This calendar has been produced as a result of South East Local Land Services customers and Small Farm Network members' desire to learn and implement management practices which will improve the efficiency of their beef operations. While each farm will operate differently, the calendar is designed to help remind land managers, and assist them with forward planning of activities which may occur during specific months, breeding and management cycles.

Author Amanda Britton, Senior Land Services Officer (Pasture), (South East Local Land Services).

Acknowledgements
South East Local Land Services would like to acknowledge the original authors Andrew Britton, formerly of Southern Councils Group, and Greg Meaker, retired Livestock Officer – Beef, NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI). The following people contributed to the development of The Beef Calendar of Operations New South Wales South Coast: Steve Whittaker, District Veterinarian, South East Local Land Services; John O'Connor, Senior Land Services Officer (Livestock), South East Local Land Services; Todd Andrews, Industry Development Officer – Beef, NSW DPI and Phil Graham, Technical Specialist Livestock Systems, NSW DPI.

Disclaimer
The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (January 2016). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Local Land Services or the user’s independent adviser.

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RAINFALL CHART AND MONTHLY SUMMARY .......... CENTRE SPREAD
The Small Farms Network is a multi-award winning sustainable agricultural support network. It provides a free service for people who live on or manage rural and peri-urban land on the south coast and southern highlands region. The Network provides support to all landholders ranging from half a hectare to several hundred hectares. Members of the Network range from full time farmers/producers, to residents who visit their property on the weekend and live in Sydney. A range of services are provided to assist with activities including:

- producing beef, sheep, goats, poultry, alpacas or worms
- weed control, pasture productivity and soil health advice
- project planning for bushland, creek restoration or shelterbelts design
- training workshops and field days on a wide range of sustainable land management topics.

A regular e-newsletter is distributed to 630 members which provides information on upcoming events, funding, training and activities from Sydney to Bega and across the southern tablelands region.

For more information or to join the e-newsletter mailing list, contact the Small Farms Coordinator:

Andrew Britton
Ph: (02) 4464 6020
Email: andrew.britton@lls.nsw.gov.au

The South Coast Beef Producers Association aims to support producers to improve quality and seek better prices by collaborating and selling collectively and by promoting locally produced beef to the local community. Over the past four years the association has successfully implemented an extensive education program with on farm field days, expert herd assessments and meetings with kindred groups together with building an ongoing relationship with state and local government organisations to ensure that the Beef producing industry on the South Coast is strongly represented in the future at all levels.

The Far South Coast Farmers Network is generally aimed at the larger grazing enterprises within the Bega Valley Shire area. It is an expectation that the farming enterprise will be profitable, sustainable and that there is an outlook that the property will provide a financial return. Farmers from other farming enterprises including small area farmers in niche enterprises are welcome where they see the objectives of the Network as beneficial to improving their farm management.

As part of the Department of Industry, Skills, and Regional Development, the Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) works to increase the value of primary industries and drive economic growth across NSW. NSW DPI manages a broad range of initiatives from resource to industry, including natural resource management, research and development, pest and disease management, food safety, industry engagement, and market access and competition. NSW DPI Agriculture is responsible for increasing the productivity and resilience of the agricultural sector. It does this through agricultural productivity research across livestock, plants and natural resource management areas, as well as providing education and training through Tocal College. It also delivers rural support and community development services through the NSW Rural Assistance Authority, and provides scientific advice, quality assurance and management of research facilities that underpin the research programs of the Department.

NSW DPI provides access to a handy database that profiles over 300 weeds, describing their legal requirements under the Noxious Weeds Act 1993, control information and registered herbicide options. You can search the database on their website or download the NSW WeedWise mobile app from the Apple App Store® or Google Play®.
Information provided in this Beef Calendar of Operations has been sourced from the NSW DPI training program, PROFarm, including workshops such as Prograze® and Landscan®. This breeding herd management planner has been adapted from the NSW DPI beef program. It is designed to assist you in developing and refining a program for your herd, and act as a forward planner to achieve farm management goals.

