

## **The Cicerone Project Inc.**

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### **NEWSLETTER No 25**

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# **WILL YOU HAVE ENOUGH PASTURE THROUGH WINTER?**

## **Pasture Assessment / Management Field Days**

to assist with your decisions through winter.

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> June**  
**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July**  
**Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August**  
**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September**

9.00am to 12.00 noon at the Cicerone Farm,  
meet at the Chiswick (CSIRO) Liaison Centre at 9.00am

**Guest speakers will be present at some sessions**

*The Cicerone Project invites you to the regular monthly  
meetings to look at pasture assessment and management.*

*Come and support this exciting learning exercise.*

*Ph. 6778 3871*

**Measure    Compare    Learn    Adopt**

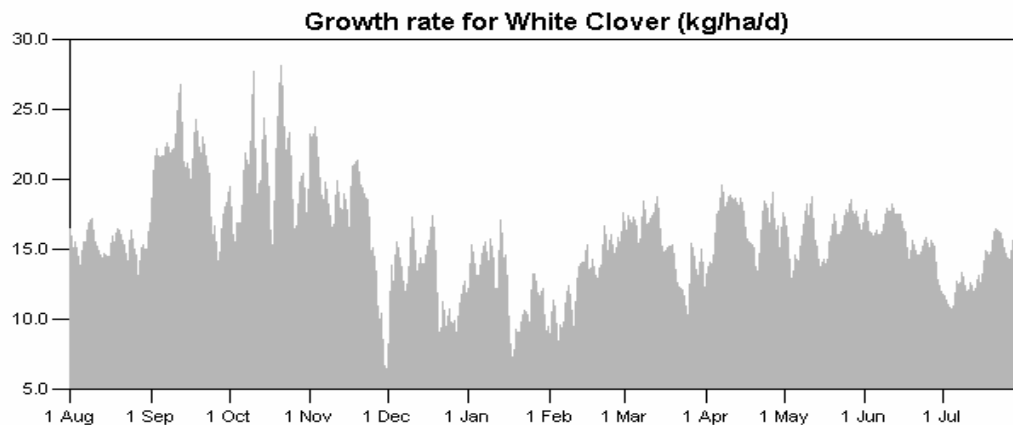
# Are you interested in helping to evaluate the value to graziers of tools for predicting future feed availability, animal growth rates and reducing risk?

**Hi, my name is Tim Sawley**

I am a Rural Science student currently undertaking a 4th year Honours project at UNE. The project involves the GrassGro and GrazFeed decision support tools, which have been developed by CSIRO to model pasture and animal systems. My project is designed to investigate the response of graziers to some of the summaries of key profit drivers that these computer programs offer.

There are a number of reasons why I think the program will benefit users. It can compare enterprises and predict gross margins. It can also be used to investigate new systems such as different pasture types, stocking rates and paddock rotations. It allows the analysis of climatic data based on the last 50 years of records. Finally the largest benefit I see in GrassGro and GrazFeed is their ability to improve your current farming system.

An example of this is the following graph of pasture growth rates; the GrassGro program can give you the growth rates of pasture right up until yesterday. With this information you can adjust your fodder budgets and change your stocking rates which can reduce risk and perhaps increase profit.



I am looking for farmers who are interested in spending some time with me to work on the program. It will involve one session where I will work through the program with you, followed a few weeks later by a questionnaire which will ask for your thoughts on the program. Your participation would be much appreciated and it may even benefit you in the future.

**Contact Details:** *Phone:* 6772 8442

*E-mail:* [tim.sawley@bigpond.com](mailto:tim.sawley@bigpond.com)

**Measure**

**Compare**

**Learn**

**Adopt**

# Survey of Northern Tablelands Wool Growers Hoping for a Great Response

**Wool growers are being asked to back their industry and respond to a one page questionnaire that has just been posted to all woolgrowers on the Northern Tablelands**

The survey was designed with input from Northern Tablelands woolgrowers, to collect information about how the local industry combines profitable production with conservation of native vegetation and biodiversity.

