

Get involved: 2020 Phosphorus Challenge, NT



Photos courtesy of Stephanie Coombes, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Northern beef producers are invited to sign up for MLA's 2020 Phosphorus Challenge.

The Challenge not only provides participating producers with insights about the P status of their mobs, but it helps MLA build a fuller picture of the P status of northern herds and demonstrate the benefits of testing and P supplementation.

Following the highly successful pilot program in 2019 involving 68 properties, the 2020 Phosphorus Challenge is seeking 105 northern beef producers to get involved.

Participating producers will receive the following (valued at \$463):

- blood sampling kit (enough for 20 samples)
- faecal sampling kit
- free postage of kits and samples
- sampling instructions
- analysis of results.

To be eligible, producers must be able to:

- yard stock at a time nominated for sampling or can organise a technician, extension officer or vet to collect the samples during routine husbandry practices
- have adequate stock handling equipment, such as a vet crush
- have young breeders, heifers or steers on a good plane of nutrition
- meet criteria to ensure blood sampling is consistent across all mobs
- collect samples at the end of the growing season (depending on seasonal conditions)

Producers should also meet at least two of the following criteria:

- have cattle grazing in a known P deficient region or in an old cropping paddock
- steers/heifers achieving an annual growth of less than 120kg or having a record of poor reproductive performance
- understand they're managing P deficient country and feed P (but want to know if supplementation is sufficient)
- new to the industry and keen to manage P deficiency to improve production.



How to get involved

The 2020 MLA P Challenge will be open to 35 producers in the Katherine, Barkly and Alice Springs regions of the Northern Territory. Applications close on Friday 21 February 2020.

Producers interested in participating should contact:

- Your local Regional Beef Research Committee Secretary/Chair: nabrc.com.au/regional-committees/
- Department of Primary Industries & Resources contact Tim Schatz: tim.schatz@nt.gov.au
- MLA P Challenge Coordinator Liz Allen: etgallen@bigpond.com