

beefup FORUM

Broome BeefUp Forum

MONDAY 27 MARCH 2023

Hear about the latest on-farm R&D

•

Have your say on R&D priorities in your region

•

Gain insights, tools and next steps to beef up your business

Welcome

MLA's BeefUp Forums are held throughout northern Australia and are developed by regional Working Groups in collaboration with the BeefUp Coordinator (AA&P Events) and MLA. Thank you to the Kimberley Regional Beef Research Committee (RBRC), the Kimberley Pilbara Cattleman's Association and WA DPIRD for their support in planning this event.

MLA's BeefUp Forums have been developed to:

- Give you an opportunity to see and hear about what MLA and industry partners are delivering
- highlight current and completed research that is relevant to you
- give you a chance to participate in regional research, development and adoption (RD&A)
- hear about your regional RD&A priorities
- provide practical tools and information to beef up your business.

BeefUp forums are about helping northern beef producers identify ways to improve the productivity and profitability of their beef enterprises. After today, use this booklet to find the information, tools and contacts you need to put your ideas into action.

Event location

Mangrove Hotel

47 Carnarvon St

Broome WA 6725

Forum Coordinator Contact

Natalie Bell

AA&P Events

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About MLA

Meat & Livestock Australia Limited (MLA) delivers research, development and marketing services to Australia's cattle, sheep and goat producers. MLA has approximately 50,000 livestock producer members who have stakeholder entitlements in the company.



Program

Monday 27 March	
8:30am	Registration opens
9:30am	Opening Barb Camp, Chair Kimberly RBRC
9:35am	RBRC Welcome Barb Camp, Chair Kimberly RBRC
9:40am	MLA R&D and market update Sarah Strachan, Group Manager Adoption and Commercialisation – Meat & Livestock Australia
10:10am	Northern Beef Development update Trevor Price, Program Manager Northern Beef Development – Dept Primary Industry and Regional Development
Growing more from your feedbase	
10:25am	Grazing land management for the west Kimberley Anne Marie Huey – Dampier Downs
10:40am	Remote feedbase monitoring Jess Paton, Customer Support – Cibo Labs
10:55am	Planting Stylo into native pastures – Kimberley trial update Geoff Moore and Clinton Revell – Dept Primary Industry and Regional Development
11.05am	Fire management in the Kimberley John Wheelock, Biosecurity Officer – Kimberley Pilbara Cattlemen’s Association
11:20am	Pasture panel – Question time Anne Marie Huey, Jess Paton, Geoff Moore Facilitator: Trevor Price
11:40am	Morning tea
Producer Focus	
12.10pm	Staying connected in challenging times Owen Catto, Executive Officer, The Regional Men’s Health initiative
12:30pm	Producer priorities season Barb Camp, Chair Kimberly RBRC Harriet Bawden, Project Manager – Northern Beef Adoption Meat & Livestock Australia
12:50pm	Lunch (60 mins)
Getting animals to peak performance	
1:50pm	Best outcomes from first muster Sarah Gwynne – Managing welfare and production at weaning Désirée Jackson – Nutrition Charlie Howarth – Low stress stock handling Michael Laurence – Monitoring animal health - what to look for when the herd comes in
2:15pm	Weaner and breeder nutrition Désirée Jackson, Livestock Management
2:35pm	Kimberley/Pilbara phosphorus trial Annie Bone, Dept Primary Industry and regional Development
3:20pm	Afternoon tea (30 mins)

3:50pm	Genetics – Traits, EBVs and indexes explained Matt Wolcott – Animal Genetics and Breeding Unit
4:15pm	Panel discussion ‘Genetics in Kimberley pastoral businesses’ John Geddes – Roebuck Plains Chris Morrow – Nerrima Facilitator: Matt Wolcott
4:50pm	Biosecurity update – what’s happening here and internationally Michael Laurence, Program Manager Animal Wellbeing - Meat & Livestock Australia
5:15pm	Closing remarks MLA
Broome BeefUp Dinner	
6:00pm	Networking drinks and dinner The Mangrove



RBRC Representatives



Chair

Barb Camp

Phone: 0497 287 059

Email: jcbm@live.com.au

Barb came to the Kimberley in 2017 after completing a degree in Equine Science in the UK. Since then, she has been passionately involved in the Northern Beef Industry. This love for research and progression in the industry of animal husbandry led her becoming of Chair of the Kimberley Regional Beef Research Committee in 2022 following on from assisting her husband James in the same role previously. Barb and her family currently manage Napier Downs Station on the Gibb River Road.



Secretary

Annie Bone

Phone: 0419 921 659

Email: Annie.Bone@dpird.wa.gov.au

Annie is a Beef Development Officer in DPIRD's Northern Beef Development team, based in Broome. Not coming from a farming background but having an eye for adventure, 2020 saw her relocate north for a stint on a cattle station in WA's Gascoyne region.

