Greta Dunne, Harriet Dunne and Jasmine Boxsell



BROOME ISC's Elizabeth Bradley talks to attendees about Australia's robust livestock integrity systems

Digital adoption programs

Webinars and podcasts

All webinars are available on the MLA YouTube channel: youtube.com.au/meatandlivestock

Productivity and profitability media series

In partnership with Agrista, a new Productivity and Profitability media series was launched in the winter of 2023. It has continued to provide new and topical information that can assist red meat producers to increase the productivity and profitability of their businesses. Over the course of the 2025 financial year, eight webinars and eight podcasts were delivered and are available as online recordings as webinars and podcasts. A total of 505 producers participated in these eight webinars.

Some of the topics covered over the year include:

- cattle, complexity and change
- analysis of fertility and fecundity in the Australian sheep flock
- hot tips for top heifers.

This series is now complete, delivering 20 webinars and podcasts to more than 7,000 unique attendees and listeners. Of those attending webinars, 56% indicated an intention to make changes to their businesses as a result.

All webinars are available on the MLA and Agrista websites and podcasts are available on all major streaming platforms.

🔗 To watch and listen visit mla.com.au/pandp

FutureBeef webinar series

FutureBeef is a collaborative program between MLA and the governments of Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia, working together for a profitable and sustainable northern beef industry. FutureBeef webinars share the latest practical tools, scientific insights and relevant, timely advice. During 2024–25, 181 producers participated in webinars, with participants increasing their knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA) by 89% on average with 53% intending to implement a change to their practices.

Some of the topics covered in the series throughout 2024–25 included:

- Australian Agricultural Company (AACo): Modelling to implementation
- Managing infectious causes of reproductive loss in beef herds
- Legume establishment in southern and central Queensland (focused on the Brigalow Belt region)
- Legume establishment: Why pasture legumes benefit beef businesses in the monsoonal tropics and how to get them into grass pastures
- Mapping the future: Updating Queensland's phosphorus landscape
- A practical conversation on pasture dieback with Advancing Beef leaders
- Adapting and advancing: How is investment in northern WA shaping the future of pastoralism?

🔗 All webinars are available on the FutureBeef website at futurebeef.com.au/resource-type/webinars

Online resources

The toolbox



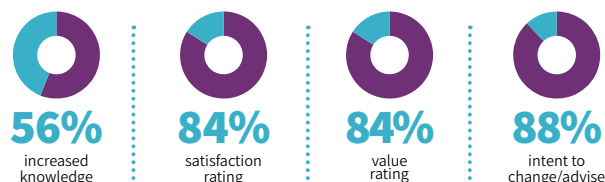
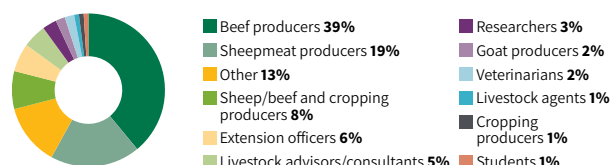
This online learning platform facilitates the delivery of capability building packages for red meat producers and livestock advisors. Users can work through training packages at their own pace and pick and choose the content suitable for their production system.

Available to use anytime and anywhere, it provides practical opportunities for knowledge and skills-building across a range of topics.

In 2024–25, 12 new packages were added to The toolbox. All of these were modules related to the Making More from Sheep program.

During 2024–25:

10,652 toolbox users **12** new training packages



🔗 Visit The toolbox today at elearning.mla.com.au to start exploring new resources.

Genetics hub



The Accelerate Genetics hub (Genetics hub) is a one-stop-shop for commercial producers looking to boost their productivity through genetic tools. It contains a suite of practical, simple to understand videos on how breeding values can assist in sire purchasing decisions.

During 2024–25, existing videos were updated to reflect developments in the Sheep Genetics and BREEDPLAN websites and how to use selection indexes.

Producer case studies also feature on the Genetics hub to share the journey of using breeding values to accelerate livestock performance.

The Genetics hub will be continuously updated with new videos and resources as more genetic tools become available.

🔗 Visit the Genetics hub at genetics.mla.com.au

CASE STUDY

Learning made easy beyond the boundary fence

Spending weekdays driving across NSW as an extension officer and weekends at home on the family farm, Jess Armstrong's feet are firmly planted in the agriculture world.

Whether working within the family business or assisting other producers across the countryside, knowledge is power, and Jess can't get enough.

"As someone who is relatively young and still developing technical knowledge, networks and an understanding of the industry landscape, it's important to learn things from beyond the boundary fence," Jess said.

To extend her industry knowledge base, Jess listens to MLA's Productivity & Profitability series during long commutes.

Sustaining the family farm

Together with her parents and brother, Jess operates a sheep and cattle station north-west of Hay, NSW. For the Armstrongs, particularly the next generation, like Jess and her brother,

every on-farm decision is made to ensure the business remains family owned and operated.

Jess said succession can still be a challenging, complicated subject and navigating the compromise between generations can be difficult.

"We're always looking at the tiny steps we can take which will sustain our business. The diversity of the Productivity & Profitability series has an underlying theme of decision making which has helped us find some of those steps," Jess said.

When introducing electronic identification (eID) onto their farm, Jess turned to Sally Martin's episode, which discussed how to use the technology as a valuable business tool.

"The episode does a really great job of keeping the information practical and

it works. On our own farm, I'm really proud of how far we've come with our implementation of eID," Jess said.

"It's basic at the moment and there's more to be done. We're deciding what data to collect, such as fleece weight or breach score, and how we make that collection fit into our management, like using an automatic drafter."

One series, two options – timelessly useful

As part of the series, guests are interviewed for both podcasting and webinar formats, providing two different audience experiences.

"I spend a lot of time on the road, so the accessibility of the podcasts makes it an easy choice. The podcasts have a really practical and grounded approach that would be useful to any producer.

"The webinars – which are slightly more high level and technical – are better suited for my work," Jess said.

Sally Murfett's webinar within the series, which discusses human agronomy, resonated with Jess.

"I came across the series and this episode during a work project around farm labour attraction and retention. It informed the project but was also relevant in our family operation.

