AN INITIATIVE OF

Making More From Sheep

Turning Pasture into Product

Tim Prance, T Prance Rural Consulting

t.prance@bigpond.net.au ph 0427 812 655

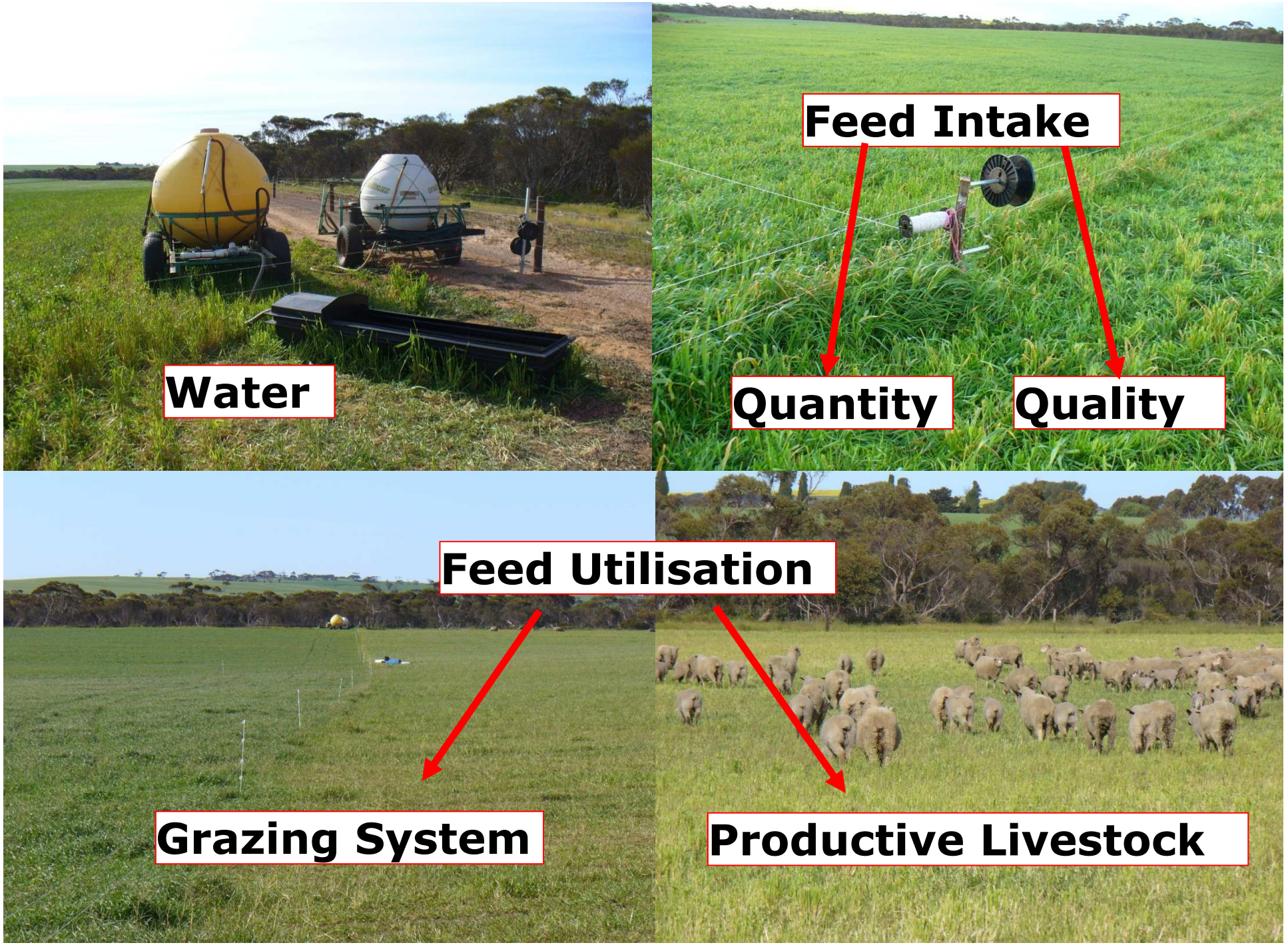
member of the SA Livestock Consultants group

EVENT PARTNERS:

EVENT SUPPORTERS:

