

Highlighter Green

The green highlighter has been out in the NI, with warm northerly flows changing the colour of country. Soil temps are now sitting around 11-12°, rousing clover into life. Grass is converting sugar into growth and the soil microorganisms have woken up.

Cattle Wires & Growing More Grass

Our thoughts go out to those in **Nelson and the West Coast**. The area has experienced extreme rainfall causing major flooding, slips and evacuations. Hats off to the Met Service for clearly forecasting this event and to date no lives have been lost. There is widespread damage with milking sheds under water and cows not be able to be milked.

Prior to this latest weather bomb, the warmer days in **Northland** were encouraging pasture growth rates of 20-22kgsDM/ha/day. This week the eastern Bay of Islands copped 180mm. Lambing is well underway. Feed is still tight on some places as a result of poor utilisation and stock gobbling feed. In the **Waikato/King Country** everyone is flat out lambing and keeping their heads down. The rain hasn't amounted to much - in fact there were mutterings that they needed rain before this arrived. It has helped immensely with grass growth and everyone is hanging on. Store cattle are like hens' teeth as everyone holds on for a better payday. Good attendance at GHG workshops, where farmers appreciate the no nonsense, no-scare-tactics methods. 'Just tell us what we need to know and do, and we will get onto it.'

The **Manawatu** is trying to dry out with frosts and fine days but another 2 inches on Thursday /Friday has put a halt to the drying. After a few shocking months on finishing farms, reports are that animal performance has picked up with the warmth. Hunterville and Taihape are largely set stocked, with covers tight under ewes on many properties.

In the **Wairarapa** it has been a cracker week, with a noticeable change in the colour of country after a warm northerly flow. The storm in early August impacted some early lambing flocks. Some have recorded more slips this year than in the last 10 years. The warm week and colour change has lifted spirits, however covers are still short for some about to spread ewes.

The lamb schedule did see a slight lift this week, however there is still a large spread between companies It depends who wants them but agents report a spread of 30-40c/kg with the top at \$9.50. Local Trade are hunting for cattle and paying for them, reports of some offering up to \$6.80/kg CCW. The bull schedule is stubborn and falling away from prime with a 20-30c difference which hasn't happened for some time. Stortford drew out 9000 lambs which was unusual for the time of the year. Males sold well with C/O 35-37kg \$4.80, 41-43kg \$4.35/kg. Another big yarding of cattle at Feilding met strong interest with Trad R2 Steers around \$3.55/kg, R2 Hfrs \$3.30/kg. 200-220 kg Fsn bulls \$3.50-60.

AT A GLANCE	Aug-20	Aug-21	- 2 Weeks Ago	- 1 Weeks Ago	This Week	Latest change
Store Lamb (36-40kgLW)	\$3.86	\$4.44	\$4.45	\$4.30	\$4.50	\$0.20
Indicator PM Lamb (15-19kg)	\$7.24	\$9.17	\$9.25	\$9.30	\$9.35	\$0.05
R2 Steers	\$3.26	\$3.24	\$3.45	\$3.50	\$3.50	\$0.00
P2 Steer (295-320kg)	\$5.59	\$6.16	\$6.40	\$6.45	\$6.55	\$0.10
P2 Bull (295-320kg)	\$5.56	\$6.09	\$6.20	\$6.25	\$6.35	\$0.10
Local Trade Beef (220kg)	\$5.60	\$6.09	\$6.40	\$6.45	\$6.65	\$0.20
AP Stag (50-65kgCW)	\$6.16	\$6.28	\$8.15	\$8.25	\$8.25	\$0.00
Strong Wool Indicator	178	285	260	260	260	0
90-day Bill Rate	0.28%	0.38%	2.88%	2.94%	3.04%	0.10%
US Bull Price 9c/lb US)	242	288	267	271	271	0
\$NZ/UK	0.5035	0.5049	0.5168	0.5250	0.5230	-\$0.002
\$NZ/\$US Exchange Rate	0.6603	0.6975	0.6241	0.6424	0.6230	-\$0.019

Growing Cattle and Growing More Grass with Temporary Wires

It's been a slog through the winter for many to keep trade cattle growing or just holding and not damaging pastures. Many have had cattle pinned behind wires, in forestry blocks with baleage, set stocked or on crops. The long acre has also had a good hiding.

