

# Feeding Pastures for Profit (FPFP)



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## Program Aim

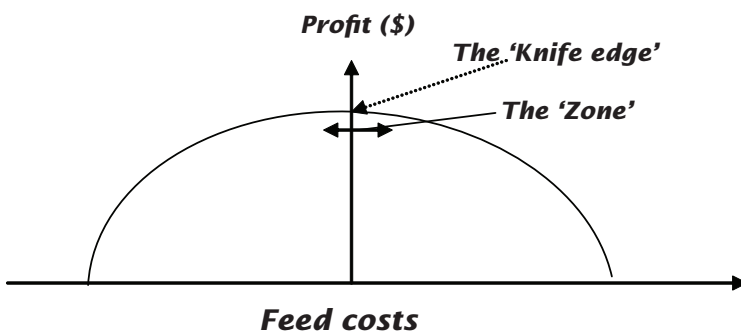
To improve profit and ease of farm management by assisting farmers with pasture management and supplement use. The program is designed to assist those who are in charge of making all feeding and grazing management decisions on the farm.



The program enables participants to gain the skills and confidence to make two major decisions that have a big impact on profitability.

1. How much pasture do I allocate to the herd today?
2. What amount of supplement do I need to offer the herd to be feeding "in the zone"?

Feeding "in the zone" is the term used to describe getting the most profitable balance between milk production level and the level of feed being offered to the herd. The diagram below helps to describe this:



For every farming system there is a point where offering the herd more supplement reduces farm profit. At some point the cost of the last kilogram of feed offered is greater than the 'income' generated. The "zone" describes the area that is on either side of this point – either slightly too much feed or too little. The FPFP program attempts to explain where this point is, and provides some simple practical tools to identify this point for each individual participant's farming system.



The program is about **'making the most of the current available farm resources'**, rather than changing the resources. There is no need to change the pasture type or quality, herd size or labour availability to get value from this systems approach to feed management on the farm.

The system used can start at a very simple level, and can build into a more complicated management tool. The degree to which the information is "adopted" by a farmer will depend on the complexity of their farming system and on their own motivation level.

The program provides tools (like the Rotation Right tool) and concepts, which allows farmers to adjust their system based on changing conditions. It is important to understand that FPFP is not a recipe for farming – it is a systems based approach. A system allows the farmer to understand how the decisions that he or she makes impact on the components of the system, and allows the farmer to repeat success even when conditions change.

The program is based on the principle or belief that home grown feed (pastures, crop, silage or hay) will on average be cheaper per tonne dry matter than any brought in or purchased feed (grain, concentrates). Refer to diagram showing the profit line and how it changes with increased home grown feed usage. So the greater the proportion of home grown feed in the total feed required by the herd over the year, the higher the likelihood of increased profitability. However, the importance of maintaining cow efficiency is not overlooked in the systems approach that is taken. It is the balance between hectare efficiency and cow efficiency that is addressed throughout the program for each farm system.

|                       |                                                                                        |                                           |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
|                       | Feed required to reach target production level<br>(Total for the herd over the season) |                                           |
| Low pasture utilise.  | Feed from pasture<br>(\$100 per tonne)                                                 | Feed from supplement<br>(\$400 per tonne) |
| High pasture utilise. | Feed from pasture<br>(\$100 per tonne)                                                 | Feed from supplement<br>(\$400 per tonne) |