



# Milking Your Feedbase



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[www.grahamcentre.net](http://www.grahamcentre.net)

# Future Dairy – What is it?



- Multi-discipline research project, 2004-Now

- Labour – AMS



- Feedbase – Complementary Forage Rotations

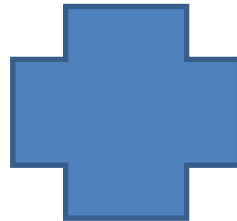
# Why do we need feedbase research?

- Decreasing terms of trades, cost of inputs is increasing.
- Increase cost and competition for land and water.
- A complementary forage rotation was designed

# 40tDM/ha in a CFR



# A CFS – 26tDM / ha



35%

65%

# RISK

- Farina - CFS is less “risky”
- Milk Price had highest impact on operating profit
- Forage crops had lower inter-annual variability than pasture

# Proving it on commercial farms

- Using 4 case study farms in Nth Vic, 6 in Hunter Valley
- Monitored on a fortnightly basis for at least 12mths.



# 30:30 project

- Summer shoulder pasture –Fescue, shifted supply, whole crop silage
- Improve pasture harvest!!!!
- Forage crops can fit into systems as long as they are utilised efficiently
- Farmlets – 12%ROA



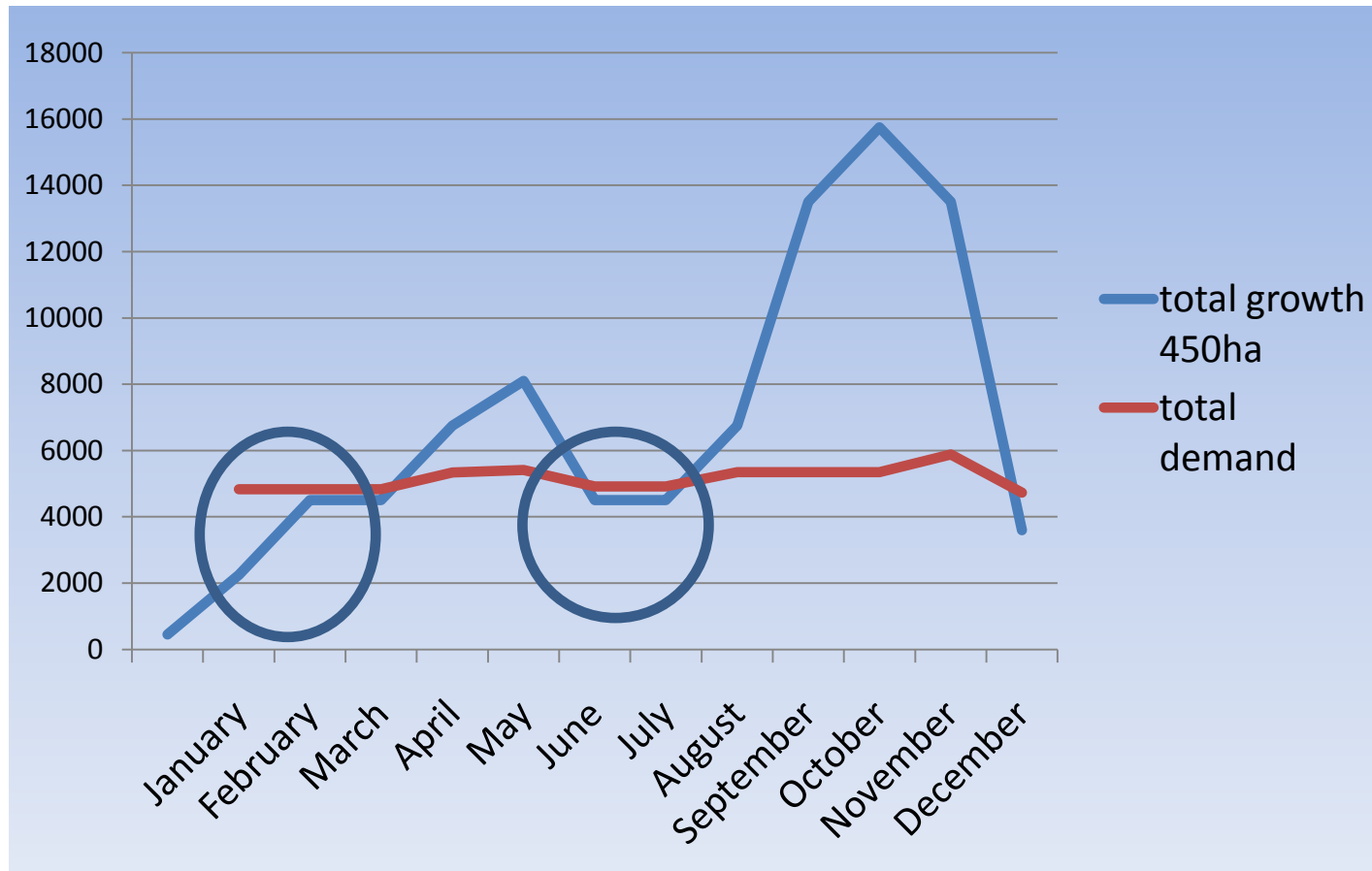


# How does this fit into a beef system?

- Grow more home-grown feed. “Grazeable” feed?
- Lift overall stocking rates and/or reduce supplementary feeding
- Better hit target market specifications



# Assess current supply and demand



# What are some options?

- Perennial Summer Feed - Lucerne or Chicory
  - weaners, finishing steers, (finishing lambs).
- Winter Feed Annual/Short term
  - Oats/Winter cereal/Peas
  - Brassica (spring or autumn sown) can provide feed in summer or winter

# A simple system change

- Harvest silage from ryegrass/annual pasture paddock in October
- Immediately broadcast forage rape seed + seed to germinate on late spring rainfall.
- It may provide 3tDM.ha or more in Jan-Feb.
- Cost - \$181.ha, \$60/tDM.
  - *Compared with what?*

# Economics & Risk

- Whole Farm Budget – A thorough analysis
- Opportunity costs, marginal returns
- Risk
  - What are they for your situation?

# Key Messages

- There is no one simple answer!
- Need to assess your production system
- Forage crops can be a way to
  - increase production,
  - fill feed gap quickly, cheaply,
  - Potentially lower risk

# Dairy websites worth looking at

- [www.futuredairy.com.au](http://www.futuredairy.com.au)
- [www.dairyaustralia.com.au](http://www.dairyaustralia.com.au)