As better country dries out and cattle come off crops, many will hit the 'grow button' on R1 and R2 cattle and bring them onto specialist cattle finishing areas. The following article looks at a few principles to get more out of these areas so that cattle hit target weights and/or finish before Xmas.



Know your target weights and weight profile

Coming out of winter is a good time to assess where each of your mobs are in terms of live weights. Eg a 250kg yearling heifer aiming to be 350kg in November to mate as a yearling, or 2-yo bull that you are trying to finish before Christmas.

Below is an example of a mob of 65 2-yo Fr bulls weighing 440 kg at 1 August, modelled in Farmax. The plan is to have these all gone by mid-Jan. Some aggressive compensatory growth rates are entered based on experience. Check with BakerAg if you don't have good GR info - don't be too optimistic with GRs and get caught out. Typically dairy Fr bulls will grow 15% faster than a traditionally bred steer.

2 Year Bulls	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan
End Live Wt (kg)	432	439	454	478	525	571	562	
LW Gain (kg/d)	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.8	1.5	1.8	1	0.8
Intake (kg/hd/d)	7.2	7.2	8.5	8.8	11.8	13.5	12.1	11.5
Sales						8	46	10
Sale kg (CCW)						314	309	306
Sale \$/hd						\$2,041	\$1,981	\$1,536

Weigh the animals and decide what animal growth profile you require to reach your targets relative to the feed supply on offer. The range is more important than the average, as the lightest ones will often let you down, still hanging around when you need them gone. A good trick is to work backwards from your target finish weight or mating target and work out what daily weight gain the lightest animal will need to hit this target. The example below shows the 15 tail-end bulls need to grow at a minimum of 1.3kg/hd/day from Aug-Jan which is a very big ask.

Tail End Cattle - GR Needed	Av	Range
Weight	4/08/2022	440
Final kill date wanted	10/01/2023	393-486
Days	159	15 Bulls below 410Kg LW averaging 400kg LW
Start weight	400	
End weight	600	
Weight gain total Kgs	200	
LW Gain needed (kg/d)	1.3	

Some farmers will make a separate plan for the lighter animals – selling store, holding for finishing next season, or giving preferential treatment.

Mob Sizes & Weight Ranging

Mob size has a big impact on how fast cattle will grow. Generally, the smaller the mob the better they grow because of mob pressure and social structure. The size of the mob will depend on the farm's infrastructure and finishing system. On more extensive properties with a limited number of paddocks or greater paddock areas, steers (or heifers) can be run successfully in large mobs. However, running bulls in large mob sizes especially 2 yr olds in the spring can result in behavioural problems and increased labour and R&M.

There is always a hierarchy in mobs and small, stable social groups reduce fighting and social stress. For bulls we often see mobs of 25-30 for R2s and 50 for R1s. Most intensive finishers have mobs no bigger than 20 bulls with some as low as 15. Some will stock according to covers and PGRs using LW/Ha or 2.5 Bulls/ha. It is a good idea to weight range the animals, especially bulls. This allows all animals in a mob to be killed at once. If some are left some farmers top the mobs up with steers.

Back Fencing

Limiting back grazing by back fencing is perhaps one of the most overlooked management tools that can significantly boost pasture productivity and help you carry more cattle on your finishing blocks. After pastures are grazed, the plant uses energy reserves in its roots to produce more leaf (essentially the solar panels) for collecting more energy for growing. The energy is stored in the plant's roots as more leaves grow. Plants not protected from being regrazed will have depleted energy stores and greatly reduced growth rates.. The back fence will also reduce soil damage caused by cattle treading the soil.

Technograzing - The ultimate in back fencing

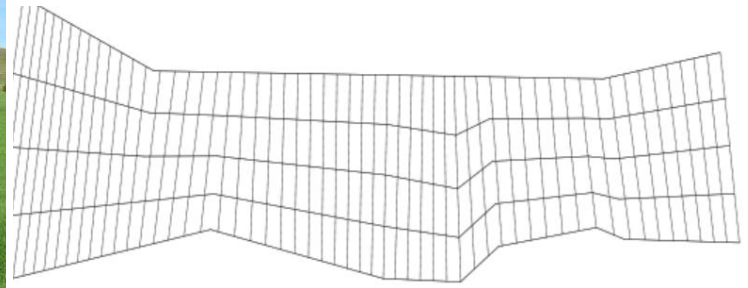
Back in the early 90's Harry Weir invented the Technograzing systems which used a cell grazing system to achieve very intensive and efficient pasture utilisation. The results were outstanding. In many cases productivity doubled (see Table below).