"Far-west NSW isn't always an attractive option for potential employees. It was useful to know what kind of standards, incentives and expectations we need to set if we ever go down the road of employing people," Jess said.

Whether it's a webinar or podcast, Jess said the learnings have been evergreen.

"The content is timeless. I went back and listened to the episode on managing a late autumn break, which is really relevant to producers in our area at the moment."



Jess Armstrong

Livestock Advisor Network

Building the capacity of livestock advisors is a core component of MLA's adoption strategy. Livestock advisors play a critical role in exposing producers to new practices, products and technologies and supporting them to implement these practices or products into their businesses.

Livestock advisors are defined as someone who provides red meat producers with advice as a core part of their role. They include private consultants, public extension officers, stock agents, agronomists and veterinarians. Upskilling livestock advisors provides MLA with another avenue to ensure producers can implement the latest research findings, new technologies or best practices on farm.

The Livestock Advisor Network (LAN) consists of multiple programs funded through MLA to engage and upskill people who provide advice to red meat producers. Australian livestock advisors work with an average of 20–50 producers each year. As such, an investment into capability building within this cohort results in a multiplying effect.



🔔 The quarterly e-newsletter *The Advisor*, provides information on the latest news and events for livestock advisors across the country. Sign up at: mla.com.au/enews

Livestock Advisor Updates

Livestock Advisor Updates (LAU) are one-day, regionally relevant technical workshops held across Australia. They provide opportunities for livestock advisors, leading producers and professional extension consultants to learn about the latest red meat R&D, and gain skills, tools and knowledge to increase their offerings to clients and network with their peers.

🔔 To find out more about LAU visit mla.com.au/advisor-updates or email getinvolved@mla.com.au

Livestock Advisor Essentials

Livestock Advisor Essentials (LAE) is a nationally delivered professional development program designed for early career professionals involved in the livestock industry. Delivered in partnership with Pinion Advisory, the program consists of three face-to-face workshops held over six months. LAE is delivered in one Australian region per year with content altered to suit regionally relevant production systems. During 2024–25, the southern events were held in Melbourne and Tamworth and the northern program was delivered in Townsville.

The program is designed to teach livestock business fundamentals, help participants develop knowledge, skills and confidence and connect them with other livestock advisors.



LAE workshops have been developed by industry specialists. Five focus areas across three workshops are currently on offer:

- **Optimising pasture production:** Participants gain knowledge and confidence in the key aspects of feedbase management to equip them to better support their producer clients.
- **Building blocks of business:** Participants build confidence and skills in financial literacy, critical thinking and the ability to do simple cost-benefit analysis to support decision making.
- **Fundamentals of reproduction and genetics:** Participants gain knowledge in the key principles of reproduction and genetics relevant for livestock businesses and how advisors can support them through important decisions.
- **Meating the market:** Participants learn how to analyse customer feedback and assist their clients to identify and discuss possible on-farm solutions to compliance issues.
- **Influence, impact and extension:** Participants will learn the fundamentals of human engagement, processes and frameworks for sustained influence and understand what makes for effective extension in the agricultural space.

🔔 To find out more about LAE visit mla.com.au/advisor-essentials

NEW Pasture Pathways



Pasture Pathways is a new long-term advisor training program that launched during early 2025. The aim of the program is to increase the number of well-trained pasture agronomy and grazing land management advisors across Australia.

The program, delivered in partnership with Meridian Agriculture, is an 18-month professional development program to train 10 early-career feedbase consultants from leading independent agricultural advisory service providers across the country.

Pasture Pathways has been developed to link with significant MLA feedbase investments (e.g. Queensland Pasture Resilience Program, NSW Department of Primary Industries Acid Soils, CSIRO Transformational feedbase in WA/NSW). This program aims to help transfer knowledge from these projects into the private advisory sector.

The development program consists of a combination of online and face-to-face workshops, covering foundational interpersonal skills, extension skills and technical grazing management practices.

The current Pasture Pathways program kicked off in May 2025 and will run until late November 2026.

🔗 To find out more about Pasture Pathways, email breeve@meridian-ag.com.au

Service provider and supply chain training program

Livestock agents have been identified as a core source of advice for producers through the Genetics Insights Survey, Global Adoption Review and MLA Livestock Advisor Adoption Strategy, with up to 90% of producers identifying agents as a primary source of advice.

The Service provider and supply chain/Certificate IV in Agriculture – Agricultural Services and Supply Chain – Stock and Station Agent, as offered by Wodonga TAFE (RTO 3097), is now in its fourteenth year of delivery. Since inception, more than 300 participants have been involved in the program, as have facilitators and industry representatives from across Australia.

For the second year, MLA has partnered with RMA Network – to deliver the program through Wodonga TAFE – with the aims of upskilling agents, increasing knowledge and uptake of MLA tools and resources, and increasing the technical value offered as part of their services.

Over the past year, the program has trained 30 early career agents across two workshops. Attendees gave the workshops a value rating of 94%, with 93% indicating they would make a change in the way they delivered advice and undertook their roles as a result of attending. Participants had an average increase in knowledge and skills of 69%.

🔗 To find out more about the Service provider and supply chain training program, email sdand@wodongatafe.edu.au

Livestock advisor 2024–25 highlights



NETWORK

6

UPDATES

1

ESSENTIALS

3

events delivered



NETWORK

80

UPDATES

16

ESSENTIALS

34

advisors engaged



NETWORK

90%

UPDATES

81%

ESSENTIALS

94%

value rating



NETWORK

90%

UPDATES

87%

ESSENTIALS

85%

will confidently apply workshop advice with clients

Livestock advisor event locations



Livestock Advisor Network workshops may have been held in the same location multiple times.

CASE STUDY

Veterinarian upskills to boost business benefits for clients

Dr Matthew Boon is a livestock veterinarian who participated in MLA's 2024 Livestock Advisor Essentials course in southern Australia. Being able to offer his clients an expanded set of skills and advice – which now includes business and people advice – has been a key benefit from his investment in his professional development.