It provides a brief checklist of technical information that is time-specific for each month of a production year. Its purpose is to provide information to maximise the efficiency of a breeding herd, in areas like weaning rate and weight per cow at joining.

The calendar has been designed to be mounted in a prominent place to remind you of the recommended procedures to be carried out in a beef enterprise each month. This calendar is a guide only and timing or specific management activities may vary with breed/herd management goals. Consult with your nearest Local Land Services office or rural produce store advisor for specific advice on management activities listed within the calendar if required.

For further information on training opportunities refer to page 30 of this calendar or contact your nearest Local Land Services office.

**Prograze®**  
Prograze® is a series of workshops that develops producers skills in pasture and livestock assessment (page 30). Dealing specifically with the interaction of pasture and livestock and the impact each can have on the other.

**Pasture**

Numerous quality characteristics of a pasture can influence intake by livestock however, digestibility and proportion of legumes are the most important even though they don’t always fully explain the variation which can be observed.

Digestibility is directly and positively related to the energy content of the pasture. This energy is then used by the animals for all body functions. The higher the digestibility the faster the movement of feed through the animal, the more pasture consumed equates to higher production.

Grazing management has a significant role in manipulating plants to stay vegetative for longer providing a higher digestibility, optimising growth rate which positively influences carrying capacity, and using feed efficiently to meet livestock production and market targets (Figure 1 and Table 1).  

**Livestock**

Figures 1-2 and Table 2-3 describe pasture benchmarks indicating the amount of green herbage mass required to satisfy the nutritional requirement of stock at various stages of their reproductive cycle, and for growth.

Benchmarks provide ‘ball park’ estimates for the minimum green herbage mass which stock can graze and still maintain satisfactory levels of production. Primary factors determining herbage mass are pasture height, density and dry matter. The ‘sample pasture’ on which the benchmarks are based is one which is green reasonably dense; the first 3 cm of height is equivalent to about 1000 kg DM/ha, with each centimetre afterwards that equivalent to about 200 kg DM/ha.

**Tropical pasture**

Table 1: Variation in pasture growth that occurs between years using a native grass* and ryegrass# as representatives of warm season and cool season species.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Good growing conditions</th>
<th>Poor growing conditions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring*</td>
<td>113 per cent above</td>
<td>92 per cent below</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer*</td>
<td>77 per cent above</td>
<td>19 per cent below</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autumn*</td>
<td>32 per cent above</td>
<td>57 per cent below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter*</td>
<td>16 per cent above</td>
<td>74 per cent below</td>
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</table>

Predicted growth rate variation based on GrassGro computer model. GrassGro predicts growth rates equal or fixed in relation to the median, using a native grass* and ryegrass# as a representative of warm season and cool season species.
JANUARY

CATTLE MANAGEMENT
Evaporation in summer months can be very high.
Cattle must have adequate good quality clean water – preferably from troughs.

Water allowances:
- weaners (250-300 kg liveweight): up to 55 litres/day
- calved 2 year old heifers (350-400 kg liveweight): up to 70 litres/day
- calved cows (500 kg liveweight): up to 90 litres/day.

NUTRITION
Target fat score for joining (breeders), minimum 2.5.
In dry years assess breeder condition for early weaning requirements.

HEALTH
Drench (fluke): test for fluke burden levels. If test results are high an additional drench may be required for any livestock class over 6 months of age.
Monitor for pinkeye. Treat if required.

PASTURE MANAGEMENT
Evaluate if pastures will match livestock requirements over the autumn-winter period. If you need to improve quantity and quality develop a pasture improvement program.
1. Improve temperate species composition, options may include: annual species (e.g. oats, ryegrass, brassicas forage herbs); or perennial species (e.g. ryegrass, lucerne, cocksfoot, phalaris).
2. Order seed and fertiliser and engage contractor.
3. Develop a fertiliser application plan and nutrient budget based on soil test results (no older than 2 years).

