

More Pasture, Same Work, Same Inputs

Peter Frahn joined **FORAGE** Skill\$ because he wanted to make more money without any extra work or without spending any more on farm inputs & so far..... it's happening.

Peter & Faye together with their daughters aged 8 & 3, & employee Andrew Lehmann are farming over 1000 hectares including 70 hectares of irrigated swamps at Cowirra near Mannum. The goal of the business is to be self sufficient producing all their own hay, grain & silage needs. Milking a mix of Jerseys, Friesians and cross-breds the target is to build herd numbers and milk 350 cows with split calvings in Autumn and Spring.

To help achieve these targets Peter wanted "to see how other farmers are managing their pastures and what I could do to grow more without more work or spending more money." I joined a **FORAGE** Skill\$ group & have picked out one of my paddocks to trial what we are learning through **FORAGE** Skill\$. I have been grazing this paddock at the 2.5 to 3 leaf stage and taking notice of what the cows are leaving behind after grazing. Once the third leaf starts to emerge the cows go into the paddock and I am aiming to leave 4 to 5 centimetres behind after grazing. So far I have seen a 25-30% increase in the pasture grown in this paddock compared to other paddocks. I have had a lot more grazings off this paddock and more grazings to me means more milk and more money. No extra work is involved but I am just doing things a little differently, instead of being on a 24 day rotation all year I have changed to graze the paddock when it needs grazing, to water it when it needs watering and to take more notice of the pasture."

"Although this year we have water restrictions of 60% the change to my grazing from **FORAGE** Skill\$ has actually helped me to manage this, it gave me the confidence to graze the paddocks earlier than I would normally. In spring I was grazing every 15 or 16 days rather than 24 and I have more confidence now in knowing the right amount to leave behind and when it is best to graze, overall I had more pasture with less water"



Peter Frahn checking out the pasture with his cows

"**FORAGE** Skill\$ helped me to work out when it was best to shut up a paddock for silage & when best to cut it too, before I would shut up for 6 weeks but now I am cutting the paddock when it is due for grazing rather than letting it go longer. Overall I still had the paddock shut up for 6 weeks but I was able to take 2 silage cuts, and I was able to come back in to the paddock a lot sooner after making silage, overall I made more silage."

"So far I have been concentrating on one paddock as a learning curve; my next step is to try more of the farm because I can see the benefits."

If you too would like to know more about **FORAGE** Skill\$, how you can be involved to grow more pasture for the same work with the same inputs phone Kirstie on 8536 3958.