



SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DROUGHT RESILIENCE ADOPTION AND INNOVATION HUB

OTHER TOOLS AVAILABLE FOR PASTURE FORECASTING

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This fact sheet complements the fact sheet available at www.mackillopgroup.com.au/library-of-resources. Although the tools described here are not currently available for producers in South Australia, they provide an example of other technologies and applications that are available within the industry.

FARMING FORECASTER



farmingforecaster.com.au

Farming Forecaster is a decision support tool that produces overviews of current seasonal conditions and an expected range of pasture availability and livestock performance over 3-4 months. The tool brings together soil moisture, local weather, livestock performance and future pasture production information. The weather forecast includes information on spray risk and an outlook for three months.

The pasture forecast feature (provided by CSIRO's GrassGro) combines information about the current pasture position, a historic range of pasture cover throughout a defined period of time, and a forecasted range of pasture cover. Farming Forecaster ties into the GrassGro model, which has a greater focus on livestock performance through pasture utilisation.

Farming Forecaster is developed by CSIRO, co-developed with livestock producers, and managed by a consortium comprising Monaro Farming Systems, South East Local Land Services, Tablelands Farming Systems and Bookham Ag Bureau through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.

The tool is accessible on all modern internet browsers, mobile phones and tablets, and is free to use. The tool is available for southern NSW (Hunter and Southeast), Tasmania and Western Australia (Stirling Ranges to south coast). It is now run by an incorporated body, Farming Forecaster.

Access is usually organised through farming groups that pay for setting up the tool and allow member access. Contact admin@farmingforecaster.com for information about making Farming Forecaster available in your local district.

FARMAX



www.farmax.co.nz

Farmax is a modelling and decision support tool for pastoral farmers. It combines farm performance data, forecasts livestock production and profit, and allows investigations of scenarios resulting from potential management decisions. It also includes features for calculating greenhouse gas emissions.

The benchmarking features in Farmax allow comparison to other Farmax users. The tool is focused primarily on financial and livestock performance.

Farmax is a subscription-based product available for New Zealand, Australia, Ireland and the UK.

The tool has a pasture forecasting feature that is suitable for NZ Farmax users. There are Australian Farmax clients who use the pasture forecasting tool for their Australian businesses, but manual adjustments are required to ensure applicability of the model to Australian conditions.

Farmax users are advised to engage a Farmax consultant to help tailor the tool to their business and receive support in interpreting results.



Photo: Meg Bell, MFMG

PASTUREMAP



pasturemap.com/about-us

PastureMap is a US-based pasture tool that creates grazing plans, season forecasting and scenario planning, pasture productivity estimates, and forage and stocking rate forecasts.

Users enter farm data such as livestock and paddock information; the program tracks this information and produces records based on the information provided. Farm tasks and stock movements can be logged and shared with multiple farm team members.

Subscription costs for the tool vary between USD20 and USD75 monthly, or USD200 and USD750 annually, based on the level of support and number of animals and team members under management (with added costs if the number of animals under management exceeds baseline levels).

The tool is comparable to the functionality of the PastureKey and AgriWebb integration. It is unknown if the program will be developed for Australian conditions.



Photo: Jane McClure, Beerik Partnership

AT A GLANCE

TOOL	INPUTS	OUTPUTS	APPLICABLE TO	AVAILABLE IN	USER PLATFORM	COST	FREE TRIAL
Farming Forecaster	Soil moisture, local weather data, livestock performance data	Pasture cover forecast; spray risk information; weather forecast	Beef, sheep	Southern NSW (Hunter and Southeast), Tasmania, Western Australia (Stirling ranges to south coast)	Computer, tablet, phone (web-based)	Free	Unlimited
Farmax	Farm performance data, livestock performance data, paddock performance data	Livestock production forecast; feedbase forecast; profit forecast and scenario analyses	Beef, sheep, dairy	New Zealand, Australia (limited pasture forecasting accessibility), Ireland	Computer (software program)	Quarterly subscriptions between \$175 and \$295.	No free trial
PastureMap	Livestock information and performance data, paddock information, weather data	Grazing plan; pasture productivity estimates and forecast; stocking rate forecasts; scenario analyses	Beef, sheep	United States	Computer, tablet, phone (software program)	Monthly or annual subscriptions starting from USD20 (monthly) or USD200 (annually)	30 days