Lucerne


MOGUL
(Medicago truncatula)
1000 plants per square metre

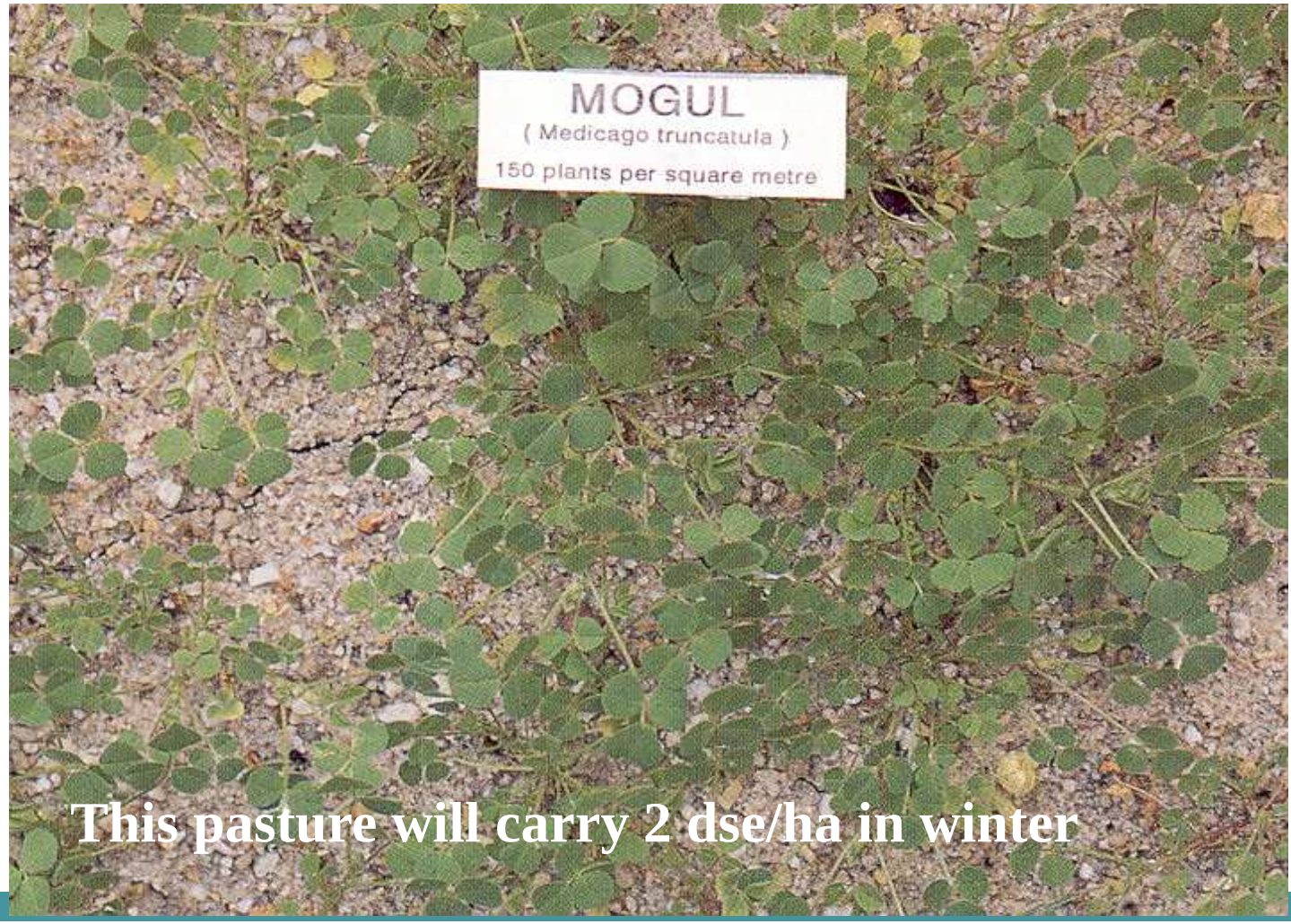

Water
Feed Intake
Quantity
Quality
Feed Utilisation
Grazing System
Productive Livestock

Quantity of Feed – Grow More

- Plant density
- Fertility/nutrition
- Leaf area & ground cover = grazing
- Mineral balance for plants and animal
- Pest & disease control

