



Local Land
Services
South East

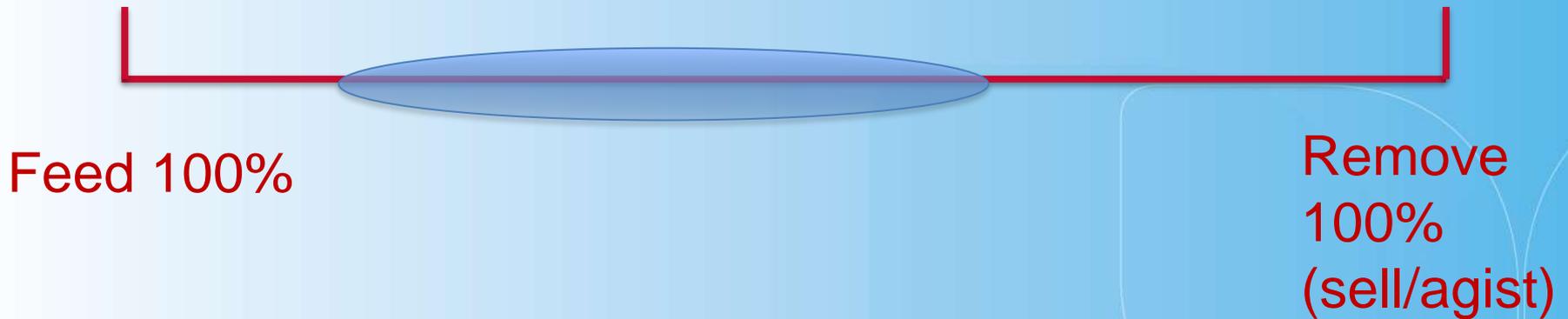
Confinement feeding

HCLG “Managing the dry times” workshop

Frogmore, 13 March 2020

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Managing drought: what stock do I keep?



- Stockplan (NSW DPI)
- Confinement feeding enables a broader range of options without –ve impact on the resource base

Confinement feeding – what is it?

- Droughtlots
- Stock Management Areas
- “Sacrifice” paddocks

Maintenance feeding of stock in a confined area during drought to protect pastures and soil

Exempt from legislative requirements associated with feedlots

Confinement feeding: Pros

- Maintain core breeding stock **whilst** protecting pastures and soil
 - ✓ reduced erosion (wind and water)
 - ✓ quicker pasture recovery
 - ✓ reduced resowing costs



3 weeks after
about 20mm

Overgrazed native grass (<30% ground cover)
Has had about 20 major wind erosion events on it
since this photo taken with 100s t/soil lost per ha

Source: Bob Freebairn



3 weeks after
about 20mm

Native grass flexibly rotationally grazed
and never grazed into the ground.
70% + cover (500kgDM/ha)
No wind erosion

Source: Bob Freebairn

Confinement feeding: Pros

- Maintain core breeding stock **whilst** protecting pastures and soil
- Reduced labour
- Weeds can be more easily managed
- Stock health and condition can be easily monitored
- Multi-use facility (additional holding yards for shearing, fires, floods etc.)

Confinement feeding: Cons

Cost

- ✓ full production ration
- ✓ infrastructure costs

Water

- ✓ Quantity and quality is critical – big demand

Potential health issues

- ✓ Acidosis, ammonia toxicity, pulpy kidney
- ✓ salmonella, coccidiosis

Confinement feeding isn't for everyone...

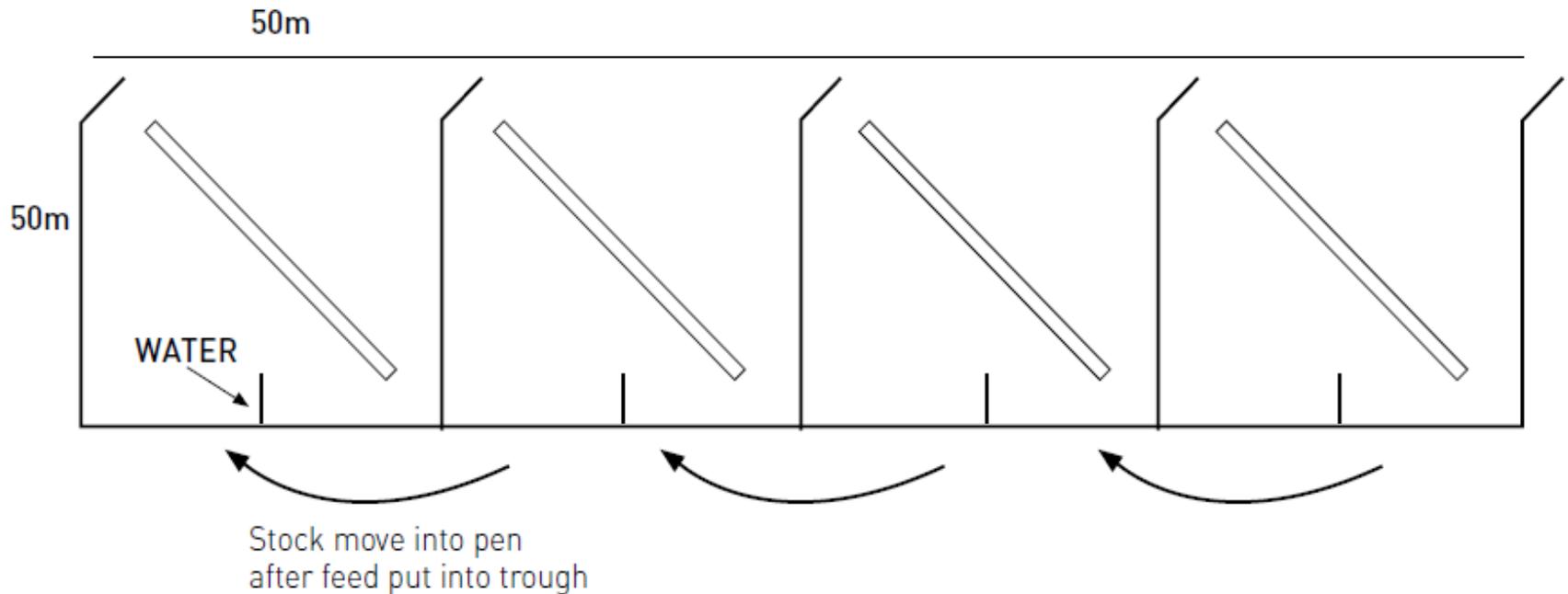


Site selection

Some key factors to consider

- ✓ water
- ✓ soil type and slope
- ✓ visibility

Pen design and size



Source: AWI 2017 *“Managing Sheep in Droughtlots, a best practice guide”*

Pen design and size

Space and mob size

- Sheep: 5m²; mob size up to 1000hd/pen
- Dry cows: 15 – 25m²; mob size up to 250hd
- More space can help reduce stress and shy feeders





Infrastructure

Troughs

Preferred over trail feeding – less waste and animal health issues

Trough spacing

- Sheep – single sided access = 30cm/hd +
- Adult cattle – single sided access = 60cm/hd +
- These figures are halved if stock have double sided access

Infrastructure

Water

- Position well away from feed (min 10m)
- Daily cleaning



Summary re confinement feeding...

- Can be an extremely valuable drought management tool
- Generally works very well with minimal stock losses
- Design a system that suits you



Photo: Amy Walker

Further information

‘Confinement Feeding, Early Weaning and Drought Management’, LLS workshop series 2019. Geoff Duddy (Sheep Solutions); Jeff House (Jeff House Livestock); and Brett Littler (Local Land Services)