She has an interest in regenerative agriculture and is keen to focus on the continuous improvement of the region's pastures, livestock nutrition, drought preparedness, animal welfare and herd genetics. Annie leads the phosphorous supplementation trial for northern WA and is Secretary of the Kimberley Regional Beef Research Committee.



MLA Representatives



Harriet Bawden

Project Manager – Northern Beef Adoption
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: hbawden@mla.com.au

Harriet is an agricultural communications and extension professional with a focus on supporting on-farm adoption of new research, technologies and practices. She is currently the Project Manager for Northern Beef Adoption at MLA. Harriet works closely with industry and project partners across Queensland, NT and northern WA to deliver programs including BeefUp forums, the EDGENetwork and FutureBeef.



Sarah Strachan

Group Manager – Adoption & Commercialisation
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: sstrachan@mla.com.au

Sarah oversees the delivery and development of the Meat Standards Australia (MSA), Producer Adoption, Livestock Genetics and On-farm Sustainability programs within MLA. These programs are driven by the ambitions of the Red Meat 2030 plan to grow the investment in adoption to help double the value of sales from high quality Australian red meat.

The programs achieve this by converting research into commercial services for businesses along the entire supply chain, as well as supporting the goal of the red meat industry becoming carbon neutral by 2030. This includes providing a diverse range of options for producers to engage with and apply research outcomes into their production systems such as the well-known EDGENetwork, Producer Demonstration Sites and Profitable Grazing Systems programs.

Sarah has a Bachelor of Rural Science from the University of New England and has worked with MLA for over 20 years, spending 18 of these working in the MSA program.



Michael Laurence

Program manager – Animal Wellbeing
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: [mlaurence@mla.com.au](mailto:m Laurence@mla.com.au)

Michael joined MLA in March 2020. He is the Program Manager of the Animal Wellbeing portfolio where he has responsibility for research and adoption investments in animal health, welfare and biosecurity.

Michael has been a cattle veterinarian for 24 years and has practiced in rural Australia and the UK.

He was head of production animal medicine as an academic at Murdoch University for the 14 years up to his appointment at MLA. His research focus during this time was on the measurement of the pain of surgical husbandry as well as disease management in intensive supply chains. Michael continues to supervise PhD students and conduct research, and has a passion for translating improvement in on-farm animal welfare into measurable value for producers.

Speakers and Presentations

Welcome



Barb Camp

Chair of Kimberley RBRC

E: jcbm@live.com.au

Bio:

Barb came to the Kimberley in 2017 after completing a degree in Equine Science in the UK. Since then, she has been passionately involved in the Northern Beef Industry. This love for research and progression in the industry of animal husbandry led her becoming of Chair of the Kimberley Regional Beef Research Committee in 2022 following on from assisting her husband James in the same role previously. Barb and her family currently manage Napier Downs Station on the Gibb River Road.



Market and industry insights

MLA R&D and Market update



Sarah Strachan

Group Manager – Adoption & Commercialisation
Meat & Livestock Australia

E: sstrachan@mla.com.au

Session overview:

MLA's purpose is to foster the long-term prosperity of the Australia red meat and livestock industry by investing in research and marketing activities. MLA's Strategic Plan 2025 sets out the priorities, strategic focus area and guiding principles to help:

- Double the value of Australian red meat sales.
- Make Australian red meat the most trusted source of highest quality protein.

MLA's investment in producer adoption aims to increase the uptake of on-farm research and development (R&D) by producers. MLA's adoption pathway makes a journey through three key areas: awareness activities, short-term training programs and long-term practice change activities. Supporting the journey along the pathway is an area of focus dedicated to building the capacity of livestock advisors.

Producer awareness of the latest research and development (R&D) is delivered via field days, forums, webinars, newsletters, articles and podcasts. Short-term training programs are designed to increase producer knowledge and skill around the latest livestock production practices by engaging them in training activities like workshops or online learning modules. Long-term practice change-focused activities involve producers learning from each other under the guidance of a consultant or advisory coach.

These activities involve producers implementing the best performing livestock production practices into their businesses. Further adoption activities are designed specifically for livestock advisors to increase their knowledge of the latest R&D, professional development and networking.

The 2021–22 producer adoption program saw MLA deliver \$54.3 million in annual net benefits to the 10,000 producers involved in MLA adoption activities, including BeefUp forums.

Sarah's presentation today will cover the latest opportunities resulting from research, development and adoption (RD&A) programs funded by MLA that red meat producers can get involved in to help boost productivity on-farm. Sarah will also share some insights into current regionally-relevant research as well as provide a market update including some forecasts on the future market.

MLA's EDGEnetwork® (EDGE) delivers northern research & development and helps red meat producers improve productivity and profitability. Face-to-face workshops allow producers to develop new skills, learn from others in the industry and access the latest research, leading to effective practice change in their businesses.

Grazing fundamentals EDGE

Foundations for grazing production

A one-day workshop to give you a broad understanding of grazing production system components and the core, scientifically-backed principles to optimise grazing land productivity.



