

## FEED MANAGEMENT CHECK-LIST FOR FARMERS

*Many parts of the country are currently experiencing feed shortages, or potential shortages in the coming months.*



The following is a checklist for farmers to consider:

**1** Get an accurate tally of how much stock you wish to have processed, and by when.

**2** Talk to your meat company representative to find out what's changed and identify the implications for you – how many animals delayed and for how long? Let them know your processing needs.



**3** Complete a Feed Budget from now until Spring, based on likely processing dates (B+LNZ has spreadsheets, worksheets and feed budget software to help, or your trusted advisor can assist):

- What's my feed situation? Do a stocktake of pasture cover plus available supplements and forage crops.
- What's the daily pasture growth rate likely going to be over the period of the feed budget?
- What will be the pasture growth response to fertiliser N? (urea, DAP and the like).
- What's my feed demand going to be and what's the additional demand with those extra mouths I'm going to have to carry? Slot all of these figures into a feed budget.
- What does that mean for my ongoing feed cover, my seasonal pasture cover targets and animal production targets?

**4** If there's a feed deficit, what are my options?

- For ewes, cows, finishing stock, trading stock, young stock, options could include the following (check our Extreme Dry Management toolkit for options for dealing with feed deficits):
  - If a class of stock is unable to be processed, are there other stock classes you could and should consider processing instead or is the store market an option?
  - Should I defer planned hogget mating?
  - Use a ram harness to draft off mated ewes as early as possible onto maintenance feed.
- Nitrogen – temperature, moisture, feed cover – what response will I get?
- Other supplements such as barley, baleage, PKE. Consider price, availability, equipment, utilisation, labour.
- Grazing out – what stock class, where, what performance arrangements?

**5** Look at the cashflow consequences and talk to your financial advisors and your financiers as early as possible.

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**6** Keep an eye on yourself and your neighbours talk about the issues over the fence (with appropriate distancing) or on the phone and don't hesitate to reach out to your other trusted advisors.

**7** Consider a 'virtual discussion group' or 'virtual woolshed meeting' - use tools like Skype or Zoom to have a discussion with other farmers. A problem shared is a problem halved.

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**8** If you want to talk to someone, confidentially, about your situation or the situation of someone you are concerned about, contact Rural Support Trust.



**0800 RURAL HELP**

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