



2019 - 20

**PRODUCER ADOPTION
OUTCOMES REPORT**



CONTENTS

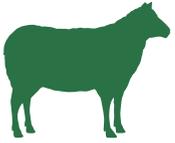
- 4** 2019-20 highlights
- 5** Program manager's welcome
- 6** Producer adoption strategy
- 8** Profitable Grazing Systems (PGS)
- 12** Producer Demonstration Sites (PDS)
- 15** Back to Business: bushfire recovery initiative
- 17** EDGENetwork
- 19** Bredwell Fedwell
- 20** Livestock advisor capacity building
- 21** Webinars
- 23** Integrated R&D and adoption initiatives
- 24** MLA contacts

2019-20 HIGHLIGHTS

\$9.52M INVESTED

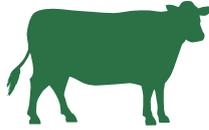
BY 2040 added value to producers following a first-round economic assessment of investments made in the Producer Adoption portfolio between 2015-20

\$484M



>2.9M

sheep benefited from practice change programs



>1.1M

cattle benefited from practice change programs



14,113

Producers engaged



>28M

hectares of Australian agricultural land impacted by MLA adoption programs



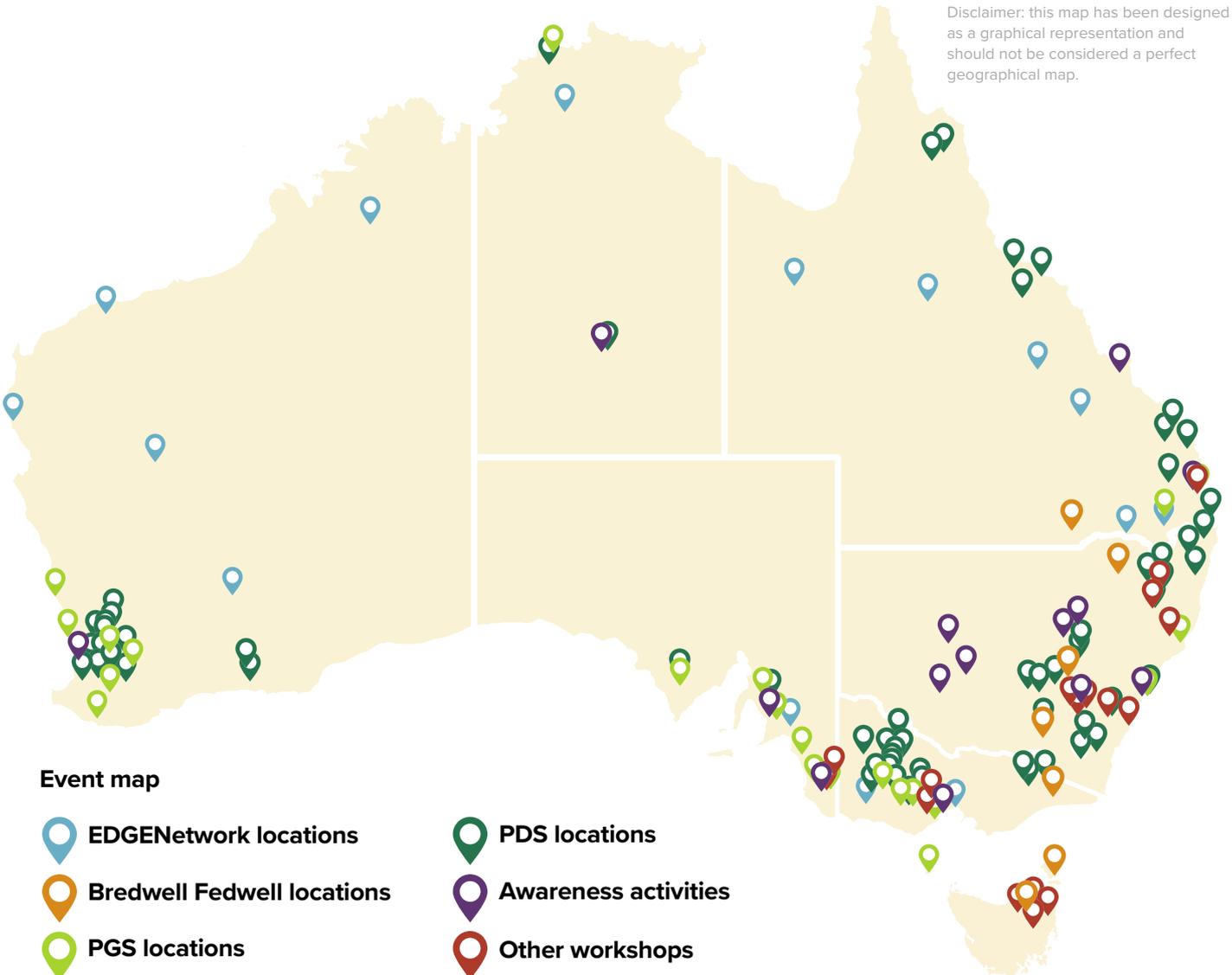
average satisfaction rate across MLA adoption programs

972 LIVESTOCK ADVISORS ENGAGED



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

Disclaimer: this map has been designed as a graphical representation and should not be considered a perfect geographical map.



PROGRAM MANAGER'S WELCOME



It is my pleasure to present to you the first Producer Adoption Outcomes Report. In this report you will find the breadth of adoption projects and programs Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) delivered for the 2019-20 financial year and how red meat producers have benefited from their involvement in them.

The red meat industry faced many challenges in 2019-20 from drought, bushfires, floods and repercussions from the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges drove producers to learn more about containment feeding, property planning and pasture redevelopment, and to seek out advisory and support services.

At MLA we have adjusted to meet the everchanging landscape of the past year from responding to the devastating bushfires to redeveloping course content and delivery platforms to accommodate online learning. The use of these new platforms has provided new opportunities, enabling us to cost effectively bring international and interstate experts to producers' homes, with the ability to be viewed on-demand.

