

PASTURE PLUS AND A STUDY OF WEIGHT GAIN IN CATTLE

How Pasture Plus adds value and improves the 'bottom line'



By:

Greg Kaynes
Area Sales Manager
NNSW/SQLD

What is in this IN

This IN discusses the results and outcomes of a weight gain trial in which a group of cattle were closely monitored both before, and after, grazing on pasture treated with **Pasture Plus** on the property of a client in Walcha, New South Wales Australia.

An Overview of the Trial and Location

The weight gain trial was conducted on the property 'Glen Eagle' owned at the time by RLF client Neil Brazel, a third generation grower.

The grazier was extremely pleased with the weight gain result at the time and has since said :

*“We initially stuck the cattle into 'Top Flat' for nearly two months and they did not do much. After weighing them, we stuck them into 'Iron Gate', the paddock right next door to 'Top Flat', which has the same pasture mix and similar country. We had treated 'Iron Gate' with 3-litres per hectare of **Pasture Plus** about two weeks before the cattle went in. Once they were in there, the cattle started to really put on the weight. We, along with our stock and station agent were very happy with the result from **Pasture Plus**”* . – Neil Brazel



Neil Brazel
Third Generation Grower

The district of Walcha supports some of the best grazing land in the country and it covers approximately 1,605,590 acres. The district usually runs about 940,000 sheep (mostly Merinos) and around 85,000 head of stud and commercial beef cattle. The district is known to produce some of the best superfine wool in the world and is also a hub for dairy cattle.



Typical Grazing Country

FIRST PHASE

A herd of 59 Domestic Trade Heifers were run on traditional pasture of cocksfoot, fescue and clover for a period of 50 days. The paddock identified for this part of the trial was known as 'Top Flat'.

- ✓ the heifers were weighed on 27th November 2014, with a combined total weight of **22,448kg**
- ✓ therefore, the average weight of each animal at the commencement of the first part of the trial was **380.47kg**
- ✓ when they came off the pasture on 15th January 2015, they weighed a combined total of **24,204kg**, with the average weight of each animal being **410.24kg**

+ 0.6kg
Daily weight gain

No Treatment

This represented a **daily weight gain for each heifer of 0.6kg per day**

SECOND PHASE

The same 59 cattle were moved to the paddock next door known as 'Iron Gate', which had been sprayed two weeks previously with RLF **Pasture Plus**. This became the second part of the trial. At the time it was noted that the pastures in both paddocks were identical, the topography in both paddocks was similar and the paddocks were next to each other.

- ✓ the heifers were weighed on 15th January 2015, with a combined total weight of **24,204kg**
- ✓ the average weight of each animal going back onto the pasture was **410.24kg**
- ✓ when they came off the pasture on 18th February 2015, after a period of 34 days, they weighed a combined total of 26,506kg, with the average weight of each animal being **449.25kg**

+ 1.2kg
Daily weight gain

With Pasture Plus

This represented a **daily weight gain for each heifer of 1.2kg per day**



About Pasture Plus

Pasture Plus delivers 12 essential nutrients contained in a HBS (a High-analysis Broad-spectrum Solution), and these essential nutrients are formulated specifically for animal carrying pastures. **Pasture Plus** is an Ultra Foliar fertiliser with RLF's NDS (Nutrient Delivery System). This increases the efficiency of product uptake through the leaf and transfer in the plant and cells.

Pasture Plus can provide greater plant protection, more growth and improved yields with soil and nutrient variability and deficiencies addressed.



How the Crop Nutrition Benefits Translate

Although grass measurement and analysis was not done on the pasture crop under review, the 100% increase in daily weight gain as demonstrated in this trial can only be achieved when the quantity and quality of the grass on offer for the livestock is influenced by beneficial and high quality characteristics. Most useful amongst these are the characteristics of digestibility and crude protein.

Pasture Plus has performed very well in the past when [grass measurement and analysis data](#) has been evaluated, so it is with a high degree of confidence that the same qualities have contributed to the turnaround in condition and weight of the 59 heifers followed as part of this report.



- Digestibility is a measure of the proportion of the grass (on a dry matter basis) that can be utilised by an animal. Generally, grasses with higher digestibility can be processed more rapidly, allowing livestock to eat more.
- Crude protein is an estimate of the total protein present in the grass. Protein forms the building blocks of muscle, and is positively related to the digestibility of the grass. As crude protein increases, so does the performance of the livestock.

Previous **Pasture Plus** evaluations have shown that crude protein values in the range 10% - 60% increase can be achieved from treated pastures. With a corresponding decrease in fibre content **Pasture Plus**-treated grasses bring about a change in feed digestibility because of the presence of young tissue as opposed to woody or older tissue. This influences metabolisable energy (ME) because the quality of the feed generally increases.



So, for the animals, **Pasture Plus** delivers a wide range of important value added outcomes, including :

- ✓ access to healthy nutritional feed
- ✓ reduced need for feed supplement
- ✓ reduced veterinary expenses
- ✓ improved birth rates
- ✓ improved weight gain (as evidenced by this trial)
- ✓ improved wool clip
- ✓ higher quality and improved milk production
- ✓ lower mortality

These benefits are all possible because of the unique characteristics of this highly specialised RLF Ultra Foliar product especially for pasture crops.

Conclusion

This simple, straight-forward weight gain trial delivers a conclusive, credible result for **Pasture Plus**. The RLF specialty crop nutrition fertiliser for pasture crops delivers a long list of advantages and benefits and this trial is testament to these.



The following chart highlights the full picture of trial results.

	in 'Top Flat' 27/11/14	out 'Top Flat' 15/1/14 in 'Iron Gate' 15/1/14	out 'Iron Gate' 18/02/2015
Total kilograms of herd	22,448.00	24,204.00	26,612.00
Average kilograms per heifer	380.47	410.24	451.05
Number of days on pasture		50.00	34.00
Weight gained per heifer		29.76	40.81
Average daily kilogram gain		0.60	1.20

When results such as those presented by this weight comparison trial are offered, the question has to be asked "Can you afford not to use RLF Ultra Foliar **Pasture Plus**?"



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