“We are hoping for a great response from wool growers because this survey aims to provide us with positive information about the local industry’s environmental management and sustainability,” said Associate Professor Nick Reid of the School of Environmental Sciences and Natural Resources Management, University of New England.

“New England wool growers profitably manage a large amount of native vegetation and biodiversity at no cost to society, and the region produces some of the best wool in the world.

“Unfortunately, with governments’ native vegetation reforms in recent years, the tremendous environmental service provided by local wool growers has been ignored.

“This survey will help us define the industry’s stewardship role in relation to the environment,” said Dr Reid.

The questionnaire is one component of the *Land, Water & Wool* program, called *Profitable, biodiverse wool production for the Northern Tablelands of NSW*. The project led by Dr Reid, is advised by a committee of local wool growers, extension officers and researchers. The Committee is chaired by Mr Richard Maclean of ‘Woodville East’, Armidale.

“Primary producers are asked to fill in lots of surveys,” said Mr Maclean.

“This one is worth it. We helped the researchers come up with the right questions, and made sure it was only one page long. It takes only seven minutes to fill in,” he said.

“Many wool growers are probably worried that information about native vegetation or biodiversity is going to come back and hurt us. But the Land, Water & Wool project is different. The project is looking at ways wool growers can be more profitable while looking after the natural resource base and native plants and animals at the same time,” said Mr Maclean.

“It’s all about finding a sensible balance. The results of this questionnaire will be good for the industry as well as the environment,” said Mr Maclean.

The Northern Tablelands Project is part of the *Land, Water & Wool* initiative, a partnership between Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI) and Land & Water Australia (LWA), in conjunction with the University of New England and supported by Southern New England Landcare.

For more information, please contact either: Associate Professor Nick Reid, Project Leader, Ecosystem Management, UNE on 6773 2759, nrei3@metz.une.edu.au OR Karen Forge, Project Facilitator, Southern New England Landcare Ltd on 6772 9123, snelcc@bigpond.com.

## Changes to Worker's Compensation

For Worker's Compensation policies which are new or to be renewed after the end of the financial year on 30 June 2003, there is a change in the items to be included in your 'wages' calculation. Wages will now also include:-

- Director's fees paid to working directors
- Employer Superannuation contributions
- Grossed up value of fringe benefits
- Long service leave payments
- Termination payments

There will be an increase in the amount listed in your wages but this is due to be compensated by a lower premium. For more information phone 13 10 50 or visit the Work Cover website at [www.workcover.nsw.gov.au](http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au)

### FARM RISK ASSESSMENT

**SMALL BUSINESSES NEED TO HAVE THIS DONE SOON, SO HAVE A LOOK AT THE ENCLOSED 15 MINUTE FARM SAFETY CHECK AND MAKE YOUR PROPERTY A SAFER PLACE FOR YOUR WORKERS, YOUR VISITORS AND, VERY IMPORTANTLY, YOUR FAMILY.**

### SLINK SKINS

When you were at Wool Expo did you see the glorious long sheepskin coat which was part of the Winter Olympics uniform? It was a beautiful russet colour and so soft to touch.

It was made from Slink Skins, the skin collected from newborn lambs which don't survive the first few weeks of life. In this cold winter climate neonatal lamb losses are something all sheep farmers have to bear. But now you can receive cash for something that is no use to you but very useful to the fashion industry.

The rewards for you are cash for the lambs and an additional credit towards a holiday. You are cleaning up a food source from predators and vermin and you have a management resource to monitor lamb losses.

For more information contact Bob Conkey phone 0429 476 612 or 1800 424 393. The email address is [slinkskins@bigpond.com](mailto:slinkskins@bigpond.com). The local contact is GA and F Reeves of Hawthorne, Llangothlin, phone 6779 2820 or 0412 417 520

**The Cicerone Project gratefully acknowledges the funding support given to them by Australian Wool Innovation**

• australian wool  
**innovation**  
• limited

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