I would like to highlight some of the key outcomes from the 2019-20 MLA Adoption program. These include:

- In a first-round economic assessment of the adoption projects funded between 2015-20, participating red meat producers will receive an additional \$484M for their businesses by 2040
- 14,113 red meat producers and 972 livestock advisors engaged in MLA adoption projects
- On average 90% of participating producers intend to implement change in their business as a direct result of their involvement in an MLA adoption program
- A total investment for the financial year of \$9.52M

Here's to the continued improvement and growth of the red meat industry!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sally Leigo". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sally Leigo
Program Manager – Producer Adoption



PRODUCER ADOPTION STRATEGY

The MLA adoption pathway is made up of three stepping stones; awareness activities, Short term training programs, and Long term practice change activities.

Awareness activities are focused on informing producers of the latest R&D relating to livestock production and can be delivered as field days, forums, webinars, newsletters, articles, podcasts etc.

Influence and motivate activities allow producers to increase their knowledge and skills of the latest livestock production practices by participating in training activities like workshops or electronic learning modules.

Involve and partner activities see producers learning from other producers and with guidance from consultants in implementing the latest livestock production practices into their business.

The MLA adoption program will be looking for opportunities in the future to increase the adoption products offered in the Short term training programs and Long term practice change categories.



The MLA Adoption Strategy details programs and activities, which lead to an increase in the adoption of R&D. These include the implementation of new initiatives and the enhancement of existing programs.

The adoption strategy has been broken down into four key pillars. These are:



Strategic framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole of Farm Awareness activities • Fill gaps across species, region, priorities • Clear links between all programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020-25 Producer demonstration sites strategy • Profitable Grazing Systems strategy • Embed adoption into all applicable Research & Development projects • Increase resources across involve and partner programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot new and develop further programs to increase capability of advisors and involvement in Research Development & Adoption programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and leverage partnerships to support programs to achieve Research Development & Adoption outcomes • Increase cross-company collaboration
----------------------------	--	--	---	---

With this increased focus and investment, the adoption strategy will continually evolve to deliver improved industry outcomes through the following key areas:

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

PROFITABLE GRAZING SYSTEMS (PGS)



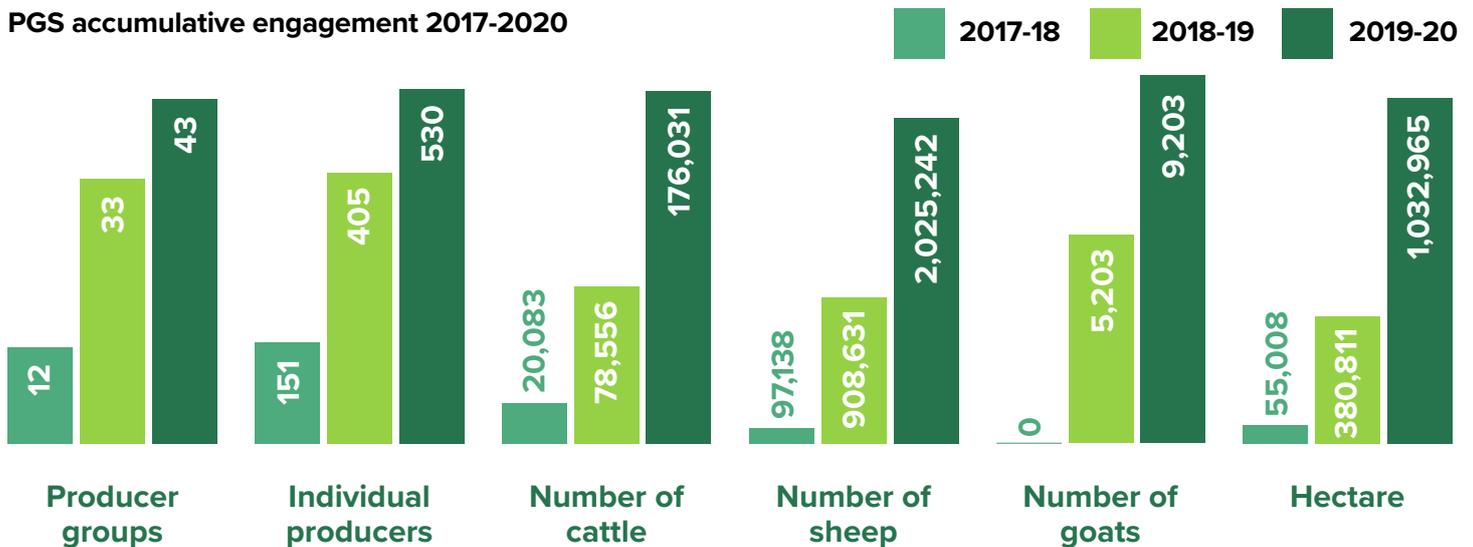
Profitable Grazing Systems (PGS) is an umbrella for a group-based delivery program that uses Supported Learning Packages (SLPs) to deliver training and coaching over several months and up to a year to improve producer skills and knowledge. The aim is to achieve practice change in areas of farm production and management covered by the SLP. Each SLP aligns to the curriculum areas of People, Business, Reproduction and Genetics, Value Chain and Feedbase.

Since November 2018, the PGS program has seen a seven-fold increase with 546 producers (33 groups) active in the program

within the 2019-20 financial year. Importantly, 70% of producers who have taken part in PGS reported an increase in knowledge and skills following the program of more than 75%, while 97% stated their intent to change on-farm practices.

As a result of investments between 2015-20, it was determined that the PGS program provided \$17.47/ha average annual net benefit to producers involved in the program, delivering \$110M in additional value to red meat producers.

PGS accumulative engagement 2017-2020



PGS offers ready-to-go training packages, including:

- **Paydirt.** This package value-adds to soil testing results and to help producers determine how to get the most bang for their fertiliser buck.
- **Dollar making decisions.** This package provides producers with the skills to take a disciplined and rational approach to capital allocation on-farm.
- **Dry time ready.** This training will leave producers with a fully developed drought management strategy focused on production and resource allocation.
- **Business essentials.** Participants will be upskilled in the fundamentals for managing the business side of a livestock enterprise.
- **Meat the market.** With a whole of supply chain focus, this package trains producers in improving lamb processing compliance and optimising meat eating quality.
- **Building better breeders.** This package covers the A-Z of beef breeding in southern and temperate production zones while supporting producers to introduce and utilise electronic identification (eID) in their operation.
- **Lifting lamb survival.** This package gives producers greater control over lambing and reproduction outcomes.
- **Pasture principles.** Producers undertake the package for a 12-month pasture production cycle to learn a set of guiding principles to manage pastures confidently regardless of the season, situation or system.
- **Satellite-assisted forage budgeting.** This package upskills producers in utilising satellite imagery to develop grazing budgets on a large scale.
- **Managing a diverse feedbase.** This program provides producers with the skills to manage a mixed farming feedbase to meet their livestock production goals.