Density drives productivity
Medic 150 plants/m²

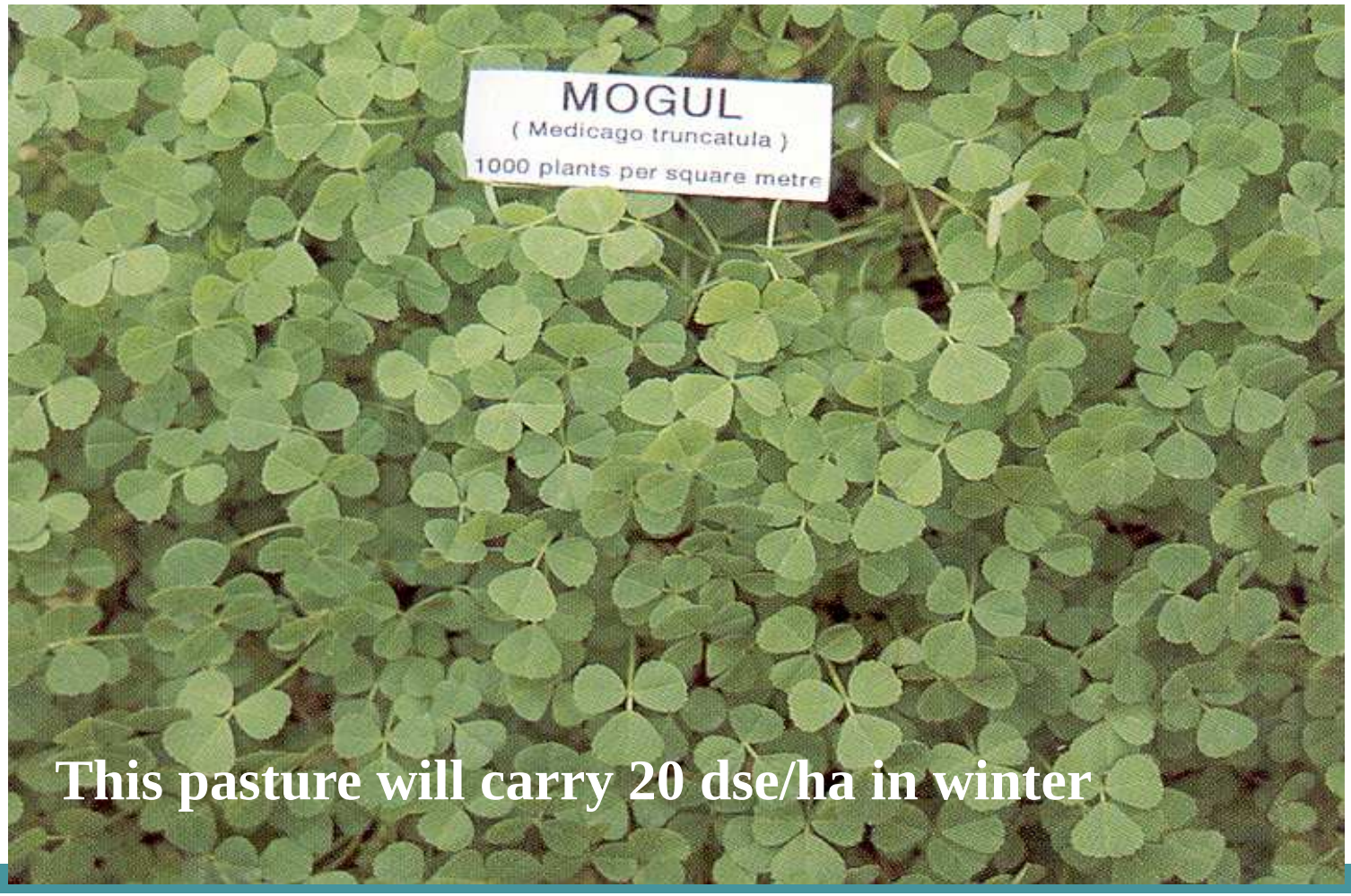
6 weeks after germination



This pasture will carry 2 dse/ha in winter

Density drives productivity
Medic 1000 plants/m^2

6 weeks after germination



This pasture will carry 20 dse/ha in winter

Soil fertility greatly affects pasture productivity and palatability

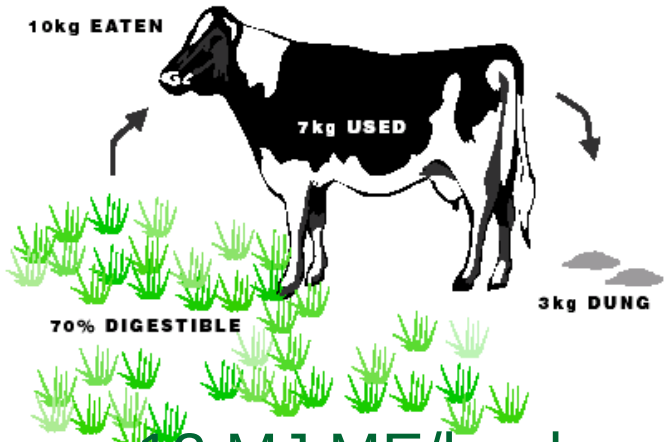
Read Five easy steps to ensure you make money from superphoshate

- Soil test
- Work out stocking rate on grazed pastures
- Match P application to stocking rate
- Check that proposed investment in P fertiliser and/or livestock will generate an acceptable return
- Check other factors that might influence P response - S, N, K, pasture density

Get the quality right

Know how good your pastures are

DM % = dry matter (after water removed)
Quality = % digestibility of the dry matter
ME – metabolisable energy (ME) measured in mega joules (MJ) per kg DM