Breeding EDGE

Build a more reproductive herd

A three-day workshop to evaluate the performance of your breeding program and identify strategies for higher productivity and reduced reproductive loss.



Nutrition EDGE

Nutrition fundamentals to hit production goals

A three-day workshop to understand optimal use of supplements and the nutrition required to reduce mortality, improve fertility and boost weight gains in your herd.



Business EDGE

Know your business, grow your business

A two-day workshop to enhance your financial management and improve business efficiency and profitability. You will also develop strategies to deal with financial risk and external market factors.



Grazing land management EDGE

Strategies for long-lasting grazing potential

A three-day workshop to thoroughly understand your grazing environment and strategically manage your grazing business to optimise land condition and productivity in the long-term.



More information



For more information about EDGE:

 mla.com.au/edge-network

To find an EDGE event near you:

 mla.com.au/events

To request an EDGE event in your area, send an email to:

 edgenetwork@mla.com.au

Australian Feedbase Monitor

Information for producers

The Australian Feedbase Monitor is a world-first tool to help producers improve grazing management, forage budgeting and ground cover.



The Australian Feedbase Monitor provides:

- access to farm-level rolling monthly pasture biomass estimates for every Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) account holder, updated every five days
- regionally calibrated predictions based on more than 6,000 sites, using world-leading satellite monitoring and data analysis systems
- data showing the trends in pasture growth and ground cover dating back to 2017
- support for more objective and accurate feed budgeting, leading to sustainable grazing management decisions.

How will this tool help producers?

The Australian Feedbase Monitor will offer multiple benefits to producers and the wider red meat industry including:

- supporting more objective and timely grazing decisions allowing an increase in production and the ability to meet market specifications
- avoiding environmental or welfare issues in grazing enterprises due to increased ability to monitor and report on ground cover and pasture status and trends
- increased consumer confidence in the environmental stewardship of red meat producers.

How to sign up

Want free access to the Australian Feedbase Monitor? The free subscription to this tool can only be accessed by MLA members via [myMLA](https://mymla.com.au), so make sure you've registered for [myMLA](https://mymla.com.au) and linked it to your current Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) account: mymla.com.au.



Not an MLA member?

You can still access the tool if you're not currently an MLA member:

- apply to be an MLA member (this process can take up to two weeks) at mla.com.au/membership
- sign up for a paid subscription through Cibo Labs: support@cibolabs.com.au

mla.com.au/afm

AFM news and updates: Sign up for MLA's e-newsletter, *The Weekly* (mla.com.au/enews), subscribe to *Feedback* magazine (mla.com.au/feedback) or follow MLA on social media.

Help with using the AFM: support@cibolabs.com.au

MLA membership support: membership@mla.com.au or 1800 023 100



Remote feedbase monitoring



Jess Paton

Customer Support
Cibo Labs

E: jpaton@cibolabs.com.au

Bio:

Jess started her role as the Cibo Labs Customer Support Manager in April 2022 and is based in Roma, Queensland. Jess successfully completed a Bachelor Agriculture/Bachelor of Business through the University of New England. Cibo Labs was established in early 2018 with the mission to bring new approaches to monitoring Australia's grazing lands, aimed at underpinning more profitable farms and more sustainable landscapes. In four years, Cibo Labs have established fully commercial services delivering estimates of pasture biomass and ground cover to over 60 million hectares on a weekly basis.

Key messages:

- The Australian Feedbase Monitor provides every livestock producer with access to new levels of objective information on trends in pasture biomass over their entire farm.
- Combining traditional pasture assessment methods and satellite imagery can help producers better understand paddock variability in pasture growth, utilisation and ground cover throughout the season to inform business and grazing management decisions.
- The new tools can help producers to get on the front foot by providing objective and transparent data to support emerging regulatory, supply chain, finance and consumer expectations.

Next steps:

1. Create a MyMLA account: mymla.com.au
2. Link your LPA/PIC account
3. Go to www.cibolabs.com.au to set up your property in the Australian Feedbase Monitor (using your myMLA login details)
4. Get in touch with Cibo Labs for more information by emailing us at support@cibolabs.com.au

Notes

Better your business



MLA offers red meat producers a range of educational resources, tools and programs to improve profitability

Training programs/workshops

MLA delivers a range of programs and workshops to equip producers with the latest best-practice knowledge:



MLA resource hubs

MLA has compiled this series of hubs containing relevant resources on a range of on-farm topics:

- **Livestock:** Genetics, beef, sheep, goats
- **Feedbase:** Healthy soils, phosphorus, leucaena, pasture dieback, dung beetles
- **Sustainability:** Carbon neutral by 2030, dung beetles
- **Climate:** Climate, disaster recovery
- **Other resources:** Seasonal resources, COVID-19 resources and market insights hub, mental health, MLA's e-newsletters



mla.com.au/hubs

The toolbox

Self-guided online tools and training packages to upskill anytime, anywhere. Topics include:

- assessing nodulation in legume pastures
- establishing a new pasture
- pain relief use in southern cattle
- pain relief use in sheep
- introduction to MateSel
- soil testing
- visual indicators of soil condition



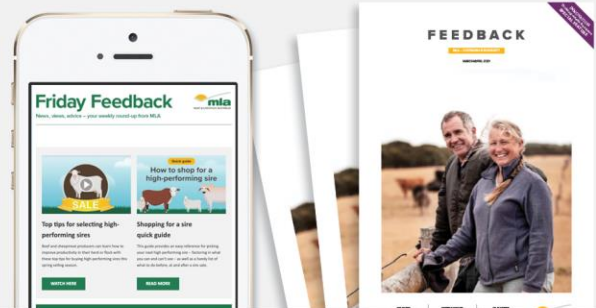
Online training, tools and resources

elearning.mla.com.au

Keep informed

Stay ahead with MLA resources:

- **Red meat industry events:** mla.com.au/news-and-events
- **Feedback magazine:** mla.com.au/feedback
- **Feedback podcast:** mla.com.au/feedback-podcast
- **On the ground podcast:** mla.com.au/on-the-ground
- **e-newsletters:** mla.com.au/enews



Become an MLA member today

MLA membership is **free** to levy-paying producers of grass or grainfed cattle, sheep, lambs or goats. MLA members receive the following free or discounted products:



Market information



Discounted entry to MLA events



Publications and information tools



Subscription to MLA's Feedback magazine

FREE
to levy-paying
red meat
producers



To become an MLA member call **1800 023 100**, visit mla.com.au/membership or scan the QR code above.

Staying Connected in Challenging Times

Things that we cannot control are our biggest stressors in life. In agriculture it is mostly weather issues followed by a multitude of other factors such as commodity prices, input costs, machinery breakdowns (how long is a bit of string).

Every season is not without its challenges and the effects are always felt across the whole community (pastoralists, farmers, people involved in agribusiness and those in the Agri-link industries like the mechanics and the hardware store). Everybody feels the pain.

No one can change what happens with the weather, all we can do is manage our programs and control our business as best we can which importantly includes looking after ourselves and each other (our family, mates and neighbours).

Remaining connected is one way of doing this. So, what does this mean? Rural communities have an innate capacity to reach out and organize and participate in many bottoms up activities. RMHI has been attending a lot of these events including, breakfasts, sundowners and many other gatherings over the years which allow the communities to have a conversation about where they are at individually and as a collective. There is less and less of us living in regional areas, add this to the nature of modern farming as well as a challenging season and isolation becomes more prevalent. Staying connected is important and something we must actively work on.

Isolation is the enemy of good mental wellbeing. This is both in the physical sense (less of us) and the interpersonal sense (social networks around us). Staying connected is important and something we must work on, this can be achieved in part if we are mindful of living in the present and staying connected with others.

As blokes, we have a propensity to self-medicate. A lot of people think that is done by sex, drugs and rock and roll however in the work we do it is mostly blokes spending more time in their cave, working harder, longer, and talking less (some ladies might find that hard to believe). It is important that we start to talk about some of the pain and distress that as blokes we tend to suffer alone.

We describe *primary care* as what can we do to look after ourselves and others, invariably it is about connection. Some simple things we can do:

- Talk to a Mate[®] – realize that we are not alone.
- Talk to whoever needs to be informed about our situation (family, financiers, advisors, government).
- Keep an eye on others – drop into a neighbour and have a chat and a coffee. Take the time to ask someone *are you okay?*
- Slow the pace of our life a little, join a group that fits in with our passions and interests. It will make a difference.
- Maintain our sense of humour, laugh at ourselves and with others.

The Team

The Regional Men's Health Initiative

P: (08) 9690 2277

E: menshealth@4blokes.com.au

📍 @RMHI 4blokes

🎧 Working with Warriors Podcast

🌐 regionalmenshealth.com.au



Getting animals to peak performance

Best outcomes from first muster



Sarah Gwynne

Livestock Development Officer
Dept of Primary Industries and Regional Development

E: Sarah.Gwynne@dpird.wa.gov.au

Bio:

Sarah graduated from the University of Queensland in 2019 with a Bachelor of Veterinary Technology. Before commencing her role with DPIRD Sarah spent time working in specialist veterinary hospitals along with a stint on an NT cattle station. Now based in Kununurra as a Livestock Development Officer, Sarah helps facilitate and run field trials across the Kimberley and Pilbara. Sarah enjoys combining her theoretical and practical experience through leading the WA Pain Relief trial and thoroughly enjoys field work.



Désirée Jackson

Livestock Management Consultant

E: desireejackson@djlm.com.au

Bio:

Désirée Jackson is a private livestock management consultant in northern Australia, covering Queensland, the NT and WA. She worked for the Qld Department of Agriculture for 22 years in research an extension. She originally completed her university training in Canada.