Table 1 Production gains from TechnoGrazing on several farms.

Farmer	Before TechnoGrazing	After TechnoGrazing
J. Gunson	11–12 stock units/ha 550–560 kg liveweight gain/ha	25 stock units/ha 1190 kg liveweight gain/ha
D. Holden	0.5–1.9 bulls/ha	1600 kg liveweight gain/ha 3.5–3.7/ha
A. Mabin	0.5–1.9 bulls/ha	3.5–3.7/ha
N. Prendergast	110 bulls (1.5/ha)	220 bulls (5/ha)
J. Rowley	140 bulls finished (3.9/ha)	270 bulls finished (7.5/ha)
A. Scoular	540 kg liveweight gain/ha	900 kg liveweight gain/ha

The key to technograzing is that it allows extremely small subdivisions with efficient logistics and a low labour input. The system accomplishes its logistical efficiency by running long, narrow, precisely laid out paddocks that are designed to be managed as a set. The trick is constructing a layout of a number (preferably an even number) of long narrow permanent paddocks that can be divided up with straight temporary cross fences running across the whole set of lanes thereby generating identically-sized grazing blocks. The temporary polywire fences lay on top of the permanent lane fences saving on Tread-ins and because there is only one fence covering several lanes the time spent on its construction and dismantling is minimal. A complete shift from one break to a new one works out at 1 to 4 minutes per mob depending on terrain and tools used.

Techno systems make many farmers run a mile. There are many misconceptions about techno but once you understand the principles and benefits like many farmers you can adapt the system to suit your situation and budget.



Benefits of a Cell grazing system with Back fencing

- Grow more dry matter in a season per ha
- Manipulate animal liveweights more easily and match to the growth curve
- Achieve target post-grazing residuals easier – high residuals equals high animal growth rates
- Reduce the need for supplements
- Better pasture utilisation
- Better composition and feed quality
- Better fertility redistribution and pasture species
- Better pasture longevity
- Less regrassing costs
- Lower animal stress
- Less pugging and trampling
- Less inputs
- Reduction in pasture pests
- Improved ability to smooth seasonal pasture production differences
- Improved ability to target nutrition for specific stock classes
- Easier, more precise, more flexible and simpler grazing management
- Improved ability to run paddock trials to pinpoint specific productivity drivers.

Better fertility redistribution and pasture species

In our legume-based pastoral systems, soil fertility (the amounts of plant nutrients in the soil) is variable over time and space. This is because animals do not return nutrients (as in dung and urine) evenly – large accumulations of nutrients occur where animals camp or congregate and if you look closely better species will be in these areas. Clover growth is stimulated by the high amounts of P in the dung where soil P is deficient whereas the N in urine stimulates grass growth

It is well documented the impact hill country subdivision has on pasture quantity and composition. “Hoof & tooth” and more even nutrient transfer helps the ryegrass and clover persist over the lower fertility species. A graphic example of hoof & tooth, better fertility, subdivision and even nutrient transfer is shown here - a station laneway that gets plenty of hoof & tooth and even nutrient transfer each year. It looks like ryegrass and clover has been drilled in the laneways. This is also evident in stock camps on hill country where the grass species are predominantly ryegrass and clover vs native low fertility species.