Before completing his Bachelor of Veterinary Science at James Cook University in 2015, he planned to become a small animal vet, however on completion, found he preferred the large animal component of his degree. The opportunities and lifestyle that arise from working with livestock were another draw card. After graduating, Matt moved to Victoria and began working in rural mixed practice clinics. In 2023, he decided to start his own business, 'Prime Livestock Veterinary Services', as a solo operator.

"Once I started working for myself, it was great to chase the things I was passionate about and build on the skills I wanted to – plus I learnt a lot about business management," Matt said.

The desire to offer more to clients

When he first started his business, Matt's day-to-day work was predominantly focused on cattle reproduction such as pregnancy testing, bull fertility testing and artificial insemination. In addition, he also worked on general herd health, sudden death investigations and tending to sick animals. Although he enjoyed this work, Matt wanted to offer his clients more to help support their farming businesses.

"I really wanted to get into other sectors in the livestock and agribusiness areas to give start-to-finish services to my clients," he said.

Matt saw a gap he could potentially fill which would help add value to his clients' businesses. This is where MLA's Livestock Advisor Essentials course showed Matt how he could open up that conversation with clients.

"You don't really talk to a vet about business management and pasture – clients go to their accountant and

agronomist – but I really wanted to fill that gap.

"I could see it but didn't know how to start the conversation and give them the tools and information they needed.

"I was exploring what avenues I could offer my clients, when I came across the Livestock Advisor Essentials course," Matt said.

Lessons from leading experts

Throughout the course, Matt learned about business, feedbase fundamentals, genetics, reproduction, the value chain, and people and influence skills. The fact that course deliverers are consultants and advisors who are leading experts in their respective fields is a key strength of the program.

"A standout after completing the full course was that it pushed me into certain subjects I wouldn't have sought out myself," Matt said.

As part of the genetics and reproduction workshop, delivered by Dr Jillian Kelly from AHN Consulting, the attendees discussed useful questions advisors could ask to help open up conversations with clients.

"I now have questions I can ask clients to start those conversations. For example, Jillian talked about asking clients what their standard reference weight was for a cow or sheep. You could do so much with that one question," Matt said.

"When I reflect back on every farm call I go to, there are opportunities where I could enter into this conversation with them and get the ball rolling.



"Now I need to practice it, and the good thing about each workshop is you are able to stay in contact with the deliverers. "You can start asking clients those questions, and I can email the deliverer to help with what to do with this information and to check if I'm on the right track."

'Putting out fires' turns into preventing them

As a vet, Matt sees a lot of the routine work he does as 'putting out fires'. He is usually called after an animal gets sick or a calf has gotten stuck. After completing the course, he now has the confidence and resources to support clients to take a more proactive approach.

"I need to apply what I've learnt – really start looking for those opportunities outside what I know and am comfortable with.

"When I'm 'putting out fires', I want to start the conversation – I want to start switching from putting out fires to preventing the fires from beginning."

Matt and his family recently moved to Queensland and he is now looking forward to exploring opportunities in northern Australia.

Integrated R&D and customised adoption initiatives

Investments into adoption and extension continue to increase through incorporation into on-farm research and development projects. These integrated programs have been created with the intention of fast-tracking the adoption of research outcomes, as well as utilising or adding to the existing suite of MLA adoption products. Some of these programs are outlined below.

Northern Breeding Business

Northern Breeding Business (NB2) is a producer-led RD&A program that aims to address calf loss in northern breeding herds, low profitability of many northern beef enterprises and low adoption of proven management practices and technologies relevant to breeding operations.

The program is creating a business-focused culture throughout the north Australian beef industry. At the heart of NB2 is a network of beef producer groups, supported by experienced facilitators and experts, working together to better understand and improve their businesses.

Producers set directions for their business based on evidence from their data, whilst working alongside others to exchange ideas and learn from a broad industry network.

NB2 takes a whole-of-enterprise approach, incorporating four pillars of focus – herd, feedbase, business, and the overarching adoption pillar, named ‘Pathway to Practice’. This adoption pillar is collectively delivered by state agencies, advisors and organisations across northern Australia.

There are currently 75 producers participating in the NB2 program across 10 groups, representing more than 650,000 breeders under management across more than 17.8 million hectares of northern Australia.

Group members have been working to understand their individual herd, feedbase and business performance and have been using those results to learn from one another and discuss where opportunities for improvement might lie. These conversations are beginning to inform group decisions around what learning and development activities they should focus on together, for example, nutrition training and carbon opportunities.

An independent evaluation of the **NB2 Pathways to Practice pilot project demonstrated an increase of 7% in the weaning rate of businesses that targeted calf loss.** The evaluation estimated an overall net return to businesses of \$13,000 from participation in the program.



The Burdekin Pathways to Practice NB2 group, facilitated by Roxanne Morgan (front row, far left) and Bec Clapperton (not pictured). Image: DPI Queensland

NB2 2024–25 highlights



650,000

breeder cattle influenced by NB2



75

producers engaged



10

NB2 groups

7%

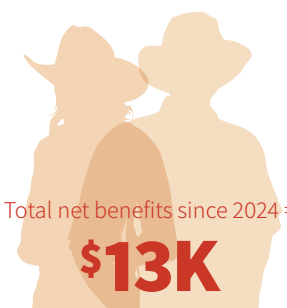
increase in weaning rates for participating businesses targeting calf loss



17.8M

hectares of Australian agricultural land influenced by NB2

Total benefits* delivered to each business via NB2



Total net benefits since 2024 =

\$13K

*Calculated as net present value of adoption to 2045, discounted at 5% annually

CASE STUDY

A bird's-eye view of Delta Downs Station. Image: Tim Gentle – Think Digital Studios



Country, community and cattle are intertwined at Delta

Being involved in the NB2 program has opened the door to productivity improvements and professional development opportunities for ‘Delta Downs Station’, located north of Normanton in Far North Queensland.

Business management training and a focus on breeder management are set to deliver productivity improvements over the coming years. A smaller but more productive herd will support continued social and environmental benefits such as Indigenous employment and care for Country.

Run by the Kurtjar Aboriginal Corporation, Delta Downs Station is so much more than one of Australia’s most successful Indigenous-owned and run pastoral enterprises.