To find out what packages are being offered in your state or to make a request, contact your PGS State Coordinator listed on the [MLA website](#).

Deliverers and producer coaches can develop their own training package to suit targeted producer needs which align with the PGS curriculum.

THE VALUE OF PGS TO PRODUCERS

\$17.47/ha

AVERAGE ANNUAL
NET BENEFIT FROM
2015-20 INVESTMENTS

\$110M

DELIVERED IN ADDITIONAL VALUE TO
RED MEAT PRODUCERS FROM
2015-20 INVESTMENTS.

PGS PERFORMANCE IN 2019-20

12
COMPLETED
GROUPS

33
ACTIVE GROUPS

89% SATISFACTION
RATE

97,475
cattle benefited from
PGS program

75% 75% of attendees
with more than 75%
improvement in knowledge
and skills as result of PGS

93% INTENT TO
CHANGE

1,116,611
sheep benefited from
PGS program

**446 ACTIVE
PRODUCERS**

5 SLPs
in development for
the Northern production
regions

17 SLPs

652,154
hectares of Australian
agricultural land impacted
by PGS program



PGS locations Map

To find out more about PGS
email getinvolved@mla.com.au or
visit the [MLA website](#)

PGS CASE STUDY -

Taking feedbase management back to basics



Craig and Jayne Drum, pictured with their dog Louie, are getting back to the basics of managing their feedbase.

Victorian sheep producers Craig and Jayne Drum could carry out feed budgeting in their sleep, but it hasn't stopped them from looking for new information to drive their feedbase productivity.

Jayne was a technical officer for trials in the MLA-supported EverGraze project for two years and Craig is an agronomist, but they reckon it's one thing to teach and another to do.

"Jayne's probably taken a thousand pasture measurements through her work," Craig said.

"The problem was, we just weren't disciplined in applying what we knew – and told others to do – in our own enterprise."

To overcome this and provide rigour to their mixed farming enterprise, the couple are currently working their way through the Managing a Diverse Feedbase program with MLA's Profitable Grazing Systems (PGS).

The program, which Craig helps facilitate, is delivered primarily by southern Victoria rural consultant Cam Nicholson to producers through group sessions, farm visits and one-on-one learning over a 12-month period.

Participants, through skills-based learning and practice, focus on how to better manage a mixed farming feedbase to meet their livestock production goals.

The PGS program is helping Craig and Jayne understand the supply of and demand on their feedbase in a 12-month cycle.

Learning curve

The Drums are relatively new to mixed farming.

Six years ago, inspired by the productivity of nearby mixed farmers, the couple introduced Australian White and Dorper ewes to their cropping enterprise.

While these breeds were easy-care and productive on a farm with no sheep-handling infrastructure, their tendency to rub and damage newly erected fencing resulted in the Drums swapping them for Merino ewes.

Craig and Jayne, who are still building up numbers, currently run 200 ewes, joined to Suffolks for a first-cross prime lamb. They opportunity trade first or second-cross lambs.

Ewes and lambs are grazed on a mix of:

- older phalaris and sub-clover pastures (dominated by phalaris)
- newer perennial ryegrass and sub-clover pastures
- failed winter crops, such as in 2019 when 138mm fell in May, 90mm in June and 80mm in July
- clover hay and feed grain

Identifying the gaps

One challenge the Drums faced was the need for ewes to lamb from 1 April, to fit in with demands of activities on and off the farm.

“The ideal would be to have ewes lambing in green pastures but, while we get lots of rain, we’re in a Mediterranean-type climate where summer rainfall is very low,” Craig said.

The PGS training helped the Drums identify this gap and understand how their pastures were performing.

Jayne said they’ve made two changes in response:

- pushing lambing back to the end of April
- providing a green food source if possible for lambing (such as sowing earlier grazing crops and, in 2020, introducing a summer crop).

They sowed fodder rape and lucerne in September to take advantage of summer storms and expect it to provide feed for pregnant ewes in February and/or March.

“I’ve learnt through measuring dry matter and developing feed budgets over and over again in this program, that I was generally overestimating how much feed was available,” Craig said.

“It’s why sheep were taking longer to reach target weights than I’d anticipated.”

The Drums believe better feedbase management is a springboard for growing their business – a theory they’re testing out by moving into trading lambs to turn events such as failed crops into opportunities.

“The PGS style of delivering learning through group sessions and one-on-one learning means you can really get to the bottom of your challenges and sort out what’s holding you back,” Craig said.

“For us it was just not being rigorous enough in optimising our feed supply and understanding the impact on animal growth.

“It’s a complex business when you’re growing crops and running livestock, but nowadays every paddock is a feed source at some stage and there are decisions to be made about that every day.”

Jayne said she’s found the balance of group discussion with one-on-one time with Cam very beneficial.

“When we sat down with Cam and mapped out our pasture growth for the year and our sheep production system, it was clear what changes could be made to our system and both the expected production and financial outcomes,” she said.

“Both of us knew these fundamentals from our work and uni days but the program has reminded us to put them into practice.”

As they improve feedbase management, Craig said it will support their next challenge – lifting their lamb weaning rates.

“If we know we’re meeting ewe feed requirements better all year round, then we can work on the other factors which impact lamb numbers, such as genetics,” he said.



Producer Demonstration Sites (PDS)



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

The demonstration sites are commercial enterprises that directly engage core producers. Additionally, activities are held to engage a wider, observer producer audience and share the learnings amongst the regional producer community.

The key outcome of a PDS is adoption of the demonstrated management practices resulting in improved business performance.

In mid-2019, MLA took the opportunity to review the Producer Demonstration Site (PDS) strategy and framework following

feedback from producers and other industry stakeholders. The feedback led to the creation of the new PDS structure, which allows for longer projects, more flexibility in producer group size, and the creation of two new PDS streams adding to the already established levy-funded PDS; Co-Contributor PDS and Integrated R&D PDS.

