FARM

beef+lamb new zealand

# FACT SHEET

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Before preparing a paddock for a winter crop, there are 3 key things farm managers should consider:

1. **Winter feed cropping**
   Do you really need to do it? (needs analysis)
2. **Paddock WoF**
   Selecting the right paddock; assessing the suitability of a paddock
3. **Good grazing management**
   The 10 top tips (before/during/after)

## STEP 1: Consider the need for winter feed crops in your farm

Do you need winter crop in your system?
Does your farm system fit with the Land Use Capability of your farm?
If you do need crop, how much is optimum?
What type of crop do you need? High yielding crops are higher risk

## STEP 2: Paddock Selection

| | ✓ |
|---|---|
| Most/all of the paddock is flatter than 15$^{0}$ | |
| There are no significant drainage issues | |
| The paddock is distant from waterways | |
| There are no extensive networks of mole or pipe drainage | |
| There are few Critical Source Areas (CSAs) | |
| The soil type is light | |
| The paddock will be grazed by sheep | |
| There is dry ground for animals to lie on | |
| There is shelter (vegetation or topography) | |
| Animals can be taken to treatment if needed | |
| Animals will not graze significant areas of biodiversity | |

**If more than 2 of these <u>aren't</u> ticked, then action will be required before grazing or the paddock may not be suitable for winter feed cropping.**

For possible actions to address issues, check out B+LNZ's winter grazing resources **www.beeflambnz.com/wintergrazing/pre-grazing**

Some paddocks are not suitable for winter grazing. Consider grass-to-grass renewal if needed, or select a different paddock or graze only with sheep and ensure mitigation methods are implemented.

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## **STEP 3:** Good Grazing Management

Research and experience has identified the key factors to avoid, remedy or mitigate the possible harmful impacts of winter grazing. The 11 steps here are the minimum every farm should have in place. For more information on each, check out B+LNZ's resources listed below.

| **Mandatory** | ✓ |
|---|---|
| 1. Exclude stock from waterways | |
| 2. Protect areas of significant biodiversity from grazing | |
| 3. Animal health plan | |
| 4. Planned transition of animals onto crop | |
| 5. Leave ungrazed buffer zone around CSAs | |
| 6. Graze paddocks strategically – top to bottom | |
| 7. Make breaks long and narrow | |
| 8. Back fence | |
| 9. Place troughs and supplementary feed before grazing | |
| 10. Look after stock by providing loafing/run off areas and adequate shelter | |
| 11. Graze buffer strips around CSAs last and when soils are not so wet | |
| 12. Plan for next year | |

| **Optional** | |
|---|---|
| Plant a catch crop | |

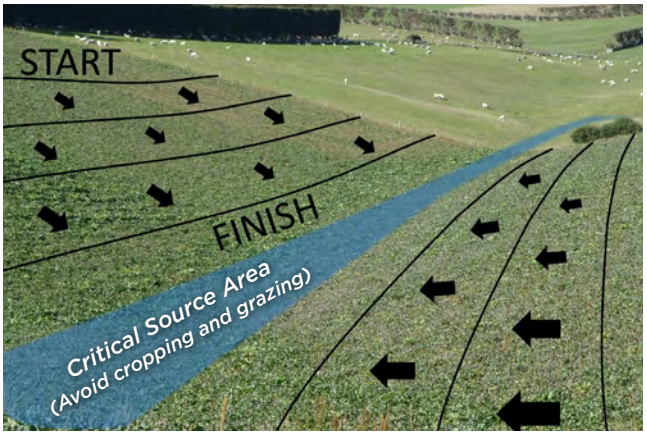
### B+LNZ RESOURCES

*www.knowledgehub.co.nz*
*www.beeflambnz.com/wintergrazing*

Further reading to download:

- Winter forage crops: Management before grazing
- Ten top tips for winter grazing crops
- Sheep and beef cattle health review workbook

For hard copies of publications please email:
resources@beeflambnz.com




***Strategic winter grazing to minimise environmental losses.Start grazing at the top of a slope and move breaks downhill. The gully at the bottom of this paddock is a Critical Source Area (CSA) that is dry in summer but gets wet in winter and after heavy rain. It should be left ungrazed if possible or only grazed when conditions are dry.***