

FEEDLOT DROUGHT MITIGATION

According to the Australian Feedlot Association there are approximately 450 accredited feedlots throughout Australia with the majority located in areas that are in close proximity to cattle and grain supplies namely south east QLD; the northern tablelands of NSW and the Riverina area of NSW with expanding numbers in Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia. They are primarily run as Commercial Feedlots for profit.

Feedlots are privately owned and operated throughout many regions, yet I know of no feedlot solely owned and operated cooperatively by farmers for their own use to meet regular de-stocking drought mitigation needs.

It appears to me that there would be considerable advantages in using appropriately widely sited drought feedlots (D-lots) with access to water and fodder to enable livestock to survive.

Such feedlots would enable government assistance to be effectively targetted to farmers by providing assistance with buying feed and freighting it the feedlot. Cooperative farmers could also receive income for managing the D-lots themselves.

Farmer owned D-lots do not necessarily have to compete with privately owned feedlots, but simply act as a drought relief contingency to maintain livestock condition during prolonged droughts.