Levy-funded and Co-contributor PDS projects are called for annually, following consultation with research advisory councils; Southern Australia Livestock Research Council (SALRC), North Australia Beef Research Council (NABRC) and Western Australia Livestock Research Council (WALRC). Producer priorities are identified through this process which formulate the Terms of Reference for the PDS call. Producers are invited to review the applications of PDS projects to ensure they address producers' priorities and will deliver impact to their region.

PDS stream	Levy PDS	Co-contributor PDS	Integrated R&D PDS
Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 core producers and 3 sites preferred Flexibility for extensive regions and other projects e.g. genetics 2-6-year projects Maximise outside producer involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 core producers and 3 sites preferred Flexibility for extensive regions and other projects e.g. genetics 2-6-year projects Maximise outside producer involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validating research in commercial production systems 10 core producers and 3 sites preferred Constructed to suit the project timeline
Available budget	\$25K/yr – can be split to suit the project method	\$50K/yr – can be split to suit the project method	Funded from within research project budget
Priorities and review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional priorities set by RAC's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must align with industry priorities/targets Reviewed by MLA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research aligned with council/industry priorities Developed with MLA

In 2019-20 MLA received 45 Levy & seven Co-Contributor applications for PDS project ideas more than doubling the previous year's applicants. 28 of these went on to become funded and active projects. Projects funded during 2019-20 that were located in northern Australia tripled levy and co-contributor PDS activity across the northern region and further reiterated how the changes made to the PDS program have made the program more accessible for all red meat producers.

As a result of investments between 2015-20, it was determined that the PDS program provided a \$6.71/ha average annual net benefit to producers involved in the program, delivering \$126M in additional value to red meat producers.

THE VALUE OF PDS TO PRODUCERS

\$6.71/ha

AVERAGE ANNUAL NET
BENEFIT FROM 2015-20
INVESTMENTS

\$126M

DELIVERED IN ADDITIONAL VALUE
TO PRODUCERS FROM
2015-20 INVESTMENTS

PDS PERFORMANCE IN 2019-20

28

NEW PDS PROJECT
CONTRACTED

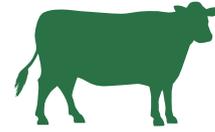
60

TOTAL ACTIVE
PDS PROJECTS



7616

Total producers
engaged



100,000

cattle benefited from
PDS program during
2019-20



producers who have
completed a PDS project in
FY2019-20 have indicated
they have adopted new
practices as a direct
result of being part of
the PDS program



6,973

Observer
producers engaged



1.4M

sheep benefited from PDS
program during 2019-20

313

ACTIVE
DEMONSTRATION
SITES

643

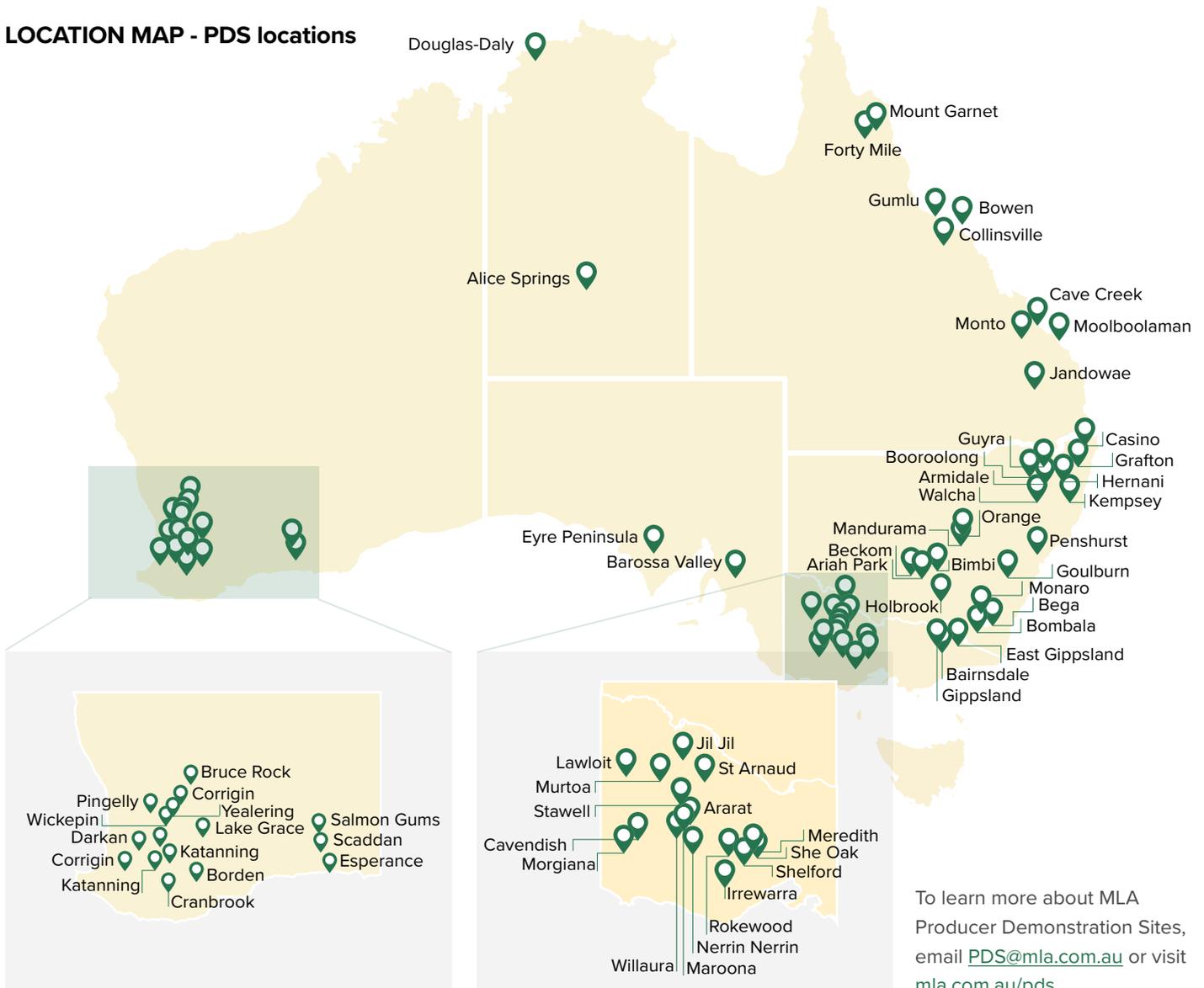
CORE
PRODUCERS
ENGAGED



900,000

hectares of Australian
agricultural land impacted
by PDS program during
2019-20

LOCATION MAP - PDS locations



To learn more about MLA
Producer Demonstration Sites,
email PDS@mla.com.au or visit
mla.com.au/pds

PDS CASE STUDY - Lamb finishing: is it worth it?



