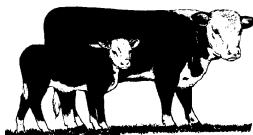
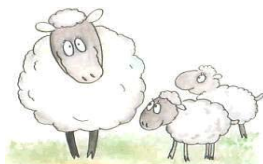




Euroa Grazing Group



Next session Thursday 22nd October – Cost of Production Feedback, Partial Budgeting and financial analysis of pasture establishment from the trials so far.

Location: Meet at Longwood Hall – afternoon session at Simon Edward’s place with a visit to Andrew Walta’s trial plots and Ryecorn if we have time.

Time: 9.15am for 9:30am start – 3:00pm finish.

Plan:

9:30am

- Update from John and Andrew on trial plots
- Update from Frank or Rob on worm juice
- “Think Tank” Bring an issue to discuss.

10:30am Morning tea

10:45 am Cost of production feedback and partial budgeting

1pm Lunch (BYO)

1:30pm

Paddock walk – Simon Edwards and Andrew Walta.

Please let Jane or I know if you cannot attend

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Coming events

Thursday 12th November – 4:30pm – 8:30pm

EverGraze supporting site field day at Warrenbayne. See the result of native pasture management, native pasture and weed ID session with Peter Mitchell and cost/benefit of pasture establishment with Alison Desmond.

Thursday 19th November – EGG Soil Biology and Worm Juice session with Julian Hills at Brooklands, Ruffy.

Thursday 3rd December – EGG Christmas Party

Review of Trial Session at John Kelly's property

We had a great day out at John's, especially since it rained for the whole day!

We started by weighing the Heifers John has been raising. Dave Manning from Galleger gave a demo on the use of the NLIS wand for recording the weights and instantly gave us the average gain of 1.6 kg/hd/day for the month. Mick Curtis was also putting growth hormone implants into the ears of the heifers to add to their growth without laying down fat for the last couple of months before sale. Since the growth hormone was put in, the 32 heifers grazed the trial plots for 19 days and put on an average of 2 kg/hd/day. That is a total of 122 kg beef produced/ha for that 19 days.

After taking a look at the trial plots and having a great hot lunch at Hunter's Rural open day, we sat down back in John's shed to crunch some numbers. We had decided that the trial plots at both John and Andrew's needed grazing with well over 3000kg/ha in some of them, and quite allot of annual weeds at Andrews that needed knocking down. So, we used the MLA stocking rate calculator and a feed budgeting spreadsheet I developed a while ago to carry out the calculations for days grazing to 1500kg/ha. If you would like to access the stocking rate calculator, visit www.mla.com.au and click on stocking rate calculator. I have provided a summary of what we calculated below.

It was also decided on the day that before John put the wires up on the fences dividing the plots, the cattle could be put in the plots for a few days to see which species they preferred. Thanks to Keith Dean for keeping an eye on the cattle over that weekend – it appears that the phalaris is the yummiest of all the pasture species. The fences had to go up to make them eat the fescue which had already gone quite storky. Interestingly, John also thinks the cattle put on less weight while they were grazing the fescue.

Andrew grazed his plots with 223 steers for half a day each. John grazed his with the 32 heifers for the days listed below. Although Phalaris 1 had enough feed for grazing, we decided not to graze it as it was starting to go to head.

News from the Bus Trip to Holbrook

We all had a great time on the bus trip. Ian Locke spoke about management of his hill country with less inputs and utilising his pastures during spring and autumn and resting for summer. He had a high input system on the low country where he could get bang for his buck.

The alternative fertiliser trial was underway, but no results as yet. We all agreed that it was a great initiative and that the measurements the group was conducting on that site would be highly valuable.

Perhaps the most interesting thing at the EverGraze visit was the sub clover trial which well demonstrated that broadcasting does not work and that a drill must be used for successful re-establishment of sub clover. Nigel Philips also spoke about the need to identify resident clover plants in order to know if the new establishment has been successful.

Key messages from the grazing trial were that lambs were able to put on as much weight grazing native pastures during spring compared to phalaris while still on their mothers; and that "robbing Peter to pay Paul" was a good strategy for managing native hill country and productive flats as one system, each benefiting from the other.

