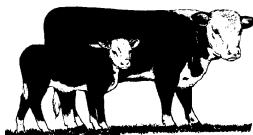
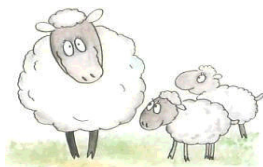




# Euroa Grazing Group



**Next session Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> April – Pastures for Place and Purpose  
Session 1 – Establishment Plan and Correcting Soil Deficiencies**

**Note the plan below – there are some things you need to bring with you!**

**It is important you come to this session if you want to participate in the Pastures for Place and Purpose program.**

**Location:** Ruffy Hall followed by paddock walk at Stan Artridge's property

**Plan:**

**9am** Arrival for a cuppa if you want to chat (we will be tight for time so won't be having a set time for think tank discussion - you may need to use your breaks for this)

**9:30am** Announcements and any burning issues

**9:40am** Enrolment for Pastures for Place and Purpose (Paddy McCarthy)

**10am** Introduction to the course and discussion of pasture establishment procedure including weed management.

**11:30 am** Soil properties from your paddock (you will need to bring a sample of your own soil for this!)

**12pm** Reading your soil test and calculating nutrient requirements for your focus paddock. (You will need to bring a copy of a soil test from a paddock you intend to establish – if you have one. We will have one from Stan's paddock and the trial paddocks for you to practice if you don't have your own).

**12:30pm** Lunch

**1pm** Continued reading your soil test and using a computer spreadsheet to calculate the cheapest fertiliser (We will supply some laptops for this – BYO if you have one)

**2:15pm** Paddock walk – assessment of the current composition, plant counts and indicator plants against soil test results in Stan's paddock – determining strategy for establishment. Also taking a look at the mulching work Stan has been doing.

**3:30pm** Close

***Please let Jane or I know if you cannot attend***

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## Coming events

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May

Euroa Grazing Group (Session 2 Pastures for Place and Purpose) – Mapping of your farm using iFarm, and profiling your feed supply/demand using the Feed Demand Calculator. Location TBC.

22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> June

BESTWOOL-BESTLAMB FEWETURE FARMING ANNUAL CONFERENCE, Bendigo

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June

Euroa Grazing Group (Session 3 Pastures for Place and Purpose – note date swap from weaner management session which will be held in August).

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> August

Euroa Grazing Group (Cattle Weaner Management)

10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> August

Grasslands Society of Southern Australia Annual Conference – Wangaratta

## Pastures for Place and Purpose Details

The next 3 sessions will be spent on the Pastures for Place and Purpose program. This course will be conducted by RIST. You will be required to complete an enrolment form for the course. The BESTWOOL-BESTLAMB program will cover your costs for the course as it will be delivered during our sessions.

A description of the program is provided below:

“This program is about selecting the right plant species that will produce and persist in your environment, pay for itself and stay there for the long term. Together we will discuss what makes a good pasture establishment and what corners not to cut. We will ask the question – why are we establishing a pasture in the first place? What purpose does that pasture need to serve? How does the pasture need to be managed to pay the bills at the end of the day? To help us through the journey, we will draw on the experiences of those in your group together with results of systems research at EverGraze Proof Sites and years of prior research and modelling.”

During the first session, we will begin to fill the boxes of a pasture establishment plan for your focus paddock. This will include weed control, fertiliser etc.

In the second session, we will get you to map your farm using aerial photography in the computerised program iFarm. Using iFarm, we will measure the area you have down to different pasture types and the size of paddocks you want to renovate. We will feed this information into the Feed Supply/Demand Calculator to determine when you most require feed.

In the third session we will look at feed quality supply and demand at different times of the year according to your livestock and the current proportion of different pasture types you have on your farm. We will use this to determine how you can best fill these gaps and how much area would be required to sow down to meet your needs.

We will also cost out your pasture renovation and determine the payback period.

We may also need to slot in an extra session to complete the content of the course (we can talk about this at the next session).

You will present your plan to the group during one of our other sessions, and in November, we will tour the farms to see how each of your focus paddocks are going.

Please let me know if you have questions about the program.

### **[Review Session 1 – Trial Plots, decisions on soil, and trial planning](#)**

Our first session for the year was a day jam-packed with some great contributions from the group, some exciting sites at the trial plots, and some good learnings from the fertiliser and rotational grazing calculations.

In our “think-tank” session, Andrew Walta initiated an interesting discussion on whether to keep or sell weaners with high store prices now that aren’t guaranteed to stick around. Some quick calculations on margins revealed that it was probably worth keeping them to grow out to 450kg provided we had excess feed that needed to be used. If extra feeding was required, it probably wasn’t worth keeping them. We also had discussion around the usefulness of heifers which are often more versatile than steers.

Summer weed control was also on the agenda with heliotrope being an issue this year. The question was whether we could spray heliotrope after it had flowered if it hadn’t yet seeded. I’ll provide this answer at the next session.

### **The trials**

In the paddock, there were some interesting results from the trial plots. It appeared that allot of the Exceltas Brome had died over the summer, but was regenerating from seed. The Yarck Cocksfoot proved useful feed during the summer and has come back fairly well. The Uplands Cocksfoot seems to have thickened over summer. The Flecha fescue has come through ok but has died back in some of the more sandy areas. Everybody agreed that the Landmaster phalaris looked to be doing the best so far.

Using the “rotation planner”, the group put together a rotation for John Kelly’s plots and decided on a stocking rate of 15 head of 350kg animals. Since John has bought 300kg animals, we have put in 20 head. During the first grazing of the two phalaris plots (9 days), these animals put on 0.66kg/hd/day.

I will provide you all with a copy of the rotation planner on a memory stick in the next session.

### **On-Farm Trials**

When we returned inside, we discussed the on-farm trials group members will undertake this year to answer questions required to meet their farm goals. We discussed measurements of DSE grazing days/ha which can be used to determine how well one treatment is doing compared to another. I have provided this calculation below. Please bring along your calculated grazing days to each session so that we can keep track of your trial results.

### **Fertiliser calculations and test strips**

The group looked at John's soil test and calculated the amount of phosphorus he requires to maintain his Olsen P. We also looked at potassium where he has a deficiency and discussed doing test strips. I have since delivered some potash and a bag of Super-Moly to determine any benefit from adding molybdenum to the soil.

## Photo Gallery



Group members getting down on hands and knees to see the new brome plants regenerating at the Kelly plots.



Group members walking through the Yarck cocksfoot plots.



Cocksfoot plots at Andrew Walta's property.



Flecha Fescue plot at Andrew Walta's property.



Uplands cocksfoot coming through strongly after heavy silver grass infestation at Walta plots.