NOTES
FEBRUARY

CATTLE MANAGEMENT
Sell 18 month feeder steers. Target weight at least 420 kg, preferably 450 kg. Regularly evaluate market opportunities as feed supply, financial situation, or market prices change. Select markets to maximise enterprise profit.
Pregnancy test breeders.
Sell empty breeders, and cull heifers for sale.
Reminder: NLIS compliance is required when livestock are leaving the farm. Contact your Local Land Services biosecurity officer or for more details refer to page 31.

PASTURE MANAGEMENT
Manage excess feed by making silage usually in February-March. After grazing or mulching, top-dress with nitrogen and allow 3-5 weeks growth then harvest.
Prepare pastures for winter feed (temperate species).
Reduce the kikuyu sward by heavy grazing, forage harvesting or mulching after the previous grazing and allowing the mat to decompose. Herbicides can provide a valuable suppression method by stopping the competition to newly growing seedlings, but doesn’t remove the “shading effect”.
Become familiar with weed seedlings such as fireweed, thistles, Crofton weed. Control plants when they are young and before flowering.

NUTRITION
Weigh steer and heifer yearlings every 6 weeks to monitor performance. Target weight gain is 0.7-0.8 kg/hd/day over summer and autumn.
Avoid excessive weight loss: daily supplementary feed intake (guide only) to stop weight loss, 1.0-0.5% of live weight per head per day.

HEALTH
Monitor for three-day sickness – a viral disease of cattle that is spread by mosquitoes and biting midges.
MARCH

CATTLE MANAGEMENT
Provide quality feed to weaner and yearling heifers to ensure they reach target weights at joining. British breeds minimum joining weight of 280 kg and European breeds minimum weight of 320 kg. Wean calves at between 7-8 months of age depending on feed availability, condition and age of cow, type of production system and the heifer calf. Methods of weaning include yard weaning, abrupt separation, gradual separation or creep weaning.

NUTRITION
Remember, it takes 2.5 months of highly digestible feed to put on 1 fat score = approximately 50 kg.

HEALTH
Drench (worms/fluke): calves at weaning for all carryover stock.
Vaccinate (clostridial): calves with 5-in-1 at weaning for all carryover stock.
Note: If early autumn break beware of bloat and manage appropriately. Don’t put hungry stock onto lush, clover dominate pastures.

PASTURE MANAGEMENT
Undertake soil testing of nominated paddocks/areas.
Manage kikuyu by grazing to 2.5 cm in March-April. Keep kikuyu short through autumn to allow light penetration of clover and temperate grass seedlings.
Consider sowing temperate species for autumn/winter/spring feed. The optimal time to start sowing ryegrass into kikuyu pastures is when the minimum air temperature has fallen below 15°C. At this time the soil is still warm enough to get good establishment and growth of ryegrass but close enough to the onset of colder weather to restrict competition from kikuyu.
Become familiar with weed seedling such as fireweed and thistles. Control plants when they are young and before flowering for the most effective management.
APRIL

CATTLE MANAGEMENT
Weigh steer and heifer weaners every 6 weeks to monitor performance. Target 0.7-0.8 kg/day over summer and autumn.

HEALTH
Drench (worms): heifer’s only, adult stock will acquire immunity.
Drench (fluke): bulls, cows and heifers. Use an effective drench against all life stages of fluke including immatures. If liver fluke are a problem drench when host snails becomes dormant due to cold weather.

PASTURE MANAGEMENT
Apply lime or gypsum if required as per soil test results.
Manage kikuyu by grazing or mulching to 2.5 cm in March-April keep short through autumn-winter to allow light penetration for clover and ryegrass seedlings.

Inspect and monitor germinating pastures regularly for signs of pest damage e.g. red-legged earth mite, blue oat mite, slugs, snails, curl grub (as they feed on the cotyledon) while cockchafers or scarab beetles feed on plant roots.
Control temperate broadleaf weeds i.e. fireweed, thistles.

NOTES
**MAY**

**CATTLE MANAGEMENT**

Fat score cows and heifers and assess pasture feed availability in preparation for last trimester of pregnancy.