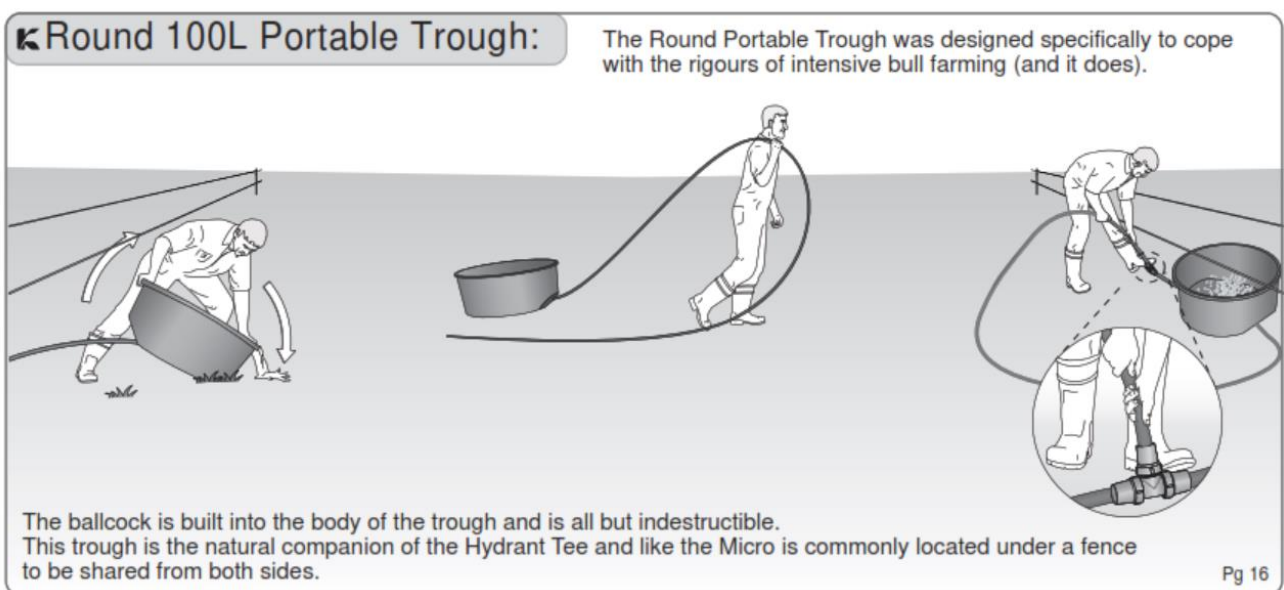


The exciting thing about cell grazing is the change farmers see in their pasture composition over time, the improvement in quality and clover, and reduced need for regrassing. With cell grazing the nutrients are more evenly spread and concentrated. Cattle don't wonder off to troughs or camps they graze the whole area distributing nutrients relatively evenly. Pastures are only grazed for a short period helping the more vulnerable species persist instead of under a set stocked regime. As pastures are improved and their

productivity increases, more stock are able to be carried and the amount of nutrients moving through the cycle is further increased.

What's needed to implement some of the principles?

- Firstly, you need the will to do it, the belief that its worth putting into practice and getting your staff on board with it.
- Have a go at dipping your toe in the water and set up just one block with your current temporary fencing gear you have. Buy a portable water trough and get into it!
- Talk to other farmers who have these systems or who have adapted them to suit. BakerAg can put you in touch with such farmers.
- You need to be able to accurately calculate daily grazing requirements for stock. If you put up a back fence there's no "margin for error".
- You need portable water troughs that can be moved from break to break.



There are plenty of videos and tailormade tools to make the temporary fencing quick and easy. See websites and videos below

- <http://www.kiwitech.co.nz/>
- <https://agdesigngps.com/farm-design/pasture-management/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtzUmPdHWLo>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05A8AwNjf8g>

Carbon Conference

The NZ carbon forestry conference was held last week in Rotorua and went off like a crackling forest fire. Labour had been looking to discourage the planting of permanent exotic forests by excluding them from the ETS. This incensed many Māori, who said it could cost the Māori economy billions of dollars. The government has now gone soft, and it appears to have backed down. This is an industry gaining serious momentum and the 300 attendees (including foreign investors watching online) are well aware that nothing can touch the economics of carbon farming on hill country.

This is a double-edged sword for farmers! Established farms have huge opportunities to jump on the gold rush with marginal land, their equity has grown and many 'high fives' are had when they sell a property once worth \$6K/ha BC (Before Carbon) for \$15-\$17K /ha. The other end is the unintended consequences and societal impacts, not to mention the dreams of many aspiring farm mangers/shepherds to one day own land. It's not easy around the family table talking succession with 3 kids and a 500ha farm worth \$8.5M either.

Other Prices

SI Lamb Schedule	\$9.40	=	SI P Beef Schedule	\$6.40	=
NI Local Trade Beef	\$6.65	↑	NI 220-245 kg M Cow	\$4.75	↑
NI 220-245 kg P Cow	\$4.85	↑	NI Venison 60 kg stag	\$8.25	=

NOTICES

Dry Hogget grazing available. East Taratahi. Contact Kyle Wells 029 200 8222

Position available on 1100ha Sheep & beef farm located approx. 10mins north of Martinborough. General farmhand role, can be full or part time dependant on applicant. House available. Dogs not necessary. Call Juliette 027 522 2033 or Mike 027 922 2999

A successful businessman became disenchanted with the stress of the fast life in the big city and decides to chuck it all. He takes his savings and purchases a large ranch in the middle of nowhere in Montana. After a couple of months of enjoying the solitude he hears the drumming of hoofbeats outside his cabin. Grabbing his rifle he challenges the man riding up on the horse. "Hold it neighbour," the man says. "I'm your neighbour, I have a ranch only 6 miles from here, and I want to invite you to a Welcome Party I'm throwing for you next Saturday. There's going to be music, dancing, hugging, kissing, drinking, fighting.... We'll have a great time". Not wanting to be unneighbourly, the new rancher lowers the rifle and asks, "How should I dress?" "Aw, don't matter" replied the neighbour, "Only gonna be the two of us".