As Kurtjar Elder and one of the traditional owners of Delta Downs Station Fred Pascoe reflects, the station is also a treasured place of cultural significance which provides an abundant source of bush foods and hunting grounds for its custodians.

Home to a spectacular array of wildlife, its thriving wetlands brim with fish, turtles and migratory birds. Its wide range of landscapes

include ridge and forest country and coastal areas which provide prime cattle country for its 45,000 head of predominantly red Brahm cattle.

Delta’s well-established and ongoing business success acts as a richly fertile incubator for Indigenous self-determination, employment and social cohesion.

Established in 1889, it took almost 100 years for Delta to become Australia’s first cattle station run by Traditional Owners. Delta now employs 35 local Indigenous people and since 2021 has been an active participant in MLA’s producer-led NB2 program.

Business development

Co-funded by the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) and Animal Health Australia, NB2 is a capacity building program which engages participants in peer-to-peer learning, business analysis and skills development.

The ILSC’s participation in the program aims to create opportunities for Indigenous-owned pastoral enterprises by encouraging and funding their involvement.

NB2 has a specific focus on supporting businesses to implement strategies to improve calf survival and breeder reproduction. Ample networking opportunities and a delivery model based on respect and community-led decision making are central to the program’s high level of buy-in from a growing number of Indigenous pastoral groups.

“Being part of NB2 is a good way for Delta to share its knowledge and experience with other Indigenous groups newer to the industry. It’s been worthwhile learning from other participants as well as from mainstream industry,” Fred said.

By working together and strengthening networks with other Indigenous-led businesses, Fred said NB2 has

opened up a range of positive outcomes to explore.

These include:

- branded beef opportunities
- helping people get established with breeders
- agistment opportunities
- getting involved in other markets
- bulk marketing and bulk purchasing.

“Being able to sit down and have a cup of tea and talk about what other groups are doing in terms of carbon farming and managing for biodiversity is another benefit we see from the program,” Fred said.

Building links for lasting benefits

NB2 has given Delta access to the latest evidence-based on-farm practices to boost productivity specific to northern cattle enterprises, as well as the opportunity to meet in-person with specialists from the wider red meat industry.

NB2’s support and facilitation of networking events, including residential workshops and on-farm training sessions at Delta is something Fred would like to expand on going forward.

“We want to get a wider range of employees out to the residential workshops and meetings we hold here at Delta. We get access to technical and financial advice from industry experts which has been very useful,” Fred said.



Building business skills

Fred sees the business management training side of the NB2 program as being particularly advantageous in the current economic circumstances.

“In today’s environment the cost of everything needed to run a business has gotten higher – it’s not in-line with what it costs you to run it anymore. You need to be on the ball to be profitable,” Fred said.

Boosting productivity

Breeder management at Delta includes pregnancy tests and culling dry cattle, and benchmarking is now being implemented through NB2.

“In two years, we should be seeing improvements in our productivity. The technical training has been good –

benchmarking is helping us see how we’re travelling compared to the rest of the industry,” Fred said.

Culling dry cows and increasing calving rates offer benefits beyond a more fertile herd and improved pasture utilisation.

“By getting rid of dry cows we’ll have a smaller, more productive herd, so we’ll still be able to employ more people. The land will also benefit with less cattle numbers – it’s a win-win.”

“We have a duty to employ local Indigenous employees – we’re one of the largest Indigenous employers in this region but the more people you employ, the less profit you make. At the end of the day business needs

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Moving cattle in the yards at Delta Downs Station. Image: Tim Gentle – Think Digital Studios

“In two years, we should be seeing improvements in our productivity. The technical training has been good – benchmarking is helping us see how we’re travelling compared to the rest of the industry.”

to be profitable, however our profits are directed straight back into the community,” Fred said.

Protecting wetlands a priority

Delta’s lush wetlands are highly valued by the community which simultaneously cares for and is nurtured by them. Protecting it from impaction from livestock and the effects of invasive animals such as feral pigs is an ongoing priority.

“We have a rolling program where we fence off the wetlands so we can reduce the havoc feral pigs cause to native animals. They destroy the magpie geese nests and decimate turtles,” Fred said.

“The wetlands are a haven for birds – we’re on a migratory bird route and

have a role to play in protecting them. By doing this our community also benefits through access to plentiful bush tucker and fish.”

More than just a cattle company

Fred provides insight into his community’s perspective on its ownership of Delta Downs – and it’s one centred around custodianship rather than a utilitarian approach.

“When we got our property, we didn’t just get our cattle company. We got land that our people now have access to for hunting and fishing and reinvigorating culture. We take our old people out to be buried on our land – it’s a hell of a lot more than just a cattle company,” Fred said.

Delta also provides a flourishing and

continually replenishing food bowl for local Indigenous people – many of whom rely on it as a significant supplement to their overall diet.

“On the weekends we get 20 to 100 people coming out to hunt and fish – the majority of them are from a low socioeconomic background so it’s really a supermarket where they can stock their fridges,” Fred said.

Self-determination

In its facilitation of networking and business development opportunities, NB2 aims to act as a catalyst for ongoing success.

“Our 40-odd year history of success drives self-determination in our community. We are good cattlemen and horsemen, and we need to convince the wider industry that we are also good businessmen,” Fred said.

“Delta is an example of a thriving, Indigenous-run business which supports its community and shares its knowledge with our Indigenous colleagues.”

Accelerating supply chain value for the Australian sheepmeat industry

In partnership with Gundagai Meat Processors (GMP), a structured adoption program has been developed to support sheepmeat producers to supply higher quality lamb. The adoption program informs producers on how they can use the carcass data provided by GMP to determine improvements to be made in on-farm practices for areas including animal health, genetics and nutrition.

In 2024–25, 21 workshop groups were established, engaging 314 producers and 14 agents, in and around Gundagai. The workshops covered topics from learning about the consumer and why product consistency is important, to animal health, genetics and nutrition. Workshop participants rated the value of attending at 96% and demonstrated an increase in knowledge and skills of 80%. Of the attendees, all indicated that they would make a change on farm as a result of attending the workshops.

This project will run until 2029.