Update on trial results

Number of days to graze plots:

Pasture Available 23/9/09

| | Exceltas | Yarck | Uplands | Phalaris | Flecha | Uplands 2 | Exceltas 2 | Phalaris 2 | Flecha 2 | Yarck 2 | Control |
|---|----------|-------|---------|----------|--------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|------------|---------|
| Available Kelly | 1855 | 1825 | 820 | 2950 | 3000+ | 550 | 1780 | 3000+ | 3000+ | 1795 | |
| After graze all plots together for 4 days | 1920 | 2100 | 1000 | 2260 | 3000 | 820 | 1680 | 2575 | 2550 | 1520 | |
| Leaf Stage Kelly | 4.5 | 5.0 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 5.0 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 5.0 | |
| Grazing days with 32 heifers | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1.5 | 3 | 0 | 0.5 | 2 | 2 | 0 | |
| Available Walta | 2420 | 2820 | 1920 | 1680 | 3000+ | 2500 | 2120 | 2280 | 3000+ | 2000 | 1400 |
| Leaf Stage Walta | 4.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | |

Walta Grazing Days/ha May-October (Grazing days = DSE * no. head/ha * days grazing)

| | Control | Ryecorn | Ryecorn II | Chicory | Banquet | Jackie Trit | Trial plots |
|---------------------------|---------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Grazing days/ha since May | 1072 | 1852* Approx 6t avail | 1543* Approx 6t avail | 2341 | 669* Approx 4t avail | 1170 | 1226 |

* Ready to be grazed again with significant feed available

Establishment costs

| Grass Seed | Price/kg inc GST | Seeding rate (kg/ha) | Grass Cost/ha |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Uplands Cocksfoot | \$7.85 | 5 | \$39.25 |
| Exceltas Brome | \$5.00 | 30 | \$150.00 |
| Flecha Fescue | \$9.55 | 15 | \$143.25 |
| Yarck Cocksfoot | \$12.10 | 5 | \$60.50 |
| Landmaster Phalaris | \$21.00 | 5 | \$105.00 |

| Clover seed | Price/kg inc GST | Seeding rate (kg/ha) | Clover cost/ha |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Urana + Coolamon | \$8.30 | 8 | \$66.40 |
| Riverina + Dalkeith | \$7.23 | 8 | \$57.80 |

Other sowing costs/ha (inc GST)

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Sowing contractor | \$70.00 |
| MAP fertiliser @ 100 kg/ha | \$100.00 |
| Spray Roundup 1.2L/ha + Goal 80ml/ha | \$12.00 |
| Spray contractor Roundup | \$22.00 |
| Spray Lemat 100ml/ha | \$4.00 |
| Spray contractor Lemat | \$22.00 |
| Spray Agtryne toadrush | \$17 |
| Spray contractor toadrush | \$22 |
| Total | \$269.00 |

| Treatment | Total Costs/ha |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Uplands Cocksfoot | \$374.65 |
| Exceltas Brome | \$485.40 |
| Flecha Fescue | \$478.65 |
| Yarck Cocksfoot | \$395.90 |
| Landmaster Phalaris | \$331.80 |

A cost of the time lost grazing can be included as follows:

May-October control grazing days = 1072 DSE days/ha

1 steer = 10 DSE

Therefore, the paddock carried 107 animals/ha for equivalent of 1 day.

If each animal gained approx 1kg/hd/day during that period on the control pasture, it produced 1kg/hd/day*107 = 107 kg beef/ha, which at \$1.80/kg = \$192/ha

However, since the start of October, very little production has occurred on the control since it was mostly annual silver grass and capeweed, but the trial plots have received 1226 DSE days/ha with animals growing 2kg/hd/day which equates to 122 hd/ha * 2kg/hd/day * \$1.80/kg = \$439/ha, more than making up for the grazing lost during establishment.



Above: Cattle lined up grazing the phalaris plot.



Left: Phalaris on the right was favoured ahead of fescue on the left.

Below: Sub clover recovering after being burnt by Agtryne.