Lambs grazing Leafmore brassica at Mila, NSW, January 2019

High-performance forage crop and perennial pasture systems were put to the test in NSW's Monaro region in an MLA levy-funded Producer Demonstration Site (PDS) to see how finishing lambs stacked up compared to the traditional store lamb system.

The result was a tick for farm profitability, with average net profits from establishing and finishing lambs on the pasture/crops ranging from \$305/ha to \$1,492/ha over the two years of the PDS, despite poor seasonal conditions in the second year.

In comparison, the region's traditional system of turning lambs off as stores by the end of December, at average sale weight of 29kg had an average total enterprise gross margin of \$161/ha.

This PDS was run by Monaro Farming Systems producer group, with technical support from consultant Doug Alcock.

It followed an earlier project by Doug and the group, where they used GrassGro modelling software to quantify the benefits of finishing lambs.

It reflects changing enterprises in the region, which is traditionally a Merino grazing area.

"In the last decade, as wool prices waned in relation to sheepmeat prices, there's been a lot of opportunistic joining to terminal sires or Border Leicesters," Doug said.

"The vast majority of those animals end up in the store market, unfinished."

Monaro Farming Systems chairman John Murdoch said the group invested in GrassGro modelling to quantify the relative profitability of retaining these store lambs and finishing them on specialised, high quality pastures.

"The modelling showed that in nine out of 10 years you're going to be significantly better off, economically, by finishing lambs on specialised pastures," John said.

The PDS was aimed at giving producers confidence these modelled figures could be replicated in real-life.

Real-world test

The PDS involved 10 paddocks on host properties with pastures and crops in the original modelling:

- lucerne/phalaris/cockfoot
- lucerne
- perennial ryegrass/white clover
- Hummer fescue/white clover/sub-clover
- white clover/lucerne/chicory/plantain
- Winfred forage brassica
- Pallaton Raphno forage brassica
- Leafmore forage brassica
- plantain/chicory
- chicory/plantain/white clover.

All paddocks were grazed with weaned crossbred lambs, with 50 in each mob eID tagged as a monitor group for weighing.

Takeaway messages for producers from the PDS include:

- The highest levels of production per hectare were achieved on systems where the crop was used solely for grazing lambs.
- Significant supplementary feeding resulted in good lamb growth rates, as well as very high rates of pasture utilisation. (The performance of lambs on finishing crops with and without supplementary feeding will be the subject of another MFS PDS this summer.)
- Allocating land to specialised lamb finishing can double or even triple its profitability, more than compensating any minor reduction in carrying capacity for breeding stock.

"As the PDS wasn't conducted under strict pasture trial conditions, the systems cannot be directly compared to each other," Doug said.

"However, the results indicate producers on the Monaro should feel confident in the reliability of increased profit from lamb finishing, regardless of the pasture/crop system chosen."

Five tips for finishing lambs on pastures

- Before selecting a forage pasture, consider the site, soil type, soil fertility status and long-term plan for the paddock.
- Good agronomic advice and good paddock preparation is critical.
- Aim for high dry matter production at high digestibility at the critical time of year – summer.
- Use the specialised pasture for finishing, don't be tempted to use it for other purposes in the meantime.
- Using eID tags allows lamb weight to be easily measured more frequently to monitor growth and address problems quickly.

Back to Business: Bushfire Recovery Initiative



Between September 2019 and February 2020, New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and Queensland experienced unprecedented bushfires that devastated livestock producers. In response, MLA created the Back to Business program to provide support to those producers affected and help to assist on the long road to recovery.

The Back to Business program was developed to allow producers in bushfire affected regions to access up to three one-on-one sessions with farm business consultants to get them, and their operations, back on track.

To find out more about MLA's bushfire recovery program, email backtobusiness@mla.com.au or visit the [MLA bushfire hub](#).

BACK TO BUSINESS PROGRAM PERFORMANCE IN 2019-20

110 BUSHFIRE AFFECTED PRODUCERS ENGAGED WITH PROGRAM DURING 2019-20

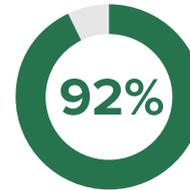
52 ADVISORS/CONSULTANTS ENGAGED WITH PROGRAM



PROVIDED SUPPORT ACROSS 5 STATES (NSW, VICTORIA, TASMANIA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA)



SATISFACTION RATING



OVERALL LEVEL OF SUPPORT RATING



KNOWLEDGE OF RECOVERY FROM NATURAL DISASTERS IMPROVED



INCREASED CONFIDENCE TO MAKE CHANGE ON FARM



OF PARTICIPANTS HAVE MADE CHANGE ON FARM AS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE PROGRAM



CASE STUDY - Rising from the ashes to build a resilient business



Producer Deb Gray reckons the Back to Business program was a ticket back to success when times were tough.
Image: Hilary Wardhaugh

Back to Business producer Deb Gray reckons the one-on-one sessions with a local farm business consultant was a ticket back to success when times were tough.

More than 110 producers in bushfire-affected regions across Australia have benefited from farm business advice to get back on track since MLA launched the free Back to Business program in January.

One producer who now knows the value of external expert advice is Deb Gray, who reckons the one-on-one sessions with a local farm business consultant was a ticket back to success when times were tough.

In early 2020, bushfires ravaged Deb's property at Araluen, NSW. More than half of her land was damaged and she lost livestock – on the back of recent severe drought, Deb said the emotional and financial toll to her and the business were extreme.

"We got through the drought and 2020 was already going to be a tight year financially, but then the fire hit and it just shattered us," Deb said.