➤ For more information email
mhenry@gmpgundagai.com.au



A workshop group visit a property in Gundagai, NSW

Pasture dieback management strategies for the Northern Rivers region

This project aims to engage producers in trials of novel approaches to manage pasture dieback. Through identification of appropriate pasture species and grazing management strategies, the trials work to maintain ground cover and sustain feed on offer on pasture dieback-affected land in the North Coast region of New South Wales.

The project will demonstrate a network of pasture species trials on 10 properties across the 570,000ha region of the North Coast and will help producers adopt them at commercial scale through peer-to-peer learning activities. Impact will be achieved through improved producer adoption of key pasture species and grazing management practices to combat pasture dieback while also supporting producers to implement and manage these new strategies to achieve on-farm practice change.

Regionally relevant support tools will be developed (e.g. case studies) for producers to drive a more data-driven approach to pasture re-establishment (i.e. ground preparation, species and variety selection, feed quality, fertiliser management and biomass management). This activity will also generate a greater understanding of the skill and knowledge levels of producers for use of farm-level measurement and monitoring in these areas.

➤ To keep informed of the progress of this project and for opportunities to get involved, register your interest at
terry.rose@scu.edu.au

Innovative mixed farming demonstration

South-west Victorian mixed farming producers are looking to grow their businesses by upskilling in pasture agronomy and grazing management. This project aims to accelerate the rate of adoption of improved feedbase management by working with these producers and their cropping agronomists and merchandise providers. Project outcomes include improved profitability and resilience of southern Australian farms through an increase in livestock numbers and the productivity of those animals.

To date, the project has focused on compiling results from the 10 trials at the Rokewood feedbase demonstration for the purpose of extension. Four short extension events have been delivered to 30 producers and 61 cropping agronomists, utilising results from the Rokewood trials which are designed around pasture production principles.

During 2024–25 the project engaged 312 producers, influencing a total of 171,234ha, 40,649 head of cattle and 583,638 head of sheep. Participants improved their knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations (KASA) on average by 85% and 82% of participants intended to implement a change to their farming practices as a result of taking part in the trial.

➤ To keep informed of the progress of this project and opportunities to become involved, register your interest at
jwettenhall@sfs.org.au

Queensland Pasture Resilience Program

In Queensland there are multiple threats to production. Land degradation from overgrazing, pasture nitrogen rundown resulting in production declines of ~50%, pasture dieback, weed incursions and woody regrowth. These are interconnected issues that are collectively decreasing land condition and pasture productivity across the state.

The Queensland Pasture Resilience Program (QPRP) is a partnership with Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (QDAF) that began in 2023. It is designed to help grazing businesses optimise land productivity through a range of integrated RD&A activities across the state.

These activities have a particular focus on:

- improving the use of legumes, which not only provide nitrogen to address pasture rundown but are also resistant to pasture dieback
- identifying and improving of pasture dieback management practices including testing resistance of grass species to dieback
- improving grazing management practices to help restore paddock condition
- supporting producers to understand and implement new practices through on-farm demonstration sites, field days, workshops, neighbour days, 1:1 support and loans of equipment.

During 2024–25, QPRP rolled out extension activities through four projects in northern, central and southern Queensland, aimed at improving grazing land management practices.

QPRP 2024–25 highlights:



119,145

cattle influenced by QPRP



295

advisors engaged



1.1M

hectares of Australian agricultural land influenced by QPRP



219

producers engaged



94%

value rating



56%

intent to change

📍 For more information about the program or to get in touch with project leads in your region please visit futurebeef.com.au/resources/qprp



Meridian Agriculture's Jim Shovelan demonstrates how to set up test strips – and why they're essential for pinpointing pasture deficiencies that soil tests can miss

Trace Element Program

Livestock production systems need trace elements, however, this need is often overlooked and large parts of southern Australia are deficient. When limited, pasture performance can be significantly affected. Similarly, deficiencies in livestock trace elements can cause considerable health issues. By adding trace elements into the system, producers often see substantial improvements in pasture biomass and quality, along with livestock performance.

The Trace Element Program (TEP) was launched in 2025 to help address trace element deficiencies in southern Australia. The project is a partnership between Meridian Agriculture and MLA and will deliver the following activities:

- **Education:** Train advisors and producers on the importance of trace elements (2025–27).
- **Demonstration:** Conduct 150 test strip experiments across Victoria to highlight the benefits of trace elements.
- **Publication:** Update the trace elements almanac in the 1986 Agriculture Victoria manual *Trace Elements for Pastures and Animals in Victoria*.

During 2025, Agriculture Victoria, the Mackinnon Project and Meridian Agriculture delivered five workshops across Victoria aimed at educating advisors about the importance of using trace elements, the benefits and detriments of trace elements, and discussing products available to alleviate trace element negatives. Additional workshops are planned for 2026.

The project's next stage is to establish approximately 150 trace element test strips across Victorian livestock production regions. Required product and information to set up and monitor the test strips will be provided by Meridian Agriculture.

Information gathered from the workshops and test strips will be used to update the *Trace Elements for Pastures and Animals in Victoria* manual. This almanac has been used extensively for more than 40 years.

The TEP will run until 2028.

📍 To participate and for more information visit meridian-ag.com.au/trace-element

Rangelands Living Skin

The Rangelands Living Skin project investigated the regeneration of the New South Wales rangelands to support livestock production now and into the future. It brought together producers, researchers and advisors to identify practical, cost-effective solutions to deliver benefits for soil, plants, animals and people – the living skin of the rangelands.

The project, led by NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, demonstrated and validated rangeland management innovations designed to enhance the environmental and economic sustainability of grazing businesses in the rangelands. This involved economic benchmarking of core producers, a study on the effects

of grazing management on ground cover, assessments of business emissions and soil carbon, and various on-station trials of landscape rehabilitation practices.

A total of 30 producers were directly engaged in the project, representing more than 1M ha of land under management. Within this cohort, 79% indicated they had made management changes as a result of their involvement in the project, while 83% demonstrated an increase in knowledge of key project focus areas. Beyond direct participants, 200 individuals engaged in project activities.

This project demonstrated the value of co-designed, producer-centric and collaborative research for delivering industry relevant outcomes and maximising engagement, adoption and impact.

