

AUTOMATED LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (ALMS) FOR ARGENTINIAN PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

How ALMS can improve on-farm productivity in the Argentinian beef industry

CQUniversity is working with Argentina's National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) and Latin American producer group CREA to trial the DataMuster walk-over-weigh system in Argentinian cattle operations to support improvements in on-farm productivity.

The project has identified enhancements to ALMS in order to customise these systems to Latin American beef production systems, while also building the capability of INTA to service the Argentinian industry in the area of ALMS.

Throughout the research project CQU has been working with Argentinean producers to participate in the trial and promoting trial results to the Argentinian industry.

The Australian Government-funded project is supporting the enhancement of the ag-tech sector through capacity building within the Australian and Argentinean beef industries, with three PhD students supported by this project.

Significance to industry

There is a need for precision livestock management technologies within the Argentinian beef industry to support improvements in on-farm productivity.

This project is raising awareness of the value proposition of adopting precision livestock management technologies, and their ability to provide more accurate, more frequent and more reliable measures of performance than traditional methods.

Progress to date

With the support of CQUniversity has been working with 21 producers in evaluating and adapting the technology to Argentinean conditions, with four walk-over-weigh units installed at INTA research stations and producer properties.

At three of the research stations the walk-over-weigh units have been used to track animal performance in research trials. At Anguil the walk-over-weigh has been used to link weight data with the net feed intake units developed by INTA.

The walk-over-weigh at Balcarce has been used to more accurately monitor individual weight gains with biomass measures from an intensive strip grazing trial.

Chachamarendi's walk-over-weigh has been used to quantify the productivity benefits of scrub clearing techniques in a range of open grazing systems.

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Figure 1: Argentinian producers inspecting paddock-based walk-over-weigh unit