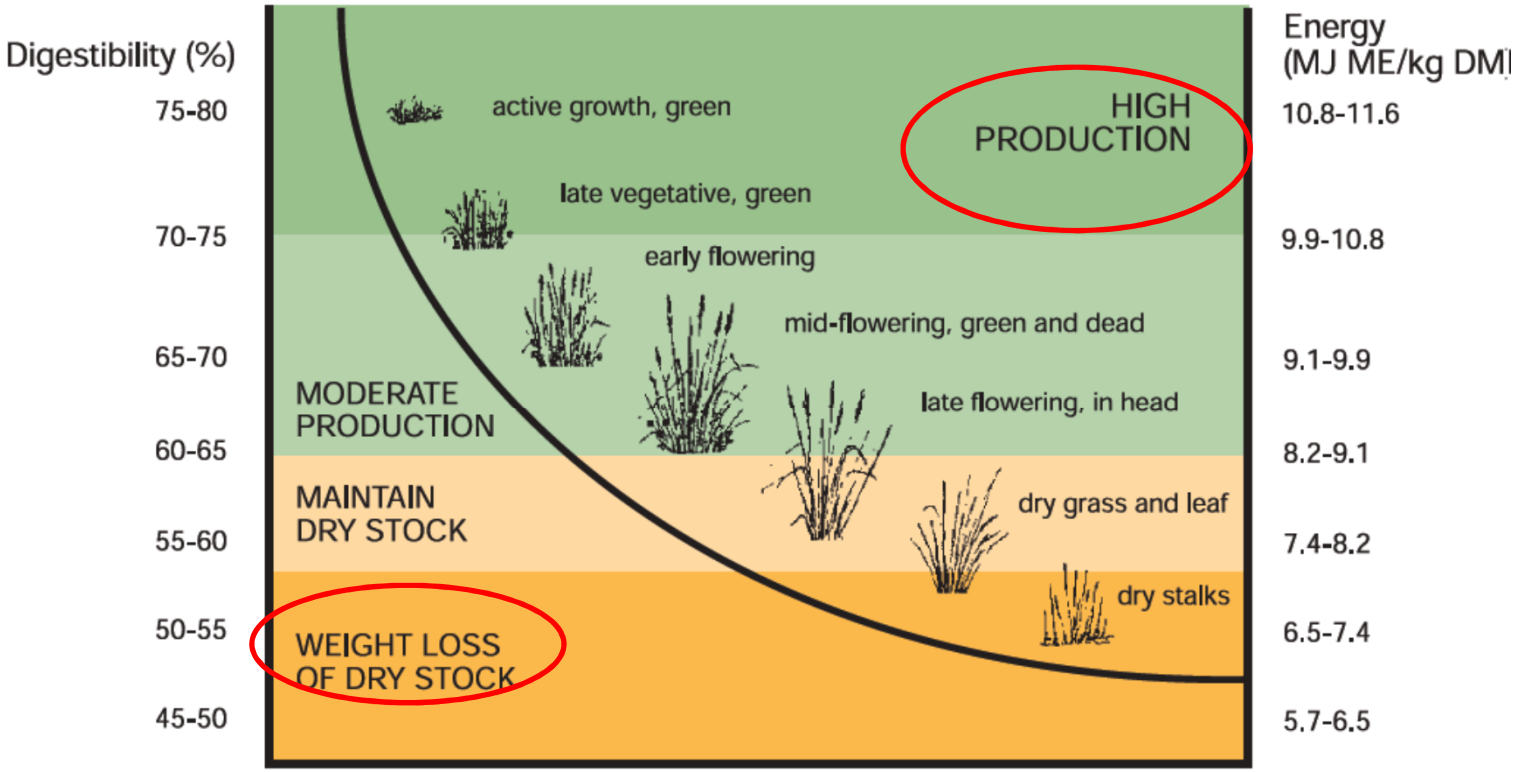


High digestibility 80% = **more energy** 12 MJ ME/kg dm

Moderate digestibility 70% = **moderate energy** 10 MJ ME/kg dm

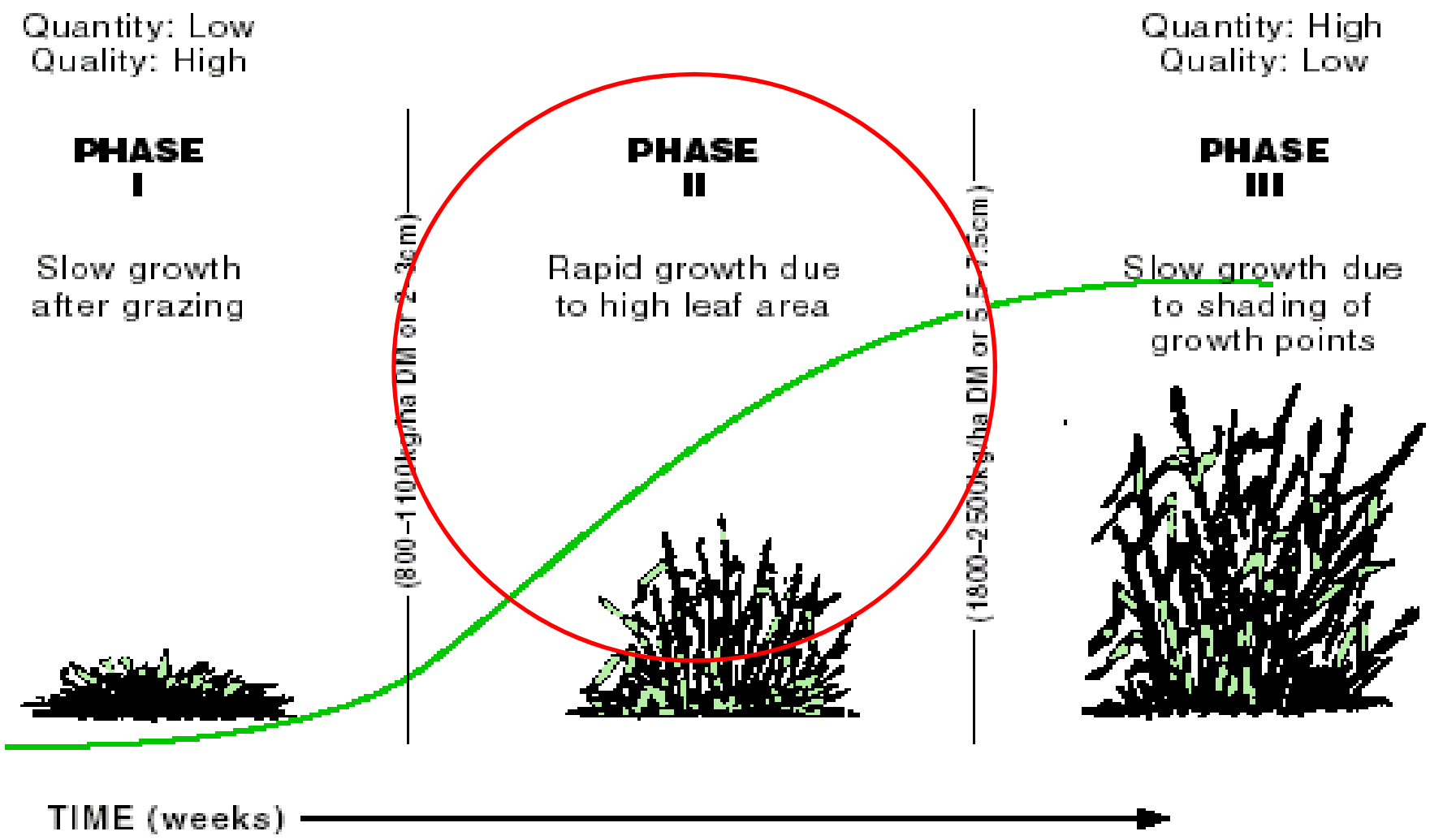
Low digestibility 50% = **low energy** 7 MJ ME/kg dm