She has been a cattle producer for over 20 years, owning mulga and flood-out country in the Stonehenge area until a few years ago.

Most of her work is in the area of nutrition, diet quality analysis, breeder herd and pasture management but the main focus has been on nutrition as this has been the focal point for many properties in northern Australia.

She loves three-sheep dog trialling and has recently taken up clay target shooting. She also has a strong passion for human health and nutrition, and personal growth and development. She believes strongly in changing our thinking to find solutions to problems to achieve our goals.

Putting P supplementation into action



MLA offers red meat producers a range of practical resources, tools and programs to help producers identify and effectively manage P deficiency.

NutritionEDGE



NutritionEDGE is a three-day workshop that provides a comprehensive look at ruminant nutrition to assist producers to better match pasture and feed options to their livestock needs.

The workshop better enables producers to define production targets for their cattle and compare current and predicted performance against these production targets.

More information

mlla.com.au/edge-network

Easy way to feed P and profit



A method of phosphorus (P) supplementation that removes the need to deliver P to stock during the wet season is proving just as effective as traditional methods of wet season P supplementation, according to the initial results of an MLA-funded project.

The strategy, dubbed 'Easy P', aims to provide a more efficient method of P supplementation for producers by including P in dry season supplements and then putting out bulk P before the start of the wet season. This method provides enough P for stock until the next dry season – removing the time, effort and labour required to supplement stock with P during the wet season, especially in areas difficult to access.

After the first few years of the project, which focus on data collection, the Easy P strategy will be demonstrated on commercial properties for producers to be able to see in action.

More information

mlla.com.au/phosphorus

Profitable Grazing Systems (PGS) training package on phosphorus for beef cattle



The latest offer in MLA's Profitable Grazing Systems (PGS) program is a supported learning package specifically designed for northern producers encompassing phosphorus management in beef cattle. The package involves group workshops and one-on-one support afterwards.

The package will help producers develop a phosphorus management plan including supplementation strategies and feeding cost-effective supplements. The PGS package will be available to producers in early 2022.

More information

pgs@mlla.com.au

BreedingEDGE



BreedingEDGE is a three-day workshop designed to help producers evaluate the performance of their breeding program and to consider opportunities for improvement.

This workshop better enables producers to:

- evaluate and improve their existing breeding herd management program
- understand the importance of measures of reproductive performance and reproductive loss
- identify strategies and management to improve breeding herd performance
- develop a management plan and program that incorporates practical, achievable strategies to meet desired objective(s).

More information

mlla.com.au/edge-network

Other MLA resources



Learn more through 'The toolbox' – self-directed online training, available to use anytime, anywhere.



MLA's phosphorus hub

mlla.com.au/phosphorus

FutureBeef resources



1 Phosphorus supplementation of cattle in northern Australia



2 Phosphorus supplementation video





Are your heifers deficient in Phosphorus?

We are seeking expressions of interest from producers to be involved in our Phosphorus trial.

What's involved?

- 30 head for tail bleeding by qualified personnel in your first-round muster either this year or next.
- Faecal sampling
- Bloods and faecal samples will be sent off and analysed.
- If the results come back as:
Deficient in Phosphorous a one-on-one consulting session with a qualified nutritionist will be arranged.
Not deficient in Phosphorous you will be notified, and no further commitment is needed.

There is no cost involved for participants

Note: This project will be run over two consecutive years, there is no guarantee you will be involved in 2023. Positions are limited per year, so register your interest early.

Register your interest

Please contact Annie Bone at 0409 921 659 or annie.bone@dpird.wa.gov.au

It is vital to ensure that nutrition at weaning is adequate and targeted because it influences post-weaning growth, fertility, and an animal's ability to meet market specs.

It is of paramount importance to consider the major impact nutrition has on heifer fertility, re-conception rates in first-calf cows. Poor nutrition will override the hard work and effort of targeting good fertility, so it is important to manage it well.

The purpose of weaning is to:

1. remove the nutritional stress on breeders to allow them to recovery body condition, either going into the dry season, or their next calving which will minimize the *post-partum* anoestrous period;
2. manage the weaners so they are well-transitioned from a milk-based diet to a pasture-based diet without compromising their health; and
3. provide weaners with adequate nutrients to ensure positive post-weaning growth rate, particularly heifers

The key objectives for weaning are:

1. Minimize stress
2. Provide adequate nutrients
3. Develop the rumen and rumen microflora so the weaner is pasture-ready
4. Educate weaners for easier management

Feeding considerations

Weaners must be segregated into weight groups to allow for more prescriptive feeding because their nutritional requirements will differ depending on their weight and stage of physiological development of their digestive system and in particular, their rumen, so their feeding regime and nutritional requirements will vary. Segregation into weight groups also ensures more even intake across each group of weaners and less likelihood of shy feeders getting insufficient nutrients.

There is a balance between supplying sufficient energy and protein to weaners, and ensuring they receive enough fibre for rumen development. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to the supplement the weaners require, as well as hay quality, and ensuring good, clean water, to facilitate digestion and dry matter intake.

