

## Feed budgeting made easy

<http://www.mla.com.au/news-and-events/industry-news/feed-budgeting-made-easy/>

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Feed budgeting doesn't have to be daunting with a Better Beef webinar, held next Thursday in collaboration with MLA's More Beef from Pastures program, taking participants through the basics.

Fiona Baker, a Beef Extension Officer with Victoria's Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources, will take participants through using a tactical feed budget and where to source the basic data required to make the tool "the best guesstimate" of the situation being considered.

"The [MLA Feed Demand Calculator](#) is great tool for giving producers an indication of the supply and demand of feed across a 12-month period and for identifying general feed shortages," she said.

"However, a tactical feed budget enables producers to look at a shorter time period (generally three to four months)."

Fiona said they can be useful for looking at the following scenarios:

- Whether stock will reach their weight gain performance targets, for example, 100kg in 100 days
- Is there enough feed on hand to see stock through summer
- Is there enough feed to get stock through winter
- The amount of spring growth and whether there is enough feed to justify buying in trade stock,
- How much of the farm could be shut up for hay/silage production.

"Once it is understood where the figures can be sourced from, the tactical budget is quick and easy to run through," she said.

"It is easy to quickly change figures, such as expected pasture growth, to develop a number of scenarios such as lower than expected growth and compare that to expected growth, and see the impact it might have on available feed."

Fiona said revisiting the tool monthly, particularly checking how actual pasture growth is tracking compared to estimated growth, gives much more control over animal performance.

"It's also a great planning tool," she said. "It enables you to see if you can meet animal performance targets from pasture growth alone or if you will need more feed to get the performance required."

"This provides time to plan and cost out different options for filling any feed gap, such as purchasing hay, grain or pellets or using urea or gibberellic acid to boost pasture growth."

"Any feed options should be costed on a cents/megajoule basis to determine the cheapest feed source and don't forget to take into account any infrastructure or equipment needed to store the feed and feed it out or apply it to the paddocks."

### More information

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Registration for the webinar/phone seminar can be done online at <http://tinyurl.com/BB23-06-2016> or by phoning 02 6030 4605