

Supporting the new ideas of a new generation

Ben Saint is a “young gun” of the cattle industry currently taking over the reins of the family property. Ben is looking to manage Kurundi using a combination of hard-won family experience and technical knowledge gained from workshops such as GLM.

Grazing Land Management workshops

Specific to Central Australia, the workshop, an MLA EDGENetwork® training package, provides a process to develop and implement GLM strategies that optimise land condition, production and profit.

The principles and tools presented will assist you to:

- Calculate land type carrying capacity and stocking rates
- Anticipate and respond to variations in rainfall, land type and land condition
- Understand the relationship between pasture, water, soils, woodlands, biodiversity, fire and weeds
- Plan & determine the financial impact of GLM strategies

The workshop includes open discussions, building on the wealth of knowledge and experience already present in the industry.



A ‘hands on’ approach is used with technical information demonstrated both in and out of the ‘classroom’.

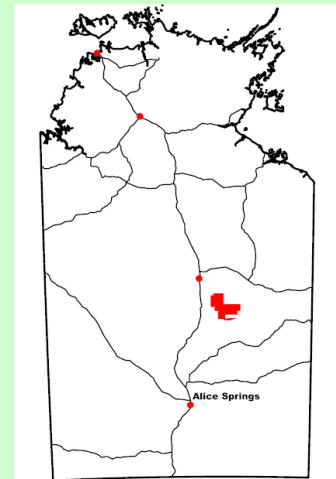
Attending a GLM workshop, and using the follow up service, will put in place a process for achieving the outcomes you see possible for your business.

Producers:

Peter, Brenda & Ben Saint,
Kurundi Station

Location:

140 km south-east of Tennant Creek, Northern Territory



Property area:

3,800 km²

Enterprise:

Steer production for backgrounding, feedlot and export markets

Goal:

“To grow as many steers as possible to meet our target markets”

Livestock:

Herefords & Brahman/
Droughtmaster crosses

Annual rainfall:

12 inches, summer predominant

For further information contact:

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How can a GLM workshop help your enterprise?

Case Study: Kurundi Station

Background

Peter & Brenda Saint have owned Kurundi Station for 29 years and are in the process of handing over the management to their son Ben. Ben had heard other pastoralists talking about grazing land management and decided to attend the Central Australia GLM workshop to see what it had to offer.

He recognises that his parent's generation "must have been doing something right" to get to this point but feels that he will need to try new ideas if Kurundi will continue to be successful into the future.

How GLM has changed him

As a young person, Ben sometimes has doubts about some of his ideas. Having done the workshop, he says "the course freshened up a lot of the ideas I already had and helped me prioritise them. It gave me renewed confidence to start putting ideas into action."

The issues

Ben says that the biggest issue they have is being able to improve pasture quality in a cost-effective way. Kurundi comprises mainly undulating hills and watercourses dominated by spinifex pastures. Although these are burnt to encourage higher quality feed, Ben feels they need to introduce other pasture species to lift carrying capacity.

The sheer size of the station makes traditional methods of pasture improvement unrealistic, so they will have to broadcast seed by air and from vehicles after burning. Changes take time though.

"Our pasture improvement work will take four years to roll out but the results will only become apparent over my lifetime" notes Ben.

"Before I did CAGLM, I didn't focus so much on how paddocks were going because I relied on Dad to make those calls" says Ben.

Since attending the course Ben has been in the situation where he has had fat cattle in hand at the same time that feed quality and quantity is starting to decline. Recognising the need to lighten off the grazing pressure and maximise the returns from these cattle, Ben says he felt more confident about discussing selling decisions with his father.

The future

Ben estimates they will invest between \$300,000 and \$400,000 on infrastructure in the next few years and he wants to be confident that he's putting those fences and bores where they will have the best return.

He says that one of the best things about CAGLM was learning how to use mathematics to test the potential of an idea. For example, he can now confidently calculate the carrying capacity implications of running a new line of polypipe or putting in a bore to open up new country.

Ben also found CAGLM very beneficial because it gave him access to maps of the property that he didn't even know existed. Becoming aware of water aquifer maps, for example, is likely to change the way he searches for new bore sites in the future. Having access to a dedicated Grazing Land Management Officer is also greatly appreciated.

"Whenever we get a bit complacent the GLM Officer rings up and this keeps our interest up. I probably would have forgotten everything I learnt by now if the GLMO hadn't regularly been in touch."

Final word

"These types of courses sow seeds in your mind", Ben says. "I'm sure there will be things I do in a few years' time and I won't recall where I got the idea, but no doubt it will be something I picked up at a course like GLM."