Some key findings from the project include:



Planned grazing management (adapting stocking rates to carrying capacity and strategically grazing and resting land) **can significantly increase ground cover** (by 2–7%) in NSW rangelands over the long term.



Targeted management interventions, including water ponding, deep ripping, gypsum, and strategic, intensive animal impact can be used successfully to rehabilitate degraded, sodic and saline scalds in NSW rangelands.



Foliar and solid biological stimulant products did not benefit pasture productivity and quality.



Soil organic carbon levels in NSW rangelands are generally low, with considerable spatial variability. They were not strongly related to above-ground vegetation variables, such as groundcover, plant biomass, perennality or plant diversity.



Methane emissions from livestock are the dominant form of greenhouse gas emissions in rangeland grazing businesses, with annual average emission from the four core producers ranging from 260–2,233t CO₂-e.



Financial benchmarking of the four core producer properties demonstrated it is possible to remain a profitable livestock business that is competitive with top performing Australian producers, while simultaneously managing for environmental outcomes in NSW rangeland grazing systems.



Bullseye 2 Livestock Productivity is a practical learning program helping WA producers boost livestock performance and business resilience while improving rangeland condition

Bullseye 2 Livestock Productivity

This is a group-based learning project being delivered in the southern rangelands of Western Australia to support pastoralists to improve livestock productivity while maintaining or increasing landscape condition. Extensive areas, a highly variable climate, non-domestic grazing pressure and increasing predation risk have created significant challenges for WA pastoralists, with many transitioning from sheep to cattle production over the past 10 years.

The project involves two producer groups based in the Murchison and Goldfields regions, and 20 pastoral businesses covering 4.5M ha have been engaged. Groups meet virtually and in-person to build skills and knowledge that can be implemented on-station with the support of a group facilitator and technical experts in pastoral production systems. The project focuses on utilising known best practice management strategies to increase livestock productivity through avenues such as increasing mustering efficiency, reducing mortality and increasing turn-off rate. At present, the focus for many project participants is to implement sound herd recording and business management accounting practices to accurately assess productivity and inform management changes.

This project will run until 2027 and is led by the Southern Rangelands Pastoral Alliance.

📍 To find out more about the project or express interest in getting involved, email info@srpa.org.au

The potential of biomineral fertilisers to increase soil carbon sequestration

This project is an integrated R&D PDS project based in south-west Western Australia. It aims to explore the use of biomineral fertilisers as an alternative to conventional fertiliser products in grazing systems. Biomineral fertilisers are a granular mineral fertiliser product coated in micro-organisms. These products claim to increase plant nutrient uptake and increase the rate of soil carbon sequestration.

The project involves a replicated trial and three demonstration sites where biomineral fertilisers and conventional fertilisers will be applied in commercial settings at recommended rates according to soil test results. Soil carbon, pasture production and animal production measurements will subsequently be taken. A replicated trial plot is also included, with biomineral and conventional fertilisers applied at equivalent nutrient rates to identify the action of the biological component of biomineral fertilisers. Ultimately, this project will assess the ability and cost efficiency of biomineral fertilisers to sequester soil carbon at a rate that is greater than conventional fertilisers, without a reduction in productivity. The 2025 financial year incorporated the third growing season of the trial. Pasture, soil and animal liveweight measurements continue to be taken and analysed alongside fertiliser treatments.

This project will run until late 2025 and is led and co-funded by Pedaga Investments with support from the Future Food Network.

📍 To find out more about the project or express interest in getting involved, email danielhester@pedaga.com.au



Pasture cages used in plot trials protect small areas from grazing so researchers can accurately measure pasture growth and soil response under different fertiliser treatments. Image: Future Food Network WA

Maximising potential stocking rate through pasture management techniques

This project aims to increase the potential stocking rate in the mixed farming areas of southern Western Australia by improving and managing pastures during the autumn and winter seasons.

As the project enters its second year, there are four established producer groups in the great southern region, and four new producer groups lined up for both the northern/west midlands area and the great southern high rainfall area. The goal of the project is to prevent and reverse the decline in carrying capacity by implementing improved pasture and animal management strategies and extending these to producers.

The project will span five years and encompass six key areas, with four core producer groups established in each area. Over a two-year period, these groups will collaborate to improve stocking rates through the implementation of introduced pasture management techniques with 15 groups established to date. The areas covered by the project include:

- West midlands/northern – three groups established in 2024
- Great southern high rainfall – four groups established
- South-west – four groups established
- South-east – four groups established
- Wheatbelt – groups to be established in 2026.

By the end of the project in July 2028, producers and advisors will have built skills and capabilities to apply management practices that can help them deal with tough, variable seasons, while also upskilling them with on-farm best practices to increase stocking rate through pasture management techniques.

➔ For more information email brianna@agpromanagement.com



At Tarin Rock, one of four South-East groups in a region known for its variable seasons, Kingbale oats and Dalkeith sub-clover fodder crops soak up some much-needed rain



Demonstration site Booderoo's manager Arran Loechel assessing crop recovery in 2025. Photo: Melissa Fraser

Improved grazing production on non-wetting sands

Building on previous research in the grains industry, the Improved grazing production on non-wetting sands project is investigating opportunities to improve feedbase and livestock productivity on sandy soils by addressing soil chemical, physical and biological constraints.

Three replicated demonstration sites have been established on grazing properties in the Coorong district of South Australia. Treatments at these sites include various tillage practices combined with applications of compost, clay, manure and fertiliser. A further six associate producers are closely involved in the project, with annual field days and workshops available to all. These activities give producers a chance to understand different interventions implemented under local commercial conditions to facilitate adoption in the region.

The project has been designed to give producers an opportunity to review the effectiveness of different treatments and practices to improve production on sandy soils, measuring plant growth, dry matter production and livestock carrying capacity. It also tests the cost effectiveness of the treatments on sites across the project area. Insights from the project to date show a combination of inversion tillage and manure has provided the greatest response, with a 77% increase in dry matter production per hectare. By converting this to a potential stocking rate, gross margin analysis has been completed to provide valuable insights into the profitability of each treatment. Learnings so far outline the need to address all soil limitations in order to achieve positive production outcomes and also highlight the importance of grazing management to utilise additional feed grown. This project runs until 2026.