"We came back after being evacuated and my last three paddocks of feed had been burnt to the ground.

"Our neighbours and Rural Fire Service volunteers had been amazing in saving our house and what stock and pastures they could, but in that moment I didn't know what to do."

Deb said they didn't have a set recovery plan after the fires – just the goal to reach May and sell their calves on the ground for cashflow.

"I was treading water during that period," Deb said.

"I was down to 42 head of cattle from 60, which I was keeping alive with the help of my family who got me in some feed. I had tight finances and my only plan was getting to May."

It was during this time Deb saw the Back to Business program advertised in MLA's e-newsletter, Friday Feedback.

"Accessing a consultant wasn't something I'd done before, but I was willing to try anything," Deb said.

"Alastair of RaynerAg was assigned to us and from the first session I had with him, we started to map out a plan of recovery."

Deb said the sessions stepped out short, medium and long-term plans for her business, and helped it grow in strength. Her goals are now:

Short-term

- weed management
- retaining calves originally earmarked to sell to rebuild the breeding program.

Medium-term

- shopping for bulls, using Estimated Breeding Values and growth weights to turn stock off sooner and to produce a genetically stronger herd.

Long-term

- developing strategies to increase carrying capacity from 60 to 80
- identifying additional revenue streams to complement the beef business, such as producing lucerne hay.

Transformation

Deb said the three consultation sessions she accessed through Back to Business have transformed her operation and her mental mindset.

"It really helped me to get back on my feet and feel excited about farming again," Deb said.

"If you're eligible for this sort of thing, give it a crack.

"Personally, the consultation sessions have been so valuable for us that we've actually renewed Alastair on a new 12-month contract".

"Having a consultant come in with an unbiased view to look at our business has seen its potential grow enormously, and it really was a godsend when we needed it most."

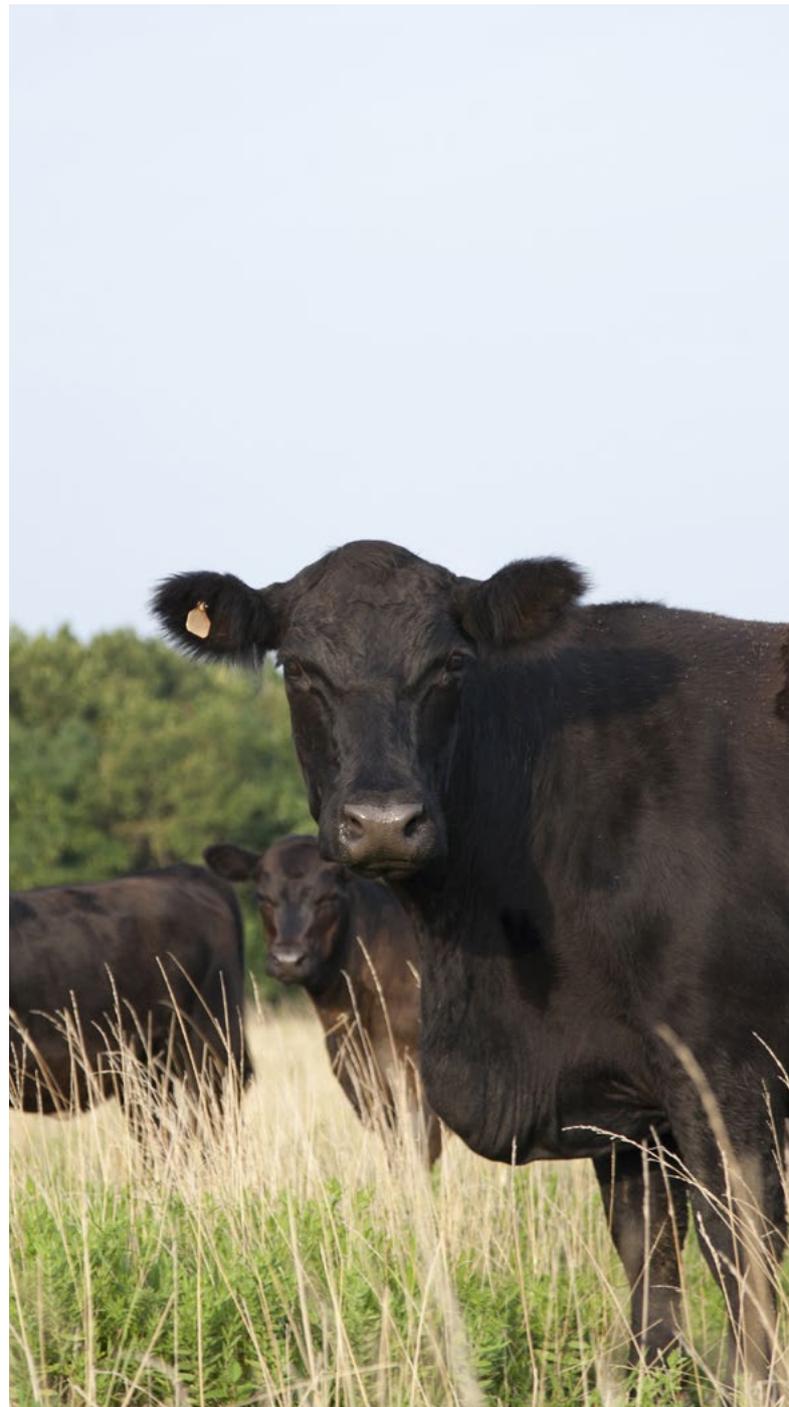
MLA's EDGEnetwork offers practical learning opportunities through one to three day workshops to help producers learn and develop skills necessary to improve their livestock enterprises.

This educational and informative format encourages producers to expand their current expertise and learn new skills, be motivated by other producers and access the latest information. Producers gain the best of group and individual learning by working in small groups that enable them to receive personalised service.