Consider introducing a supplementary feed or weight loss strategy, to achieve target fat score of 2.5-3.

*Reminder: NLIS compliance is required when livestock are leaving the farm. Contact your Local Land Services biosecurity officer or for more details refer to page 31.*

**PASTURE MANAGEMENT**

Assess and control temperate broadleaf weeds before flowering in winter/spring i.e. fireweed, thistles.

Check pastures are ready for first grazing based on leaf stage, canopy closure and root anchoring.

Check pasture for insect pest damage from aphid, red/blue legged earth mite.

**Ryegrass pastures:** graze at the 2.5-3 leaf stage and before pastures have lodged to avoid yellowing and death of lower leaves. Top-dress with nitrogen 30-60 kg N/ha (60-125 kg urea/ha) after every second grazing, if conditions are favourable.

**Oat crop:** graze when well anchored and reach the tillering stage (depending on variety).

**Brassicas:** grazing is essential to maximise plant yield, feed quality and feed utilisation and minimise the potential for animal health disorders. Actual stage of grazing is dependent on variety.

**NOTES**
JUNE

CATTLE MANAGEMENT
Prepare for bull purchase. Review EBV’s.
http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/content/agriculture/livestock/beef/breeding/breedplan/bull-buy
Select heifer replacements.
Sell 10 month old weaner steers/heifers.
Weigh steer and heifer weaners every 6 weeks to monitor performance.
Target weight gain 0.2-0.3 kg/hd/day over winter.
Reminder: NLIS compliance is required when livestock are leaving the farm.
Contact your Local Land Services biosecurity officer or for more details refer to page 31.

PASTURE MANAGEMENT
Monitor pasture growth.
Assess late sown paddocks for first grazing.
Top-dress with nitrogen 30-60 kg N/ha (60-125 kg urea/ha) after every second grazing, if conditions are favourable.
Plan winter grazings/feeding budgets.

NOTES
### JULY

**CATTLE MANAGEMENT**
Monitor calving daily.
Record calf birthdate, identification, sex, weight and health problems.
Drift cows and calves (for large herds) at end of week.

**NUTRITION**
Select quantity and quality of pasture to match the needs of a lactating cow needing to gain weight for joining.
Target fat score for joining (breeders) minimum 2.5.

**HEALTH**
Monitor for milk fever and grass tetany.
Vaccinate (pestivirus): heifer weaners, primary dose (if required).

**PASTURE MANAGEMENT**
Monitor winter grazing/feeding budgets to prevent weight loss.
Consider purchasing feed for supplementary feeding.

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**NOTES**
Identify if you have a true pasture surplus and choose which paddocks will be locked up for silage/hay production.
Engage contractor of intent to conserve feed.
Investigate the use of a summer fodder crop i.e. forage sorghum, millet, rape, brassicas (turnip, swede, kale, chicory).
**AUGUST**

**CATTLE MANAGEMENT**
Continue to monitor calving daily. Record calf birthdate, identification, sex, weight and health problems. Drift cows and calves (for large herds) at end of week. Check bull soundness (jaw, feet/legs, testicles and perpuse/penis) pre-joining.

**NUTRITION**
Select quantity and quality of pasture to match the needs of a lactating cow needing to gain weight for joining. British breeds minimum joining weight of 280 kg and European breeds minimum weight of 320 kg.

**HEALTH**
Monitor for milk fever and grass tetany.

**PASTURE MANAGEMENT**
Continue to plan winter grazing/feeding budgets. Early maturing ryegrass varieties may start flowering (weather dependent particularly if August is dry and hot).

Prepare paddocks for fodder conservation. After grazing, slash/mulch and top dress with either nitrogen or a blended (NPK) fertiliser.

**NOTES**
SEPTEMBER

CATTLE MANAGEMENT
Purchase new bulls.
Weigh steer and heifer weaners every 6 weeks to monitor performance.
Target weight gain 1.0-1.5 kg/hd/day over spring.
Sell cull heifers.
Calves: mark, dehorn and vaccinate.

