



Local Land  
Services  
Northern Tablelands

# Grazing Livestock on Winter Crops



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## Things to consider:

- Introduction of stock
- Effective fibre
- Animal health (mineral supplementation & vaccinations)
- Other considerations



## Introduction of stock

- Slow & steady is key!
- 70:30 rule
- We are feeding the rumen microbes
- 7 – 10 days to become accustomed
- What if all this ↑ is not possible?
- Roughage source available in the paddock



## Effective fibre

- Reduces the rate of gut flow
- Roughage also contains enzymes
- Helps stabilise rumen fermentation
- Also important at other times:
  - at late pregnancy & early lactation
  - scouring caused by excess protein
  - moisture content is above 83%
  - when grazing brassica species



## Mineral Supplementation

- Grazing crops can have mineral imbalances
- Main ones are magnesium (Mg) and calcium (Ca)
- Grass tetany & milk fever
- Usually occur when grazing winter or spring pastures, or young, vegetative dual-purpose cereal crops
- Due to crops being low sodium (Na), Mg and Ca, as well as being high in potassium (K)
- Mineral supplementation is needed!
- 3 types to consider



## Mineral Supplementation

- **1:1** mix of magnesium oxide (Causmag) and salt (growing livestock)
- **2:2:1** or **1:1:1** mix of ag lime, salt and magnesium oxide (pregnant & lactating livestock)
- **1:1** mix of ag lime & salt (all stock if they find magnesium oxide unpalatable)



## Vaccination

- Pulpy kidney
- All livestock should be up to date with clostridial vaccinations
- 3-in-1, 5-in-1, 6-in-1, 7-in-1 prior to introduction



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## Other considerations

- Nitrates
- Photosensitisation



## Nitrates – factors which cause accumulation

- Drought
- Cloudy or cold weather
- Herbicide application
- Wilting



## Nitrates – amount in plant tissues depends on:

- Plant species
- Stage of maturity
- Part of the plant
- Fertiliser application
- Soil nitrogen availability

## Some plants associated with nitrate poisoning

- Oats
- Sorghum
- Maize
- Lucerne
- Kikuyu
- Wheat
- Barley
- Soybean
- Capeweed
- Variegated thistle
- Mintweed
- Pigweed
- Caltrop
- Marshmallow
- Blackberry
- Fat hen



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What about supplementation on pasture?