

Mixed Species Annual Forage Crops Budget Series

Winter 2025

NORTHERN NSW, CATTLE, MIX - GRAZE ONLY

Oats, ryegrass, brassica, and clover

1. GROSS MARGIN BUDGET:

INCOME \$/ha:

Steers/ha

4.0

Sale price

\$1,661 per head

426 kg per head

(after 120 days @ wt. gain 1.3 kg/hd/day)

* includes 1% mortality.

Income \$/ha	Your Budget
\$6,579	

VARIABLE COSTS:

See page 3 for detail

Sowing.....	\$95.71	
Fertiliser.....	\$94.40	
Herbicide.....	\$74.20	
Livestock variable costs.....	\$4,814.10	

TOTAL VARIABLE COSTS \$/ha:

\$5,078	
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GROSS MARGIN \$/ha:

\$1,501	
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2. Effect of stocking rate and sale price on gross margin per hectare

Stocking rate Steers/ha	Selling price \$/hd				
	\$1,461	\$1,561	\$1,661	\$1,761	\$1,861
3.1	\$444	\$738	\$1,031	\$1,325	\$1,619
3.4	\$543	\$865	\$1,188	\$1,510	\$1,833
3.7	\$642	\$993	\$1,344	\$1,696	\$2,047
4.0	\$740	\$1,121	\$1,501	\$1,881	\$2,261
4.3	\$839	\$1,248	\$1,657	\$2,066	\$2,475
4.6	\$938	\$1,376	\$1,814	\$2,251	\$2,689
4.9	\$1,037	\$1,504	\$1,970	\$2,437	\$2,903

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3. Effect of livestock prices on gross margin per hectare

Purchase price \$/hd	Selling price \$/hd				
	\$1,461	\$1,561	\$1,661	\$1,761	\$1,861
\$868	\$1,532	\$1,913	\$2,293	\$2,673	\$3,053
\$968	\$1,136	\$1,517	\$1,897	\$2,277	\$2,657
\$1,068	\$740	\$1,121	\$1,501	\$1,881	\$2,261
\$1,168	\$344	\$725	\$1,105	\$1,485	\$1,865
\$1,268	-\$52	\$329	\$709	\$1,089	\$1,469

4. Effect of grazing days and weight gain per hd per day on gross margin per hectare

Grazing days ↓	Weight gain kg/hd/day				
	1.00	1.15	1.30	1.45	1.60
85	\$717	\$717	\$874	\$874	\$874
100	\$1,031	\$1,031	\$1,187	\$1,187	\$1,344
110	\$1,187	\$1,187	\$1,344	\$1,344	\$1,501
120	\$1,344	\$1,501	\$1,501	\$1,657	\$1,657
130	\$1,501	\$1,657	\$1,657	\$1,814	\$1,971
140	\$1,971	\$1,971	\$2,127	\$2,284	\$2,441
150	\$1,971	\$1,971	\$2,127	\$2,284	\$2,441

5. Effect of weight gains and stocking rate on gross margin per hectare

Stocking rate steers/ha ↓	Weight gain/hd/day and Selling price \$/hd				
	1.00	1.15	1.30	1.45	1.60
	\$1,461	\$1,561	\$1,661	\$1,761	\$1,861
3.1	\$444	\$738	\$1,031	\$1,325	\$1,619
3.4	\$543	\$865	\$1,188	\$1,510	\$1,833
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CALENDAR OF OPERATIONS:		Machinery		Inputs		Total Cost \$/ha	
Operation	Timing	Total \$/ha		Rate/ha	Cost \$		Total \$/ha
Pre-sowing operations							
Glyphosate 570 g/L	Jan	4.50		2.00 L	8.41/L	16.82	21.32
Paraquat 360 g/L - with above				1.00 L	4.95/L	4.95	4.95
Wetter 1000 - with above				0.10 L	10.10/L	1.01	1.01
Sowing and fertiliser							
Starter fertiliser, at sowing	Mar	20.00		80 kg	0.93/kg	74.40	94.40
Oats - with above				40 kg	0.90/kg	36.00	36.00
Annual ryegrass - with above				8 kg	4.90/kg	39.20	39.20
Canola cv. Brassica - with above				2 kg	10.00/kg	20.00	20.00
Arrowleaf clover - with above				3 kg	6.50/kg	19.50	19.50
End of season knockdown							
Glyphosate 570 g/L	Dec	4.50		2.00 L	8.41/L	16.82	21.32
Paraquat 360 g/L - with above				1.00 L	4.95/L	4.95	4.95
Wetter 1000 - with above				0.10 L	16.55/L	1.66	1.66
A. TOTAL FORAGE VARIABLE COSTS \$/ha:							264.31

Input prices were correct at the time of writing (March 2025). Use your own prices to estimate your gross margin.

LIVESTOCK COSTS	Number		\$		\$/ha
Replacements (i.e. value in)	4.0	steers @	\$ 1,068	per head	4,229.43
This assumes all steers are 270 kg/hd, purchased at 395.6 c/kg lwt.					
Husbandry					
Vaccination	4.0	steers @	\$1.00	per head	3.96
Drenching	4.0	steers @	\$2.80	per head	11.09
Livestock selling costs	4.0	steers @	\$1.50	per head	5.94
Forage and supplementary feed					
Supplements - dry lick	0.11 kg/hd/day	120 days @	\$0.81	per kg	43.11
Commission on livestock sales			4.0%		263.16
Other costs e.g. yard dues \$10.00/hd; MLA levy \$5/hd; average freight cost to saleyards \$25/hd					257.40
B. TOTAL LIVESTOCK VARIABLE COSTS \$/ha:					4,814.10
C. TOTAL VARIABLE COSTS \$/ha:					5,078.40

NOTES:

A consistent set of assumptions were used to prepare the budgets in this series, covering agronomy, livestock and economic values. Sensitivity tables have been used to test the impact of key variables. Graze & grain budgets assume forages are managed for both early grazing and subsequent grain harvest. Graze only budgets assume forages are managed to maximise grazing utilisation without the need to protect grain yield.

Key economic assumptions include:

- All calculations are ex-GST.
- Livestock price information is sourced from the MLA Market Database in March or April 2025.
- A purchase price or initial value (where they have been bred on-farm) is applied to all livestock to allow the value of grazing the crops to be evaluated.
- Labour is not included. This is usually accounted for at either an enterprise or a whole farm budget level. Labour requirements differ substantially between enterprises, particularly where rotational grazing management or specialist machinery is required.
- Additional benefits, such as spring grazing of breeding stock, or hay production, are not included but may be relevant to some operations.

Key agronomy and management assumptions include:

- Weed control is conducted prior to sowing to minimise early competition and ensure successful crop establishment. A pre-sowing herbicide mix is included in the budget as an example; however, the specific products used will depend on paddock history, expected weed spectrum, and the pasture/cropping rotation.
- Sowing in March is into sufficient moisture and a suitable seed bed allowing for good establishment prior to grazing.
- Seed is of good quality and pre-treated to prevent disease.
- Optimal grazing management for the purpose of the enterprise, e.g. rotational or strip grazing to reduce spoilage, maximise regrowth, and extend the productive life of the forage crop. Overgrazing is avoided to preserve grain recovery (where appropriate) and soil structure.
- Stocking rates matched to expected growth potential of the forage crop, preventing over- or underutilisation.

Further Information: Mixed Annual Forage Crops NSW DPIRD 2025, www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/mixes or contact Matthew Pierce matt.pierce@dpi.nsw.gov.au