NUTRITION
Select quantity and quality of pasture to match the needs of a lactating cow needing to gain weight for joining.

HEALTH
Vaccinate (clostridial/leptospirosis): bulls 7-in-1 including vibrio and pestivirus (if required).
Vaccinate (clostridial/leptospirosis): cows and heifers with 7-in-1 booster.
Vaccinate (pestivirus): bulls, cows, heifer yearlings booster and heifer weaners second and if required dose 2-4 weeks before joining.

PASTURE MANAGEMENT
Graze ryegrass pastures based on leaf stage or canopy closure.
Early maturing ryegrass varieties may start flowering (weather dependent).
Depending on the season, fodder conservation may start early. Aim to harvest ryegrass when seed heads first start to appear. Dry matter yields will be highest when seeds are fully developed.
Identify paddocks for soil testing. Do not test paddocks which have had a fertiliser treatment in the 3-4 months before testing.

NOTES
**OCTOBER**

**CATTLE MANAGEMENT**

Joining bull with heifers and cows:

- 6-9 weeks for cows and 6 weeks only for heifers.
- Joining weight target for British breed heifers is minimum 280 kg and for European breed heifers is a minimum 320 kg liveweight.
- Mating rate for 2 year old bull is 20-30 cows, mature is 35-60 cows.
- Bulls need to be fat score 3 and cows minimum 2.5.

**NUTRITION**

Select quantity and quality of pasture to match the needs of a lactating cow needing to gain weight through joining.

**HEALTH**

Vaccinate (clostridial): calves at 3 months with 5-in-1, first dose.

**PASTURE MANAGEMENT**

Silage production – assess chosen paddocks for readiness.
Manage newly sown pastures.

Annuals: mid-season maturing ryegrass varieties may start flowering (weather dependent), monitor for signs of rust and fungal disease particularly in humid seasons and graze crop before palatability is reduced.

Perennials: lock-up and allowed to set seed, increasing persistence.

Grass weeds: monitor germination of weed seedlings such as giant Parramatta grass, Coolatai grass and African lovegrass. Become familiar with juvenile plants to prevent growth and spread.

**NOTES**

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**NOVEMBER**

**CATTLE MANAGEMENT**

Mark, dehorn, NLIS and management tag calves.

Joining continues.

Weigh weaner steers every 6 weeks to monitor performance.

*Reminder: NLIS compliance is required when livestock are leaving the farm. Contact your Local Land Services biosecurity officer or for more details refer to page 31.*

**NUTRITION**

Select quantity and quality of pasture to match the needs of a lactating cow needing to gain weight through joining.

**HEALTH**

Vaccinate (clostridial): calves 5-in-1 booster, 4-6 weeks after first dose.

**PASTURE MANAGEMENT**

Begin silage/early hay production.

Manage newly sown pastures with light grazing’s and possible topdressing applications of an NPK fertiliser.

Manage existing pastures.

- **Ryegrass:** rotationally graze with back fence.
- **Annuals:** mid-season maturing ryegrass varieties may start flowering (weather dependent).
- **Perennials:** lock-up to allow seed to set (not necessary every year) and rotate different paddocks each year.
- **Kikuyu:** maintain legumes and pasture quality by grazing when 18-20 cm high or when runners have 4.5 leaves.

**NOTES**

- Ryegrass: rotationally graze with back fence.
- Annuals: mid-season maturing ryegrass varieties may start flowering (weather dependent).
- Perennials: lock-up to allow seed to set (not necessary every year) and rotate different paddocks each year.
- Kikuyu: maintain legumes and pasture quality by grazing when 18-20 cm high or when runners have 4.5 leaves.
DECEMBER

CATTLE MANAGEMENT

Remove bulls from cows and heifers, ensure bulls are removed no later than 9 weeks.

Weigh yearling steers and check feedlot weight requirements. Target weight gain 0.7-0.8 kg/hd/day over summer and autumn.