Weaners that haven't got good rumen function at the time of weaning will require much more careful management and a higher level of concentrate (eg. grain) feeding compared to heavier weaners.

Prevention of these diseases:

1. Good hygiene in yards – dust, water cleanliness
2. Provide adequate space in yards
3. Meet animal nutrient requirements
4. Bring cattle onto high starch supplements slowly
5. Vaccinate with 5-in-1
6. Conduct worm egg counts

Weaner heifers

Post-weaning growth rate in heifers has a significant impact on their future reliability as breeders so heifer selection should consider their post-weaning growth. Early-born heifers are usually more reliable breeders.

Joiner heifers and first-calf cows

Focussing on managing replacement heifers and first-calf cows is important because:

1. Heifers and first-calf cows comprise a significant proportion of the breeder herd
2. Calf mortality in maiden heifers is greater than any other class of breeders
3. They are likely to have a greater impact on genetic progress of the herd as they will be in the herd the longest and joined with young bulls that should theoretically be genetically superior to their older contemporaries in the herd

The focus of nutrition for maiden heifers is to target critical mating weights and positive growth rate from weaning to mating in order to achieve high conception rates. For first-calf cows, the focus is on managing body condition score.

In areas where there is a definitive green date, heifers should be joined four weeks after the green date. They should be overmated to allow for more selection intensity, and a tighter joining period should be employed.

Best management practice for heifers and first-calf cows

1. Ensure heifers are on a good plane of nutrition in the last month of pregnancy
2. Cull heifers that don't conceive in three months
3. Wean calves early in first-calf cows when necessary to increase breeder CS at next calving
4. Monitor diet quality to enable targeted supplementation
5. Consider spike feeding. Spike feeding assists in maintaining heifer body condition, reducing the post-partum anoestrous period and ultimately achieves higher reconception rates.
6. Run joiner heifers and first-calf cows in paddocks with the highest diet quality, to minimize weight loss post-calving and to reduce feeding costs.

Pasture

Pasture is going to be the major source of nutrients for our animals so forage budgeting is important to ensure there is sufficient pasture available until the next wet season, and to account for a lift in grazing pressure when supplements are fed.

The three nutrient components that define good quality pasture are:

1. Digestibility and energy – a highly digestible pasture ensures good pasture intake; digestibility is also strongly positively correlated with energy so if the digestibility is high in the pasture, energy will also be high;
2. Energy – energy is what drives production; a diet that is high in energy will drive weight gain and breeder performance, provided all other nutrient requirements are met; if energy is deficient in the diet, it can result in rapid weight;
3. Protein – protein is important for animals with high requirements such as weaners, wet cows and heavily pregnant breeders;

Primary limiting nutrients

Nutrients must be in balance. There must be a sufficient amount of each nutrient or production will be limited by that nutrient which is lowest in supply.

Diet quality testing using F.NIRS technology

It is prudent to back up our observations in the paddock with some rigorous testing, to establish specifically what the nutrient levels are, and how they are balanced with each other.

The information that the diet quality analysis provides includes:

1. Digestibility which can be used to calculate the energy level in the diet
2. Dietary crude protein
3. Non-grass – this includes all herbage, legumes, browse and bushes – this provides an indication of what the cattle are selecting
4. Balance of nutrients, namely protein and energy.

Knowing the extent of an energy deficiency through diet quality testing can be used for making decisions on when/what supplement type to feed (eg. protein (urea) or energy), or whether to wean earlier.

Diet quality analysis is often done in conjunction with faecal phosphorus testing, which enables you to look at the balance between phosphorus and other nutrients in the diet.

Diet quality monitoring should be ongoing with changes in the pasture because changes in diet quality have different implications for the nutritional management of cattle. The rate of change in diet quality needs to be monitored to ensure that supplements that are being fed are still currently effective and to monitor changes in the nutrient balances and changes in the primary limiting nutrient so changes in supplement formulations can be made.

Minerals

It is important to test the phosphorus status of the animals to determine the degree of deficiency and appropriate supplementation strategies.

If there is an acute phosphorus deficiency, then the productivity and return on supplementing phosphorus is clear cut. However, if the deficiency is marginal, then supplementation needs to be more strategic.

Signs of phosphorus deficiency

1. Reduced growth rate
2. Reduced fertility
3. Reduced milk
4. Depressed feed intake

Depending on the severity of the P deficiency, the productivity losses can range from:

1. 30-40 kg reduction in potential weight gain in weaners over the wet season
2. 10-30% decrease in weaning rates

Supplementation

It comes as no surprise in northern Australia that feeding is the second biggest cost to an operation, and it is considerably labour-intensive. To maximize returns on supplementation, it is important to determine:

1. The likely supplementary feeding period and how that may increase the intake of pasture
2. What different classes of stock will consume
3. What the average intake will be over a feeding period based on the assumption that the pasture will continue to deteriorate

The appropriate supplement group must first be determined to find the best supplement for the situation. Once the correct supplement group is identified, the appropriate supplement must be selected or formulated. This is determined by:

1. Identifying which nutrient(s) you are targeting
2. Calculating from the recommendation or your prediction of intake, how much of the nutrient the cattle will receive and whether this is adequate

Intakes from supplements must be monitored to ensure that cattle are consuming effective quantities of the target nutrients.

