

WALRC Livestock Matters Forum

Making gains at Manypeaks

*WALRC takes a look at two highly innovative and very different businesses in Manypeaks. We visit firstly Kent and Michelle Rochester's Palmdale Road block and then Bevan and Rebecca Ravenhill's nearby property in a day that looks at innovation in **Farm, Feedbase and Figuring it all out.***

Thursday, June 27 from 10am sharp to 5pm

Meet at Kent's Palmdale Road block, 700m south of the Fishtrack Rd intersection. Watch for WALRC signs.

- 9.30am Arrival barista coffee courtesy of **Optiweigh**
- 10.00am Welcome to WALRC Livestock Matters – WALRC Chair **Bronwyn Clarke** and introduction to our host for the day, consulting veterinarian to both of our featured businesses, **Dr Jess Shilling**.
- 10.10am** **What's changed at Kent's since WALRC was last here:** Jess brings out the best in Manypeaks most humble achiever, **Kent Rochester** as she checks in on the move to a year-round grass-fed beef production system, that sources stock from throughout the South West.
- 10.20am **Laser levelled and ready for a production boost:** Local contractor **Ben Harriss** has been charged with the task of 'getting more from this country' through an extensive laser levelling program that should make significant inroads to carrying capacity of this block. We get Ben to explain what he's done; what its cost and what that means to this farm. And then, we explore courtesy of Gallagher's **Murray Green** – what the soon-to-be-installed virtual fencing innovation will do to change the Rochester paradigm.
- 10.50am **The biggest change – the size of the financial pie:** With Kent's further intensification and upping of volume through the system, comes a remarkable jump in the financial size of the business. With his accountant **Paul Meaton** from Lincolns in the crowd – Jess explores with Kent his main strategies for keeping on top of the risk and margin factor and keeping his accountant happy.
- 11.00am **Moving on down the laneway...** we take a good look at the grass-fed system the associated decision-making systems, enabled by the Opti-weigh data Jess draws on experts in the crowd including visiting silage guru **John Piltz** to discuss:
- The feedbase on offer
 - The importance of fodder conservation and silage in particular
 - The animal health considerations of a beef trading system
- 11.45am General Q&A and look around
- 12.00pm Move on to Ravenhill Farm for lunch by **Butterfield Beef**



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- 12.45pm **Welcome to Ravenhills:** Jess invites **Bevan Ravenhill** to the front to talk us through his approach to farm business – which has nutritional value at the heart of everything. We discuss the cost benefit of deferred grazing; the cost and benefit of fencing and water infrastructure when rotationally grazing and how the business assesses their feeding decisions.
- 1.00pm **What the figures tell us:** The CSIRO team took the opportunity to measure everything they could that was on hand to understand as much about the enterprise as possible. CSIRO’s **Hayley Norman** tells us what they found while silage guru **John Piltz** tells us what that means when it comes to conserved fodder.
- 1.15pm **Fodder Conservation – a new paradigm:** With everyone pretty much fresh out of conserved fodder from last season there is the opportunity to rethink. We draw on a range of experts including Grazing Matcher’s **Dan Parnell** to look at the cost benefits of different options – from hay v silage; from rounds v squares to pits and from contractors to financing your own equipment.
- 1.30pm **The Fodder Panel:** Jess invites **Kim Lester, Luke Bairstow** and **Rob Potter** to share their experiences in fodder conservation.
- 2.00pm **The facts, figures and industry analysis:** MLA’s market analyst **Steve Bignell**
- 2.15pm **Numbers and herd structure:** Time of calving is an issue close to Bevan’s heart. Let’s hear what he and others including **Annabel Charlton, Lachy Gilmour** and **Wayne Mitchell** have to say about this and the impact it might have on the supply chain.
- 2.45pm **French Serradella that is dormant summer sown:** We walk and talk and turn to **Rob Harrison** from DPIRD/Murdoch Uni to talk us through a French Serradella demonstration trial sown in late summer to determine if this will solve a (traditional) winter feed gap on the south coast.
- 3.30pm Break
- 3.45pm **The Beef Sustainability message:** Perth-based Lawyer **Michael Maxwell** specialises in ag supply chain legal matters and has represented agriculture versus activists and governments on a number of occasions. Michael is also a member of the Australian Beef Sustainability Framework and his legal experience brings a unique perspective as to why this process is so important.
- 4.15pm **A new version of Tough:** WALRC together with Stirlings to Coast is delighted to introduce you to **Mike Rolls** and **Ben Pettingill** – a couple of country mates on a mission to share their learnings. You can call them Mike and Ben – or you can affectionately call them Legless and Blind (without being accused of something inappropriate). Because they are. Literally! They have a great story to share of how they tackled the extraordinary adversity they were each faced with and what they describe as Tough Talk. *This Legless and Blind initiative supported by the Grower Group Alliance, through funding from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.*



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5.00

Q&A and hospitality courtesy of **Optiweigh**