➔ To find out more email tstrugnell@coorong.sa.gov.au

Innovative sheep and beef networks

The Innovative sheep and beef networks project, delivered by the Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action began in July 2021 and was completed in December 2024. It delivered a range of innovative approaches to engage beef and sheep networks across Victoria to support the adoption of technologies and improved management practices, resulting in increased productivity and business performance.

The project engaged an impressive 6,644 members. Capitalising on the engagement of around 2,500 producers and service providers to the livestock industry, the project extended its engagement, the scale of these networks, and its impact, by innovating in three key areas:

- **Network service offer:** The program integrated new agricultural technologies and communication models.
- **Producers:** New and existing producer groups and associated members benefitted from improved planning of tailored programs, enhanced monitoring, benchmarking, exposure to management tools, and a focus on their value chain.
- **Service providers:** Service providers received support for training and development to improve their technical and group facilitation skills, with a stronger emphasis on their performance in meeting the project objectives.

Over the course of the project, 334 activities were delivered to producers and service providers. The average recommended rating across all the activities and events was 98.7%. The average satisfaction rating was 8.9/10. Of those producers involved, 66% have implemented and seen positive change in their farm businesses.

The final report for this project will be available on the MLA website in late 2025.

🔗 To find out more, email getinvolved@mla.com.au



The Innovative sheep and beef networks project delivered a range of innovative approaches to engage beef and sheep networks across Victoria to support the adoption of technologies and improved management practices

Sheep Reproduction Strategic Partnership

The Sheep Reproduction Strategic Partnership (SRSP) is a sheep industry initiative managed by MLA. It seeks to profitably and sustainably increase lamb production by increasing weaning rates and decreasing mortality.

An objective of SRSP is to increase the adoption of proven management practices that have been developed through key research projects over the years.

This will be done through focusing on each of the key stages of the sheep reproduction cycle:



This partnership will provide producers with practical solutions for their businesses to enable improvements in flock reproductive performance at each stage of the reproductive cycle.

One of the key project outputs for producers is the *Fit to Join* ewe guide. This guide outlines the benefits of assessing ewes before joining and provides a step-by-step process for effectively and efficiently assessing ewes. The guide is designed as an interactive PDF which can be downloaded to a device (computer, tablet or smartphone). It provides links to videos and additional information. Hard copies are also available to be printed to use as a booklet.

A quarterly webinar series and monthly newsletter is available to sheep producers and industry representatives through the SRSP research, development and adoption initiative and shares the latest research and development on sheep reproduction.

🔗 For more information visit mla.com.au/srsp and to read the *Fit to Join* guide, scan or click the QR code:



SheepLinks

FEED365 all year livestock forage systems

In Western Australia, MLA and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) have established a collaborative program of work known as SheepLinks – which aims to build resilience and productivity throughout the WA sheepmeat supply chain.

Within this broader program of work, the FEED365 all year livestock forage systems project focuses on re-designing the feedbase system to provide forage for livestock year-round. It aims to help producers overcome the challenges of seasonal feed gaps and increasing climate variability in Mediterranean environments.

The project involves a significant research component hosted at the Katanning Research Facility, where 64 pasture species are being evaluated in small plot trials. A subset of 24 species are being evaluated in replicated grazing trials. The team is conducting integrated adoption activities alongside the primary research site, with six grower groups hosting on-farm commercial trial sites. With three years of production data now captured, recommendations for alternate forage systems are getting closer to being available. Preliminary results indicate several cereal/legume mixes and winter active perennial pasture species can provide an opportunity to increase in-season pasture production and provide available dry-standing feed during summer and autumn. More novel summer crops such as sorghum and sunflower have also shown potential in utilising out of season rainfall.

The project will combine various production and quality measurements to undertake bioeconomic modelling of observed results in order to assess pasture system options. Producer research sites have been established through

engagement with six grower groups to increase the degree of commercial testing and further demonstrate project findings to producers in a local context. These sites are in the Wagin, Dandaragan, Esperance, Mount Barker, South Sterling, Wialki, Bakers Hill, Mandurah and Harvey regions and include various pasture species and mixes. Treatments at the commercial sites include perennial subtropical grasses, legumes and edible shrub species.

This project will continue until 2026.

▶ To find out more about the project or express interest in getting involved, please contact Senior Research Scientist Daniel Real at daniel.real@dpiird.wa.gov.au

Carcase feedback for improved on-farm productivity

The SheepLinks program has adapted the MLA PGS package known as Meat the Market to assist 30 Western Australian sheepmeat businesses to better utilise objective carcase feedback in order to improve lamb processing compliance and optimise carcase value.

Throughout the project, local processors and advisors will be supported to implement and increase their understanding of objective carcase feedback. One of three producer groups has completed this project, undertaking training, analysing carcase feedback and receiving group mentoring and support to implement on-farm strategies that address carcase feedback. The final two groups are currently being formed.

This project will continue until 2026.

▶ To find out more or to express interest in getting involved, please contact Research Scientist Claire Payne at claire.payne@dpiird.wa.gov.au



An aerial view of the Katanning Research Facility – the hub of the FEED365 project site, where MLA and DPIRD are testing year-round forage systems to help WA sheep producers overcome seasonal feed gaps and climate variability. Image: DPIRD



BeefLinks

BeefLinks was a four-year research partnership that aimed to drive an integrated and complementary R&D program for northern and southern production systems across Western Australia to achieve profitable, consistent and sustainable beef yields matched to consumer expectations.

The project brought together producers, researchers, businesses and state agencies to develop a greater understanding of opportunities to enhance productivity and value along the red meat supply chain. Through the program, partners explored critical control points to produce evidence-based best practices and strategies for the management and movement of cattle.

