



Tuloona Pastoral

LOCATION

West Wimmera

FARM

10,000+ Acres
Beef, Grain, Wool, Lamb

SOFTWARE

KoolCollect

“Systems that allow us to monitor individual animal performance are the next building block in profitability for our business. All the hard work we do on pastures and improving fertility is wasted if we carry passengers in our herd”

When looking at farming decisions Michael Craig takes a systematic approach of trying, measuring and validating results. Michael determined that fertility is the number one factor for his beef operation, driving 80% of the profit. Having achieved a 92-95% conception rate with mortality at 2.2% he wanted a software solution to ensure that he was breeding the most profitable animals, with no room for passengers.

Michael invested in KoolCollect a stick reader, weigh box and laptop

to help trial a number of scenarios on farm:

Bloat capsules:

In 2005 half of the weaners in every mob were randomly bloat capsuled. Using eID and KoolCollect Michael was able to record the weight of individual animals at the beginning and end of the 120-day trial period. The results clearly demonstrated that where bloat capsules were administered animals gained an additional 0.48kg per day. Taking this into account, as well as the loss of 3 animals from bloat and costs associated with capsules and application Michael would stand to

For more information, please contact:

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SapienTechnology

“Sapien and KoolCollect are a great fit for our operation. What’s great about Sapien is the support they provide and the system updates that keep us current with the most recent research”

make an additional \$40K (@ \$1.90/kg) by applying bloat capsules to his entire mob. A return on investment of almost 400% on this trial alone.

Pesti Virus auto immune response:

In another trial Michael looked at the level of infection for the Pesti Virus based on different exposure methods as well as the effect of infection on weight. These trials demonstrated that autovaccination would deliver a cost saving of \$11 per heifer, totaling over \$2,100 in net profit.

Early Weaning

This trial looked at the weight gains of steers comparing those who were weaned at 5 months to those that were weaned at 3 months (150-170kg) and run on Lucerne and the odd bail of straw. In this case the early weaned calves were 40kgs lighter than the 220kg calves weaned at the 5 month mark. However, when the steers were sold at the 15-16 month mark the early weaned calves were 8-10kg heavier than the control group. This trial

revealed a double benefit for Tuloona. First, CFA cows are selected at pre-calving vaccination not to be joined. These cows can then be sold when the calves are ready for early weaning saving significant costs. Secondly, the extra weight on early weaned calves results in higher returns.

In this case hard science, based on data from KoolCollect, reveals that a farmers’ gut instinct is not always the best guide when it comes to delivering efficiency and extracting profit from the operation. Michael may be ahead of the curve in his dedication to systematically testing options to find out what will work best in his environment, but these results clearly demonstrate significant financial benefits to this approach.

Aside from these trials Michael uses KoolCollect and the related hardware for the day to day operation of his business where it assists him with auto drafting, real time decision making, bench marking, compliance and accreditation. There is no doubt that his setup has paid for itself many times over, in his beef operation alone.

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