Key messages:

1. Minimise stress at weaning.
2. Segregate weaners into weight groups.
3. Ensure good access to good quality hay/roughage.
4. Provide high protein and energy supplements to early weaners.
5. Make changes in the diet slowly to allow the rumen to adjust.
6. Once out in the paddock, provide appropriate supplements to meet their nutrient deficiencies from pasture.
7. Manage heifers to ensure positive post-weaning growth rates, achieve critical mating weights and good body condition at point of calving.
8. Manage first-calf cows to minimize weight loss and to ensure adequate body condition at weaning.
9. Monitor diet quality to adjust the nutritional management and supplementation program
10. Consider the balance of nutrients and how this changes over the course of the year. Ensure phosphorus is balanced with protein and energy.
11. Monitor lick intakes to ensure animals are receiving effective nutrient intakes.

Next steps:

1. Register for a Nutrition EDGE workshop, Broome 12-14 April 2023.
2. Sign up for DPIRD's phosphorus supplementation project.
3. Visit mla.com.au/phosphorus for the latest Phosphorus Manual.

Pick up these related resources:

- *Weaner management in northern beef herds* guide
- *Why do cattle need phosphorus* guide

Genetics – Traits, EBVs and indexes explained



Matt Wolcott

Scientist

Animal Genetic and Breeding Unit

E: mwolcott@une.edu.au

Bio:

Matt has worked with the Animal Genetic and Breeding Unit (AGBU) since October 2004, to develop and improve genetic evaluation technologies for beef cattle breeders. Key areas of research have included new traits to describe female productivity in tropically adapted beef breeds, with a focus on reproductive performance and cow body composition. He is leading a new WA State Government-funded project which aims to help beef breeders in the Kimberley and Pilbara develop breeding objectives which focus on profitability, and to develop new selection tools which will be tailored to WA's northern production systems and markets.

Key messages:

- Well-constructed section indexes can identify bulls which will drive profitability in your herd.
- Index effectiveness is dependent on recording in the stud sector for traits of economic importance.
- Stud breeders can be informed by trait weightings to develop a targeted recording program to meet their clients' breeding objectives.

Next steps:

- There is excellent information on understanding and applying BREEDPLAN EBVs and selection indexes at breedplan.une.edu.au/help-centre/
- Visit the MLA genetics hub – genetics.mla.com.au

Pick up these related resources:

- A BREEDPLAN Guide to Interpreting EBVs factsheet
- How to shop for a high performing sire pocket guide

Notes

An introduction to Breeding and feeding to maximise profit

On the back of a decade of success, the BredWell FedWell workshops have been redeveloped to reflect evolving best practice genetics and nutrition management.

- Develop a customised breeding plan for your livestock enterprise aligned to your profit drivers
- Identify sires and select animals that help you meet your objectives
- Learn about feeding animals well to achieve your objective and maximise your genetic investment



Informative

Presentations and discussions with deliverers and peers



Interactive

Practical and written activities hosted on-farm



Individualised

Learning outcomes you can apply in your own enterprise



So far, BFWW workshops have delivered \$17.2m^{*} in total net benefits to participating producers



1.9M

cattle influenced by the BFWW workshop

\$2.98

net benefit per cow mated

639k

breeding females



19.6M

sheep influenced by the BFWW workshop

\$2.48

net benefit per ewe joined

12.7M

breeding ewes

*Calculated as net present value of adoption to 2045, discounted at 5% annually.

New workshops are available for all sheep types, southern cattle and northern cattle production systems. Register your interest to participate or host a workshop.

mla.com.au/bredwellfedwell



Panel discussion 'Genetics in Kimberley pastoral businesses'



John Geddes

Manager
Roebuck Plains

E: managerrps@yawuru.org.au

Bio:

John is originally from Central Queensland and attended St Brendan's College in Yeppoon and then the Ag College at Emerald in CQ.

John worked on various cattle and cropping enterprises throughout QLD and then moved to the NT in 1991. Since then, John and wife Kristy have successfully managed large Northern properties across QLD, NT & WA – including Delta Downs in the Gulf for RMP (Formerly Taylor Burn) and two stints with the ILC in NT & WA. John is currently co-managing Roebuck Plains Station with Kristy for the Yawuru Holdings Company, being the second time back to Roebuck Plains.

John's primary focus at Roebuck Plains Station is to deliver the sustainable grazing program successfully with an emphasis placed on a sustainable grazing framework, alongside utilising and improving existing valuable genetics within the herd.