Three areas of work were completed as part of the BeefLinks program of work. These were:

- **WA livestock supply chain management:** The major outcome was a detailed mapping of cattle transactions down the supply chain from pastoral systems, through backgrounding to feedlots, live export or returns to the rangeland systems as breeders. This will help producers understand and identify the pathways available to them for maximum profit.
- **Western Australian rangeland systems:** This looked at diet selection in WA rangeland cattle and provided some opportunities to design supplementation strategies. It also explored anti-methanogenic characteristics of southern rangelands feedbase across the state, with more than 100 species tested for their properties.
- **Virtual fencing programs:** This looked at successfully utilising virtual fencing technologies to contain northern WA rangeland cattle. It also included a PDS led by producers from the Gascoyne Catchment Group. The PDS looked at management practices to address the challenge of liveweight loss of cattle transitioning from pastoral to southern agricultural areas.

Final reports for all projects that contributed to the BeefLinks program will be available on the MLA website in late 2025.

For more information visit mla.com.au/beeflinks

Animal wellbeing extension and adoption partnership: Hoofs & Horns

This project will address two of the big, complex challenges facing northern Australian livestock production systems – horned cattle and execution of managing reproductive diseases in extensive cattle herds.

Challenges experienced in managing large herds across vast land masses require tailored solutions to ensure cost effective, efficient implementation and ongoing management. These solutions must account for standard management practices, including annual or biannual mustering, the climate and existing infrastructure.

The aims of this project are to:

- develop detailed costs, benefits and an adoption pathway for transitioning to a polled herd in different extensive commercial beef production systems
- develop detailed costs, benefits and an adoption vaccination pathway for managing and controlling reproductive diseases in extensive cattle herds.

Australian Agricultural Company (AACo) will work closely with MLA to facilitate producer research, extension and adoption activities.

The activities associated with the 'transitioning a polled herd' and 'controlling and managing reproductive diseases' adoption pathways will be undertaken and delivered concurrently.

The program is due to conclude in 2026.

For more information about the program, email sdundon@mla.com.au





Objective information is being collected to conduct cost-benefit analyses, informing the adoption of P supplementation and methods of delivering the supplement to stock

Increasing adoption of phosphorus supplementation in northern Australia

The benefits of phosphorus (P) supplementation for breeding herds in northern Australia are well researched and widely known, with P being essential for livestock growth, fertility and milk production.

However, across northern Australia, only a portion of cattle grazing on P-deficient pastures are being managed with P supplementation. This is due, in part, to perceived difficulties in implementing wet season P supplementation on extensive properties.

This project works with producers to test for, identify and analyse P deficiencies in northern beef businesses, and to implement appropriate supplementation strategies within each of the participating enterprises.

It includes some trials to validate and demonstrate an 'Easy P' phosphorous supplementation program to overcome difficulties of supplying and distributing supplements to stock during the wet season.

It also involves producer demonstration sites across northern Western Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory, where different supplementation strategies are being tested within commercial systems. Objective information is being collected to conduct cost-benefit analyses, informing the adoption of P supplementation and methods of delivering the supplement to stock. The aim of this project is to increase the adoption of P supplementation across the northern beef industry by delivering new information, peer-to-peer learning and demonstrations.

For more information email tim.schatz@nt.gov.au or visit MLA's phosphorus hub mla.com.au/phosphorus for other practical tips and tools.

Northern Australia Climate Program

In collaboration with the University of Southern Queensland, the Northern Australia Climate Program (NACP) delivers innovative research, development and extension outcomes to improve the capacity of the red meat industry in managing drought and climate risk across northern Australia.

NACP is supported by regional Climate Mates to deliver a climate service to the red meat supply chain. It is focused on building awareness, knowledge and skills and providing support and confidence for clients to use weather and climate information in decision making.

During 2024–25, the program has delivered a series of new products including Green Date, Heat Load Index, Livestock Chill Index, Cattle Comfort Index, Drought Outlook and Flash Drought Monitor – all available at nacp.org.au/drought

The program is also leading ground-breaking research on the record late summer monsoon in 2025, alongside colleagues from the Bureau of Meteorology, as well as working with Northern Territory cattle producers to uncover the causes and impacts of significant livestock chill events. Researchers are now beginning to use machine learning weather prediction models to investigate how accurately these type of extreme events can be forecasted.

During 2024–25, the NACP team and MLA also finalised development of a new course for managing risks associated with extreme seasonal conditions – Climate for decision making. This course will be delivered as part of MLA's PGS program to small groups. It includes mentoring components to ensure producers get the most they can out of the program.

It has been designed to build the knowledge and skills of producers in understanding different climate drivers, which are relevant at different times of the year, and encourages participants to consider these drivers when making decisions on farm. The course will be rolled out across northern Australia in financial year 2026.

NACP also provides quarterly forecast videos for Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland with an analysis of the climate outlook and regional climate calendars for all northern regions.

These activities will continue in 2025–26.

To find out more about NACP and access the tools and forecast videos, visit nacp.org.au. Scan or click the QR code for Climate Mate events in your region.



2024–25 service providers

With thanks to:

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AGnVET Management Services Pty Ltd

AgPro Management

Agriculture Kangaroo Island

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University of Adelaide

University of New England

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Upper North Farming Systems

Upriver

Western Australian Agriculture Authority

Contacts

To find out more about MLA adoption programs, to attend an event during 2025–26 or to deliver MLA adoption workshops, email: getinvolved@mla.com.au

- 📧 Producer Demonstration Sites: pds@mla.com.au
- 📧 Profitable Grazing Systems: pgs@mla.com.au
- 📧 EDGENetwork: edgenetwork@mla.com.au
- 📧 eLearning/The toolbox: elearning@mla.com.au
- 📧 BredWell FedWell: getinvolved@mla.com.au
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- 📧 MeatUp: getinvolved@mla.com.au
- 📧 Livestock Advisor Essentials: livestockadvisoressentials@pinion.com
- 📧 Livestock Advisor Updates: getinvolved@mla.com.au

For all other enquiries email: info@mla.com.au



Trudi Oxley working with a participant on how to improve their breeding herd efficiency, Breeding EDGE workshop, Katherine NT



Meat & Livestock Australia Limited

ABN 39 081 678 364

Level 1, 40 Mount Street
North Sydney NSW 2060

PO Box 1961
North Sydney NSW 2059

Phone: 02 9463 9333
Fax: 02 9463 9393

mla.com.au

MLA's *Producer Adoption Outcomes Report 2024–25*
is available online at **mla.com.au/adoption-report**