A dad walks into a market with his young son. The boy is holding a quarter.

Suddenly, the boy starts choking, going blue in the face. The dad realizes the boy has swallowed the quarter and starts panicking, shouting for help.

A well dressed, attractive, but serious looking woman in a blue business suit is sitting at a coffee bar in the market reading her newspaper and sipping a cup of coffee.

At the sound of the commotion, she looks up, puts her coffee cup down on the saucer, neatly folds her newspaper and places it on the counter. Then she gets up from her seat and makes her way, unhurriedly, across the market.

Reaching the boy, the woman pulls the boy's pants down, carefully takes hold of his testicles, and starts to squeeze, gently at first and then ever more firmly.

After a few seconds the boy convulses violently and coughs up the quarter, which the woman deftly catches in her free hand.

Releasing the boy, the woman hands the coin to the father and walks back to her seat in the coffee bar without saying a word.

As soon as he is sure that his son has suffered no lasting ill effects, the father rushes over to the woman and starts thanking her profusely, saying, "I've never seen anybody do anything like that before. It was fantastic. Are you a doctor?"

"No," she says, "Divorce attorney."



STORE STOCK PRICES

(Sale yard prices unless stated otherwise)

		SOUTHERN NORTH ISLAND		CANTERBURY		OTAGO/SOUTHLAND	
Store Lambs (2021)	40-46 kg	\$4.30	=	Low Turnover		Low Turnover	
	36-40 kg	\$4.40-\$4.60	↑	\$4.20-\$4.30		\$4.20	
	32-35 kg	\$4.60-\$4.80	↑	\$4.20-\$4.30		\$4.20-\$4.30	
All Males (Shorn)	29-31 kg			\$4.20-\$4.30		\$4.30	
	25-28 kg						
Ewe Lambs (Shorn)	38-42 kg	\$4.40	↑				
	32-38 kg	\$4.60	↑	\$4.20		\$4.20	
	29-32 kg	\$4.60	↑				
	26-29 kg						
Works Ewes	25-28 kg	\$6.20	=	\$6.10		\$6.10	
Top R2 Steers	450-500 kg	\$3.60	↓	\$3.30		\$3.10-\$3.20	
Med Trad R2 Steer	400-450 kg	\$3.50-\$3.60	=	\$3.20		\$3.20	
DX R2 Steers	400-450 kg	\$3.20-\$3.40	↓	\$3.20		\$2.90-\$3.00	
Top Trad R1 Steers	240-300 kg	\$3.70-\$4.00	↑	\$3.60-\$3.70		\$3.50-\$3.60	
Med Trad R1 Steers	180-240 kg	\$3.70-\$3.90	=	\$3.80		\$3.60	
Top Ex R1 Steers	240-300 kg	\$3.60-\$3.80	=			\$3.40	
Med Ex R1 Steers	180-240 kg	\$3.80	=	\$3.70			
Top Trad R2 Heifers	440-480 kg	\$3.30	=	\$3.30		\$3.00	
Med Trad R2 Heifers	400-430 kg	\$3.30	=	\$3.20		\$3.00	
DX R2 Heifers	360-400 kg	\$3.10 - \$3.20	↑	\$3.10		\$2.80	
Med Trad R1 Heifers	220-260 kg	\$3.20	=	\$3.20		\$2.90-\$3.00	
DX R1 Heifers	180-220 kg	\$3.20	↑	\$3.00		\$2.80	
R2 Friesian Bull	400-450 kg	\$3.30	=	\$2.90		\$2.70	
	350-400 kg	\$3.30	=	\$2.70		\$2.70	
R1 Friesian Bull	180-200 kg	\$3.40	=	\$3.30		\$3.00-\$3.20	
	200-250 kg	\$3.30-\$3.40	=	\$3.30		\$3.10-\$3.15	

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