Feed quality drops as plants grow

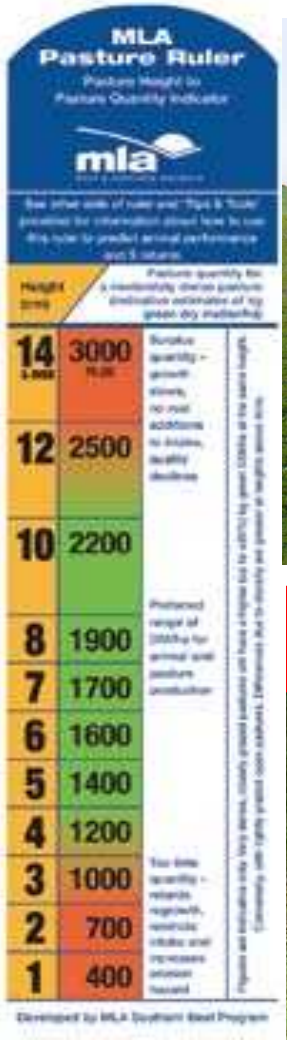


SOURCE: NSW PROGRAZE® Manual, NSW Agriculture

Phase II is the place to be!

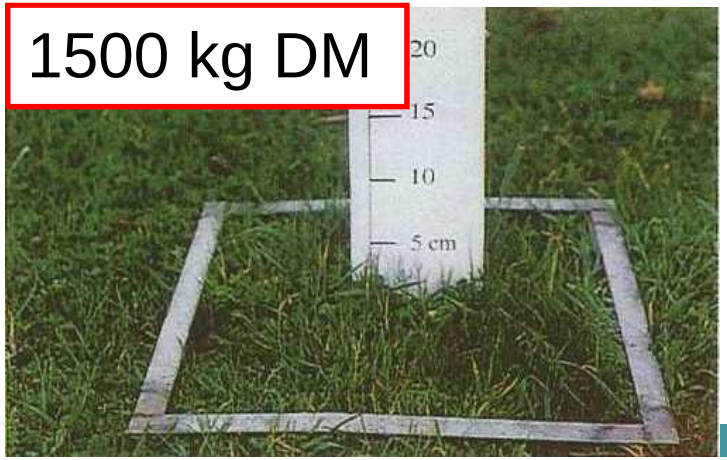


Measure, Monitor, Manage



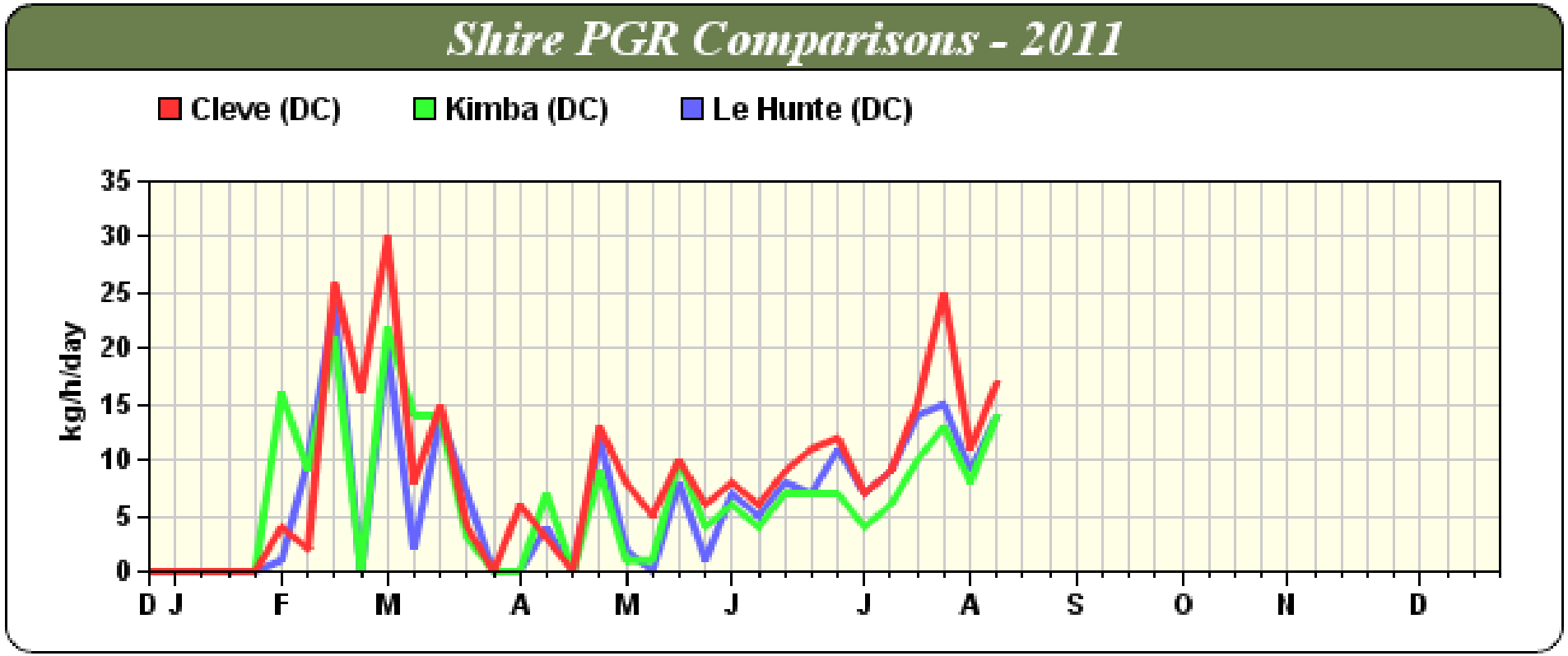
800 kg DM

1500 kg DM



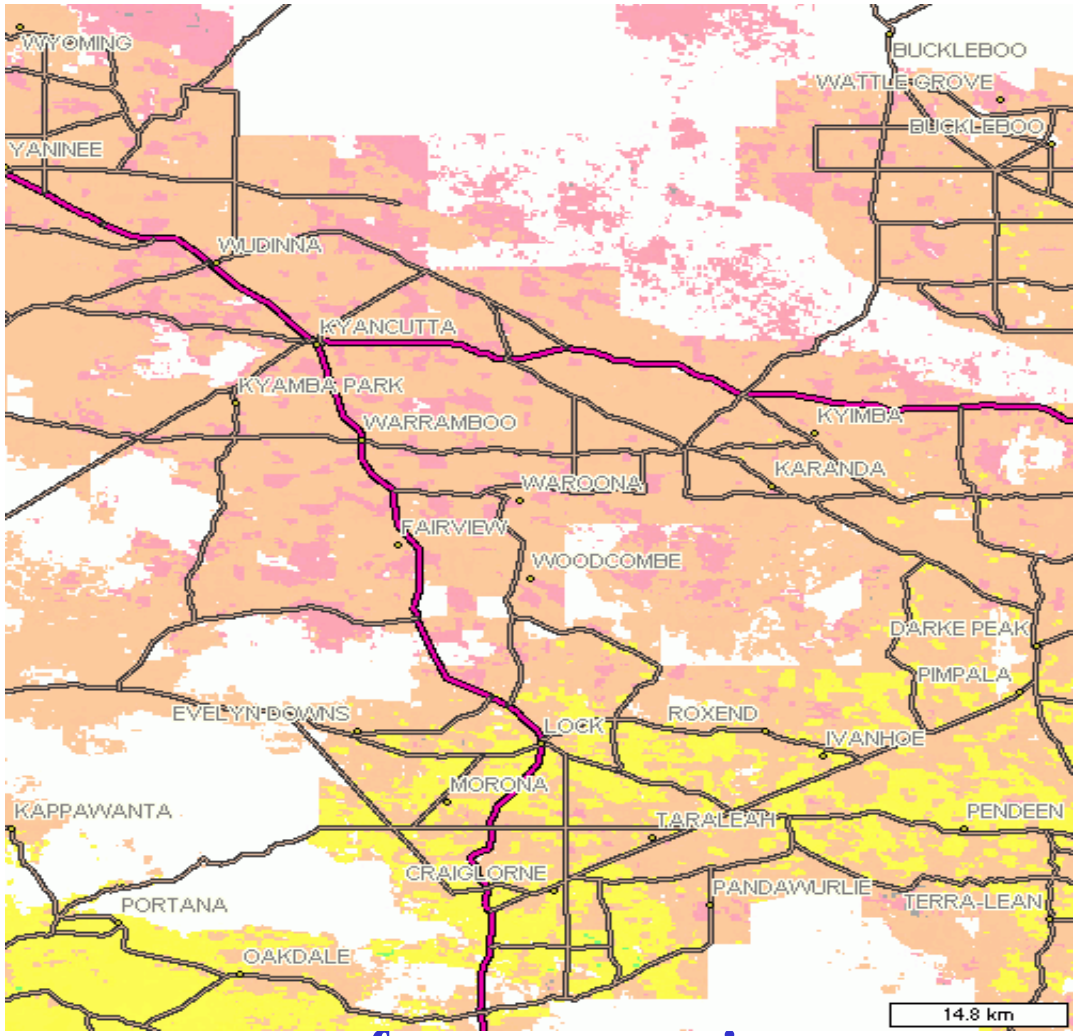
800 kg DM

Know your feed supply



www.pasturesfromspace.csiro.au

Kg/ha daily pasture growth upper EP week ending August 16th 2011



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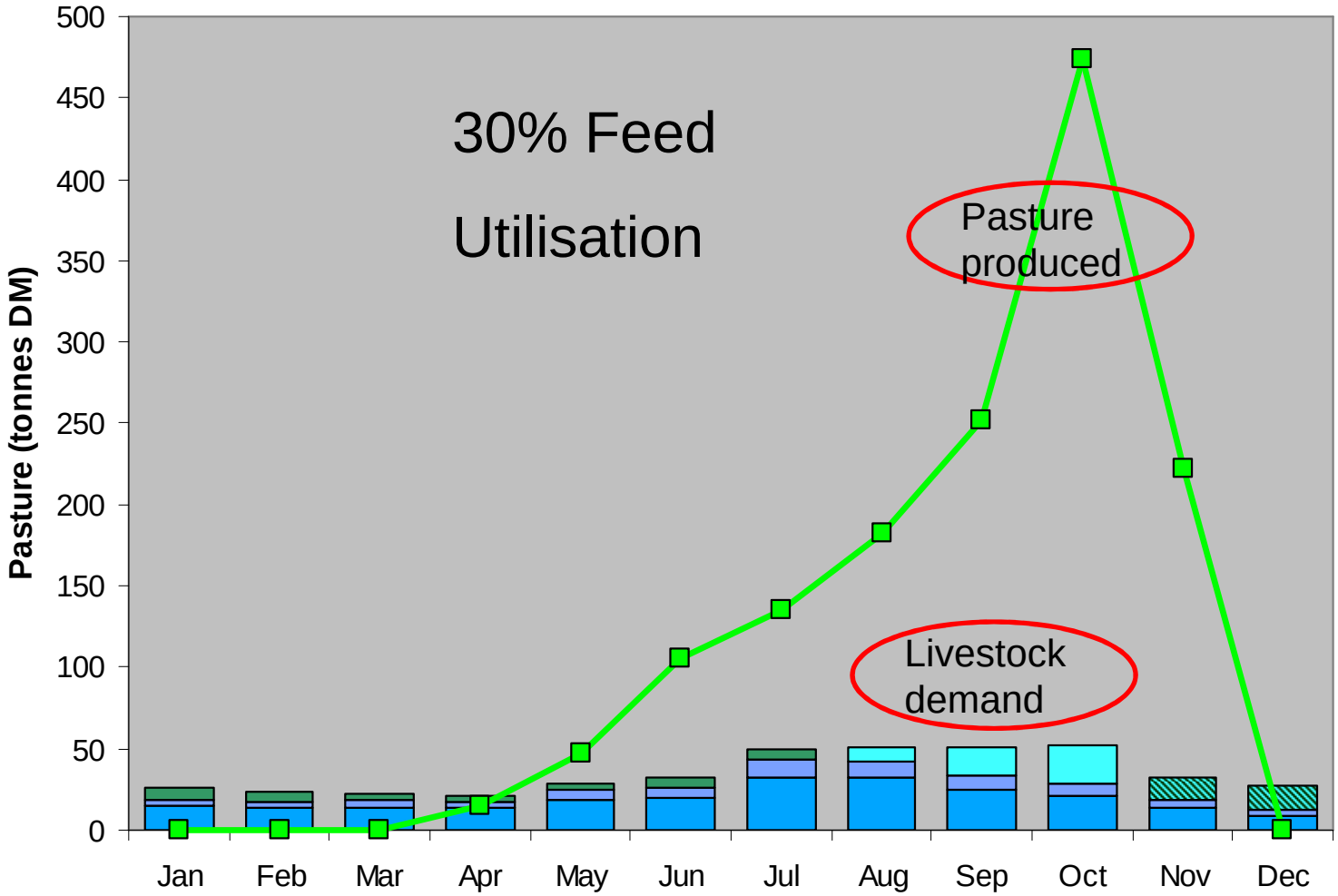
Know your feed demand

download the MLA Feed Demand Calculator



Pasture benchmarks for sheep

short dense pasture (4cm cereal in brackets)

kg/ha dry matter

Digestibility	75%	68%	60%
Dry ewe	400 (300)	600	1200
Pregnant ewe			
mid	500 (400)	700	1700
Lactating ewe			
singles	1000 (600)	1700	Not suitable
twins	1500 (1200)	Not suitable	Not suitable
Weaner lamb			
30% potential	400	700	1700
50% potential	600	1000	Not suitable
90% potential	1600	Not suitable	Not suitable
100% potential	1800 (1500)	Not suitable	Not suitable

Pastures are not about how much feed you produce, but how well you use it

Methods of Increasing Feed Utilisation

Priority	Cost	Example
1 Change that improves conversion of current pastures into wool or meat	Lower cost $10-$20/ha	Time of lambing Weaner management Genetics Sheep sale times Flock structure
2 Increase the productivity of existing pastures	Moderate cost $30-$50/ha	Increase stocking rate Rotational grazing Fencing & water Increase fertiliser
3 Improve pasture productivity by introducing more productive species	Higher Cost $80 - $200/ha	Sowing new pasture varieties or renovating existing pastures