The EDGEnetwork workshops have been developed by industry specialists and tested by producers Australia-wide to guarantee their quality and relevance. There are six courses currently available:

- **Business EDGE** - Financial and business management training workshop for northern beef and southern beef producers.
- **Business EDGE young guns** – Workshops for up-and-coming livestock producers ready to build their skills and confidence to manage a modern agricultural business.
- **Breeding EDGE** – Designed to help northern beef producers develop a cattle breeding program or improve an existing one.
- **Nutrition EDGE** – A comprehensive look at ruminant nutrition in northern beef enterprises.
- **Grazing fundamentals EDGE** – Developed to identify the connection between land condition, pasture growth and animal production in northern Australia.
- **Grazing land management EDGE**– Designed to help develop grazing management strategies to increase profit and sustainability in northern Australia

As a result of investments between 2015-20, it was determined that the EDGEnetwork provided \$6.74/ha average annual net benefit to southern producers, with \$9.7M additional value across southern region, and \$0.45/ha average annual net benefit to northern producers, with \$135M additional value across the northern region.



The value of EDGENetwork to producers

DELIVERED IN ADDITIONAL VALUE TO
\$9.7M SOUTHERN PRODUCERS FROM
 2015-20 INVESTMENTS

DELIVERED IN ADDITIONAL VALUE TO
\$135M NORTHERN PRODUCERS FROM
 2015-20 INVESTMENTS

DURING 2019-20

23
 WORKSHOPS
 DELIVERED

275
 ATTENDEES

1,442
 goats benefited from
 the EDGENetwork

835,464
 cattle benefited from
 the EDGENetwork

85%
 KNOWLEDGE AND
 SKILLS ACQUISITION
 INCREASED

97%
 OF PRODUCERS
 PLANNED TO
 MAKE CHANGES
 FOLLOWING
 WORKSHOPS

323,846
 sheep benefited from
 the EDGENetwork

**REPRESENTING
 176 BUSINESSES**

90%
 VALUE
 RATING

26.1M
 hectares of Australian
 agricultural land impacted
 by EDGENetwork



Event map - EDGENetwork

To find out more about the EDGENetwork email getinvolved@mla.com.au or visit mla.com.au/EDGE

Note - multiple events were held in some locations



BredWell FedWell is a practical, one-day workshop highlighting the key production benefits of superior genetics, plus feed management for improved reproductive performance and livestock productivity.

Producers will be able to use the outcomes of the workshop to help analyse and plan a genetics and nutrition regime suited to their environment and markets to boost profitability.

Workshops focus on:

- improved understanding of how to use Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBVs) and Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) to improve enterprise profitability
- how to develop a breeding objective for your sheep or cattle enterprise
- the impact of better management of breeder nutrition on reproductive performance and profitability

- skills in developing simple energy budgets for the breeder flock or herd
- practical sessions include condition scoring, feed budgeting and ram and/or bull selection.

Since the program's inception to the end of FY2019-20, the program has engaged 4,371 sheep producers across 186 workshops.

As a result of investments between 2015-20, it was determined that BredWell FedWell provided \$2.48/ewe average annual net benefit to sheep producers, with \$33.8M additional profits across the sheep industry, and \$2.98/cow average annual net benefit to cattle producers, with \$4.98M additional profits across the cattle industry.

DELIVERED \$33.8M IN ADDITIONAL VALUE TO SHEEP PRODUCERS FROM 2015-20 INVESTMENTS

DELIVERED \$4.98M IN ADDITIONAL VALUE TO CATTLE PRODUCERS FROM 2015-20 INVESTMENTS

DURING 2019-20



192
producers engaged

6 EVENTS



84%
OF PRODUCERS PLANNED TO MAKE CHANGES FOLLOWING WORKSHOPS



88%
SATISFACTION RATING



82%
VALUE RATING



329,866
hectares of Australian agricultural land impacted by Bredwell Fedwell



116,438
cattle benefited from Bredwell Fedwell



71,800
sheep benefited from Bredwell Fedwell



Event map - Bredwell Fedwell

To find out more about Bredwell Fedwell email getinvolved@mla.com.au or visit mla.com.au/bredwellfedwell

Livestock advisor capacity building

The upskilling of livestock advisors (consultants, stock agents, agronomists, veterinarians etc.) is a core component of the MLA adoption strategy. By engaging trusted advisors in upskilling events and workshops, MLA is better able to implement practice change on farm and improve the productivity and profitability of the red meat industry.

The MLA livestock advisor program is spear headed by flagship awareness event Livestock Advisor Updates (LAU), and webinars delivered under this branding. In future, we will see an increase in programs being delivered in this space aimed at building capability and capacity in the advisor sector.

Livestock Advisor Updates (LAU)

livestock
advisor
updates



Livestock Advisor Updates (LAU) are regionally relevant, one-day technical workshops held in northern, southern and western Australia.

The workshops provide opportunities for livestock advisors, leading producers and professional extension consultants to:

- learn about the latest red meat R&D
- gain skills, tools and knowledge to increase their offering to clients
- network with their peers.

The inaugural LAU events were held in Brisbane, Sydney and Perth in late 2019. More than 130 livestock industry professionals attended, rating the workshops 7.8/10 for value and 91% of attendees would recommend the events to other advisors.

To find out more about LAU email getinvolved@mla.com.au

131 LIVESTOCK CONSULTANTS ENGAGED

3 EVENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY



VALUE RATING



PARTICIPANTS INDICATED THEY WOULD ADVISE CLIENTS TO CHANGE PRACTICE FOLLOWING WORKSHOP



During 2020, the whole country felt the impact of COVID-19. Unable to deliver extension programs face to face, MLA had to change approach to engage producers and livestock advisors. The result was a new way of working, with a heavier focus on remote delivery and digital resources.

The ability to deliver extension messages through online webinars has enabled MLA to continue engaging with red meat producers and livestock advisors as COVID-19 restricted movement and forced the cancellation and postponement of extension events across the country.

MLA's flagship webinar series, Productivity and Profitability was joined this year by webinars focused on increasing the capability of livestock advisors through both the LAU webinar series and the PGS capability building series.

Productivity and profitability webinar series

The Productivity and profitability webinar series focused on providing practical extension webinars to increase practice change on-farm. The series, which was created for a producer audience, was very popular and has since been extended to continue into 2021.

Some of the topics covered in the series during 19-20 include:

- Reducing kid loss in meat goats
- Feeding weaner cattle: production or maintenance
- The impact of COVID-19 on the Australian red meat market
- Your one-stop winter cleaning agronomy panel – its Q&A time!
- Reproductive diseases in cattle - causes, impacts and management
- Managing bloat in cattle
- Drench resistance in sheep and cattle

All webinars are available on the [MLA website](#).



