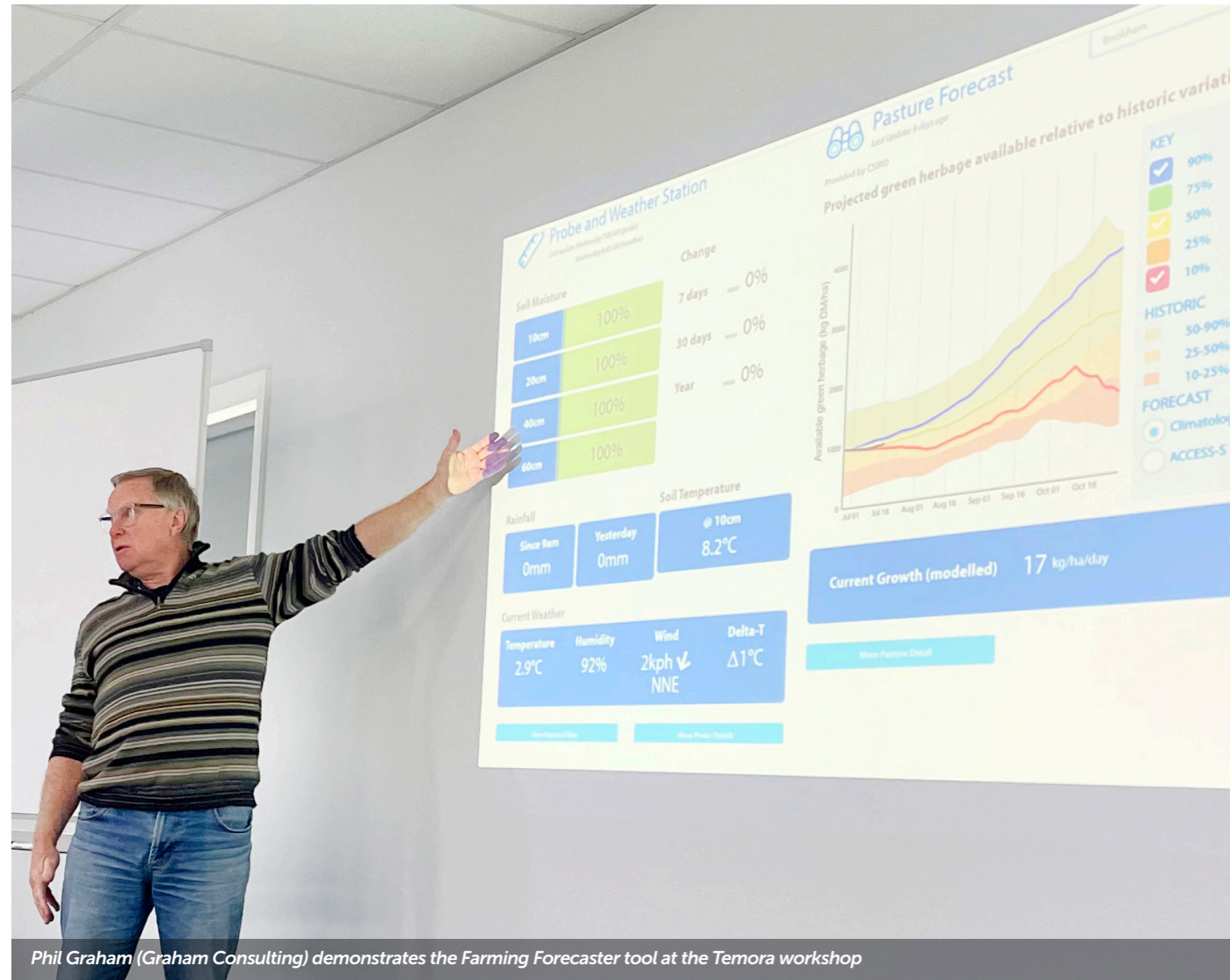


Stock management area workshops



Phil Graham (Graham Consulting) demonstrates the Farming Forecaster tool at the Temora workshop

During the month of August, FarmLink organised a series of three workshops centred around stock management areas (SMAs) and drought preparedness. These workshops were held at three different locations: Temora, Illabo and Wallendbeen, where more than 60 people participated in learning and discussion. The sessions were facilitated by Phillip Graham of Graham Consulting. Phil has 40 years of experience in the livestock industries across southern NSW. The sessions started by first discussing the Farming Forecaster tool, which uses various data and modelling tools to create real-time updates of pasture conditions and forecasts up to four months ahead. The tool creates a real-time pasture-livestock model for producers using recent weather, soil moisture, pasture production and livestock performance. Phil outlined how farmers could benefit from

using the tool, including managing stocking rates, preparing for climate variability, and making decisions for potential costs associated with supplementary feed. The project is currently looking for suitable locations for soil moisture probes within the Riverina.

Phil then moved on to discussing stock management areas. SMAs encompass any infrastructure designed to contain livestock during drought periods. These containment areas can have on paddocks during drought, while ensuring they receive the correct nutrition. During the workshop, a range of topics were covered, such as drought lot design, location, management and when to make strategic decisions to minimise financial loss during drought. One of the key and most crucial messages conveyed during the workshops was



Inspecting a Stock Management Area at Illabo



Phil Graham presented the series of Stock Management workshops



Standing room only at the Wallendbeen workshop



Plenty of great questions throughout the workshop series



Temora workshop



Wallendbeen workshop

that there is no set way to build a stock management area. SMAs should be designed based upon what is best for the individual circumstances. For more information on stock management areas and caring for animals during drought, speak to your regional Local Land Services branch or check out their resource 'A Guide to Confinement Feeding sheep and Cattle in NSW'.

The workshops finished with a visit to the on-site SMA, where participants were given the chance to observe and have their questions answered about the infrastructure. At the Wallendbeen sites, growers were also able to talk to the owners about their experiences with designing, implementing and using their SMAs.



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