2008 Case Study
Chris Lymn Wudinna

1. Set stocked 100 ha triticale paddock with 220 ewes and 240 lambs (lambing June 20th)

Lasted 80 days used 680 kg/ha dry matter

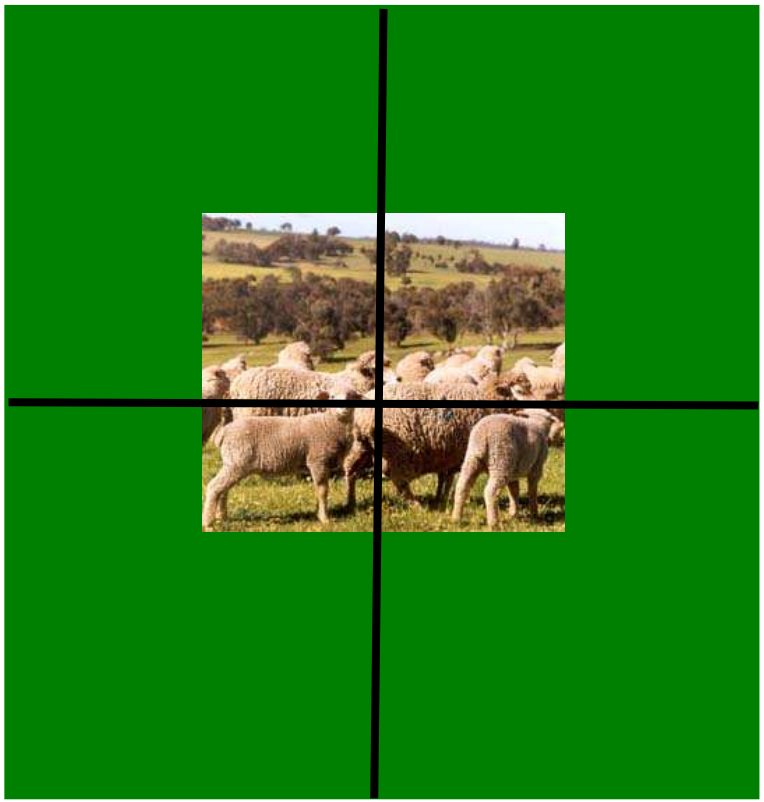
2. Rotationally grazed another 100 ha triticale paddock with 220 ewes and 240 lambs (lambing June 20th)

Lasted 110 days used 1000 kg/ha dry matter, plus 20 ha wasn't grazed (reapt and stubble baled).

Return – extra grazing $500 plus grain $3200 plus straw $800 = $4500 ($45/ha)

Stocking Rate verses Stocking Pressure

60 ha paddock – 600 DSE



60 ha
Stocking Rate = 10 DSE/ ha
Stocking Pressure = 10 DSE/ ha

30 ha
Stocking Rate = 10 DSE / ha
Stocking Pressure = 20 DSE/ ha

15 ha
Stocking Rate = 10 DSE / ha
Stocking Pressure = 40 DSE/ ha

Simple grazing system

- Paddock split into four cells
- Using temporary electric fencing
- Rotated every 5-15 days
- Even grazing
- Stocking Pressure 50-100 DSE/ ha
- **Kept between 800kg and 2000kg DM/ha**
- Surplus reapt or conserved

So what can you do now about managing pastures and sheep?

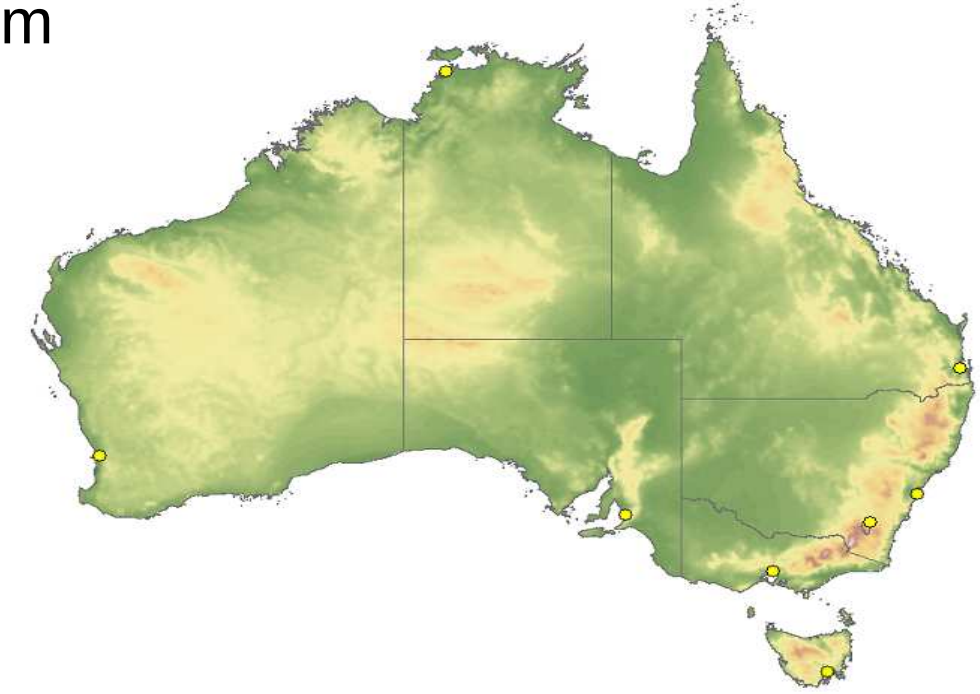
- Develop pasture & animal assessment skills
  - PROGRAZE®
- Use feed demand calculator
- Develop confidence in Feed budgeting
  - PROGRAZE
  - MLA Rainfall to Pasture growth outlook tool
  - Pastures from Space for pasture growth rates
- Making more from sheep manual
- Life Time Ewe course

A collaboration between AWI, GRDC, MLA, RIRDC and Dairy Australia

Go to Pastures Australia web site

www.pasturepicker.com.au

If you want to select a pasture species for your farm



Summary

- Grow more feed – density, fertility, grazing
- Get the quality right – 12 MJ ME/kg dm
- Graze to phase II
- Measure kg/ha dm and ME
- Work out your feed demand
- Don’t waste pasture

Toolbox

- MLA Feed Demand calculator
- MLA Cost of production calculator
- makingmorefromsheep.com.au
- Pasture picker
- Better Fertiliser decisions –www.asris.csiro.au
- MLA Rainfall to Pasture Growth Outlook Tool
- **Eyes – for looking below your knees**
- **Fingers – for condition scoring sheep**