PGS capability building webinars

The PGS capability building webinars were a series of seven introductory webinars designed, delivered and evaluated to improve the skills and confidence of MLA collaborators in the use of web meetings to engage their clients. Specifically, they were to support MLA service providers in their ability to deliver high-value PGS Supported Learning Packages during the COVID-19 restrictions and in remote areas of Australia using remote delivery technology.

 **266**
REGISTRATIONS

 **202**
ATTENDEES



INCREASE IN KNOWLEDGE FOLLOWING WEBINAR



SATISFACTION RATING



VALUE RATING



7
WEBINARS

Livestock Advisor Update webinars

To extend the reach of the LAU program, a webinar series was initiated in March 2020. The use of webinars also allowed MLA to continue to engage livestock advisors as COVID-19 restrictions forced postponement of Livestock Advisor Update in-person events across the country.

 **331**
REGISTRATIONS

 **160**
ATTENDEES



INCREASE IN KNOWLEDGE FOLLOWING WEBINAR



SATISFACTION RATING



VALUE RATING



5
WEBINARS

Some of the topics covered in the series during 2019-20 include:

- Webinar delivery and engaging remotely with clients
- National beef industry outlook report
- How to better leverage weather forecasting tools

Online resources

Although unable to hold workshops and deliver resources in person, MLA created additional written resources and new ways of accessing content.

An example of new publications created during FY2019-20:

- Turning off Cattle to Pasture Following Extended Supplement fact sheet
- An introduction to Leucaena – the productive and sustainable forage legume
- Why do cattle need phosphorus? A guide for northern beef producers
- A producers' guide to production feeding for lamb growth
- Tips & Tools: Northern beef reproductive performance

During 2020, MLA took the opportunity to redesign six of its most popular feedbase tools. These updated tools will be made available early in 2021 following rigorous producer testing. The six tools being redesigned are:

- The Stocking rate calculator
- The Phosphorus tool
- The Feed planning and budget tool
- The Feed demand calculator
- The Pasture improvement calculator
- The Pasture trial network

2020 has increased the reliance on online delivery. To help facilitate delivery of capability building packages MLA has developed an eLearning platform that will house training packages for red meat producers and livestock advisors. Users can work through training packages at their own pace or pick and choose the content that is suitable for their production system. The platform is due for release in early 2021.

COMING IN 2021

- Due to launch in early 2020, the highly anticipated MeatUp southern awareness events were delayed until March 2021. The events scheduled to take place in 2020 will instead be moved to 2021.
- After running for 16 years, BeefUp events were not held during 2019-20. BeefUp events are scheduled to resume in February 2021 across northern Australia.
- LAU north and south events were postponed to 2021 and will be held at the same location as previously advertised for 2020.

Integrated R&D and Adoption initiatives

In addition to the \$9.52M investment in MLA's Producer Adoption budget, investments into adoption and extension have been made across initiatives that integrate research, development & adoption programs. These integrated programs have been created with the intention of fast tracking the adoption of extendable research outcomes, as well as compliment the existing suite of MLA adoption products.

Two programs underway in 2019-20, Northern Breeding Business (NB2) and the Sheep Reproduction Strategic Partnership, are detailed below.

Northern Breeding Business (NB2)



The Northern breeder business (NB2) program is an initiative developed by the North Australia Beef Research Council (NABRC) in conjunction with MLA to address calf loss in northern breeding herds, low profitability of many northern beef enterprises, and low adoption of proven management practices and technologies. The project has set the ambitious target to deliver an estimated \$20 million/year in net benefits by 2027 to 250 northern beef enterprises.

There are four key pillars to the program including the overarching 'adoption pillar' named Pathway to Practice – focused on delivering the practice change required to achieve the benefits listed above. The three R&D pillars including herd, feedbase, and environment will be directed by feedback from participating producers. An NB2 needs and gaps analysis will be completed independently, ensuring involvement with NABRC.

The driving force behind the program is the establishment of producer groups where peer-to-peer learning is key to developing and implementing customised breeding management programs for each participant. These groups will discuss and assess core topics, practices, and new R&D with the help of a producer mentor as well as an experienced facilitator who will help secure any training required by the group. To assess the impact of practice change resulting from these groups, producer participants will be taught how to gather and analyse key data. Any producer who currently operates a beef breeding business in the NABRC regions is welcome to join these groups via an 'expression of interest' process.

To find out more, email getinvolved@mla.com.au or visit mla.com.au/nb2

Sheep Reproduction Strategic Partnership (SRSP)

The Sheep Reproduction Strategic Partnership (SRSP) stemmed from the Sheep Reproduction RD&E Impact Assessment review. Among the key findings was a considerable amount of sheep reproduction R&D has generated new knowledge demonstrating pathways to improve reproductive outcomes, however, there remains a significant opportunity to boost adoption to increase reproduction efficiency on-farm. Improving sheep reproductive performance, reducing ewe and lamb mortality, and improving animal welfare is a key priority for MLA, Australian sheep and wool producers and other industry partners.

MLA called for expressions of interest to develop the strategic partnership to address emergent priorities and to leverage opportunities for wider industry collaboration. From this process, MLA received 21 expressions of interest covering 24 partners to be involved in the partnership.

The major priority of the SRSP is to lift lamb survival in the Australian sheep industry through the increased adoption of proven management practices which have been developed through key research projects over the years. This will be done through four key pillar areas.

- Pillar one – On-farm best practice management
- Pillar two – Human social factors
- Pillar three - Enabling technologies
- Pillar four – Basic research and development

A key part of this strategy is the importance of integrating adoption practices into all pillars of the partnership, but most actively through Pillar one – On-farm best practice management. The integration of adoption into the program strategy highlights the importance of extending research outcomes, as well as promoting the integration of adoption pathways at the beginning of research projects.

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

MLA Contacts

To find out more about MLA adoption programs or to get involved, email getinvolved@mla.com.au

To learn more about MLA Producer Demonstration Sites, email PDS@mla.com.au

To learn more about MLA tools and calculators email tools@mla.com.au

To learn more about MLA eLearning platform, email elearning@mla.com.au

For all other enquiries, please email info@mla.com.au