Chris Morrow

Manager
Nerrima Pastoral

E: chris@emanuelbrothers.com

Bio:

Chris manages Nerrima station and has been in his current role for 8 years. Nerrima is 203,000ha and runs a self-replacing herd of 15,000 red Brangus cattle.

The vision at Nerrima Pastoral company is to maintain a highly productive herd with a maximum sale yield. Nerrima runs a fully segregated control mated herd, which has boosted productivity by 20% over the past 4 years. With the use of an electronic data collection system over the past 8 years the team have been able to gather accurate data for every animal on the station. They can make critical management decisions and forecast accurately which is a key tool in the business.





Matt Wolcott

Scientist
Animal Genetic and Breeding Unit

E: mwolcott@une.edu.au

FMD and LSD: what you need to know

What's it called?	Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)	Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD)
What is it?	A highly contagious animal disease that affects all cloven-hoofed animals including cattle, sheep, goats, camelids, deer and pigs.	A contagious viral disease that affects cattle (both beef and dairy) and water buffalo.
How does it spread?	Through close contact between animals, by animal products or by the wind.	By biting insects and fomites.
What are the possible symptoms?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fever • drooling • reluctance to move • mouth, snout, tongue, hoof blisters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discharge from eyes and nose • decreased milk yield in lactating cattle • high fever • firm skin nodules • loss of body condition.
Where can I find out more?		

Australia is currently free from both FMD and LSD and our priority is to keep it that way.

An LSD or FMD outbreak in Australia would be devastating to our livestock and associated industries through international trade losses, market disruptions, animal health impacts and production losses. FMD alone could cost Australia around \$80 billion over 10 years (Source: DAFF, 2022).

The threat of these diseases entering Australia has increased significantly with the recent outbreak of FMD and LSD in Indonesia.

What's being done to stop the spread?

It's the Australian Government's responsibility to protect Australia from these diseases, and industry, in partnership with MLA, is doing everything possible to support this work.

What the government's doing

State and federal governments are undertaking a range of activities to manage the biosecurity risks posed by LSD and FMD and are actively engaged with industry on prevention and planning. The Australian Veterinary Plan (AUSVETPLAN) is in place as the nationally agreed approach to respond to an animal disease outbreak.

What MLA's doing

MLA, in conjunction with the Australian Government, is working closely with the Indonesian Government and industry on a biosecurity support program to help control the spread of FMD and LSD.

MLA is also an active member of the industry taskforce working on planning and preparedness. MLA's role here as the marketing and research provider for the red meat industry is to support the industry taskforce with technical expertise and investment in potential prevention and treatment solutions, including mRNA vaccines.

What can producers do to stop the spread?

- educate themselves and their employees on the symptoms of FMD and LSD, as well as how to report suspected outbreaks
- meet industry traceability requirements under the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) and complete National Vendor Declarations (NVDs) so they're clear, complete and correct
- review their Farm Biosecurity Plan and improve their farm biosecurity practices
- call the **Emergency Animal Disease Watch Hotline** on **1800 675 888** if you suspect FMD or LSD in your livestock.

More information



Scan here to view MLA's dedicated webpage about LSD and FMD for the latest information



Scan here to watch this webinar answering frequently asked questions about FMD and LSD

What's next after today's **beefup** FORUM?

You'll receive MLA's **BEEFUP ROUNDUP** e-newsletter in the next couple of weeks, with links to today's presentations and other great resources.



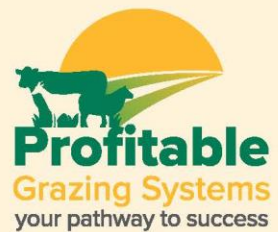
PRODUCER DEMONSTRATION SITES

allow producer groups to apply research on farm while at the same time grow their knowledge and skills.
mla.com.au/pds

PROFITABLE GRAZING SYSTEMS

takes groups of like-minded producers – who want to improve their whole-farm performance – and partners them with coaches who share their knowledge, skills and experience. Profitable Grazing Systems has modules covering genetics and reproduction, the value chain, the feedbase, and managing people and the business.

mla.com.au/pgs



MLA'S EDGE WORKSHOPS

help producers gain knowledge and skills to improve their livestock enterprises. Which one will you try first? Choose from Business EDGE, Breeding EDGE, Nutrition EDGE and Grazing Land Management.
mla.com.au/edge

Keep informed about the latest red meat and livestock industry news, events, research and marketing with MLA's suite of

E-NEWSLETTERS

including *The Weekly*.
mla.com.au/e-news



FEEDBACK MAGAZINE

is published four times a year and features seasonal on-farm actions, tips and tools for producers, the latest research, case studies, snapshots of MLA's global marketing campaigns and recipes from our foodservice and retail initiatives.

mla.com.au/feedback



myMLA

is a customised online dashboard that provides news, weather, events and R&D tools relevant to you, as well as a single sign-on feature for integrity systems.

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For more ways to get involved with MLA and grow your productivity and profitability, visit mla.com.au/get-involved



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