Reminder: NLIS compliance is required when livestock are leaving the farm. Contact your Local Land Services biosecurity officer or for more details refer to page 31.

HEALTH

Test for worm burden. If required drench (for worms) steer weaners/vealers and heifer yearlings. Adult cattle are not usually drenched due to acquired immunity.

Vaccinate (pink eye): 3-6 weeks before beginning of pink eye season. Pink eye is a bacterial infection of the eye that causes inflammation and, in severe cases, temporary or permanent blindness.

PASTURE MANAGEMENT

Silage and hay production continues with identified paddocks that have been locked up.

Annuals: mid-late season maturing ryegrass varieties may start flowering (weather dependent).

Kikuyu: maintain legumes and pastures quality by grazing when 18-20 cm high or when runners have 4.5 leaves, rotationally graze with back fence, slash after grazing to remove old rank growth.

NOTES
TRADING OPPORTUNITIES

NSW DEPARTMENT OF PRIMARY INDUSTRIES

PROfarm is the training program developed by NSW DPI to meet the needs of farmers, primary industries, agribusiness and the community.

Courses are delivered locally by highly skilled and respected NSW DPI staff. Many of the courses are subsidised to reflect the public benefits provided by the adoption of more sustainable farming practices.

By participating in a PROfarm course you will gain valuable skills to meet the ever-changing needs and compliance requirements of today’s farming and agribusiness sector.

NSW DPI delivers accredited short and full-time courses through its Registered Training Organisation - Tocal College. The College has two campuses, the CB Alexander Campus near Maitland and the Murrumbidgee Rural Studies Centre at Yanco.

NSW DPI offers a variety of educational courses, facilities and activities for people working in the state’s primary industries, and PROfarm forms an important part of our commitment to their lifelong training and education.

For more information on PROfarm courses or to register your interest contact:
Kim Griffiths
PROfarm support Officer
Phone: 1800 025 520 Email: profarm@tocal.com

MEAT LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA

Extension, training and tools

Meat Livestock Australia (MLA) delivers the practical results of its research and development investments by providing producers with education, training and opportunities to change on-farm practice.

MLA supports extension and training opportunities with practical information, tools and calculators to assist producer decision making, with the aim of helping producers identify and implement on-farm management practices to maximise the profitability and sustainability of their business.

Extension and training opportunities are available for all red meat enterprises, helping producers put research findings into practice.

General enquiries
Phone: 02 9463 9333 or Free call: 1800 023 100
Email: info@mla.com.au

NATIONAL LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM (NLIS)
www.nlis.com.au

The National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) is Australia’s system for the identification and traceability of cattle, sheep and goats. As animals are bought, sold and moved along the supply chain, they must be tagged with an NLIS-accredited tag or device. Each movement they make to a location with a different PIC is recorded centrally on the NLIS Database by people with NLIS accounts. NLIS accounts are free to open and operate.

Using this information, NLIS is able to provide a life history of an animal’s residency, and to discern which other animal’s livestock may have come into contact with. NLIS is required to facilitate the traceability of animals in accordance with the National Traceability and Performance Standards.

BEEF CATTLE “FIND A WORD”

Y T I L A U Q N R O H T R O H S X Y D
P R O I P D D H M N Y A W O L L A G L
V E G E T A T I V E U I P S X Y M Y A
S E R U T S A P G S S A R G E Y R Z T
I E M A N A G E M E N T S A A I U C N
H H M U P W O C T Z S E B U L L A P E
H N O V E D H T U O S T K D G L V Y M
Y E R G Y A R U M M J I I F N B I M
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G L H E R E F O R D O M B J A T I U A
A I W A G Y U Y S I A L O R A H C T W
M S O P Z Q U A N T I T Y O B C A H Y

angus hereford
murray grey
santa gertrudis
shorthorn
simmental
charolais
galloway
limousin
south devon
wagyu
cow
calf
bull

Pasture
quality
quantity
digestibility
clover
ryegrass
kikuyu
silage
management
vegetative