

Kangaroo Island Landscape Board - Containment Feeding Case Study



Case study: Ella Matta Pastoral - Andrew 'Aphid' Heinrich and Tania Heinrich

- **Location:** Stokes Bay Rd, Duncan, Kangaroo Island
- **Annual Ave Rainfall:** 444 mm
- **Farm size:** Approximately 800 hectares
- **Enterprise:** White Suffolk, Maternal & Poll Merino Stud

Why did you make the decision to build a containment feeding area?

Instead of sacrificing your farm in dry times, a containment feeding area means you only have to sacrifice a small area, it's as simple as that. This area takes a hit, the rest of your farm is preserved. We built this containment feeding area in 2006 in the drought. It was a good decision and we've virtually used it every year since.

Describe the size and features of the containment area:

We made four pens, we have three mobs, we feed into the empty pen and then open the gate and they run through. We then feed into the next empty pen and the sheep leapfrog over.

You feed out about 10% less than you would out in the paddock, so there's a cost saving right there. All your grain is nearby, which makes feeding quicker. We've got our hay behind us and we've got our water system here too.

That was one thing we found in the 2006 - 2007 drought. 70 % of our dams dried up but we made sure we had water here and that got us through the drought.

What are some advantages of building a containment area?

Our dams were silting up in dry times, so putting livestock into containment feeding areas stopped erosion and associated run off into dams.

Containment feeding areas can be used in normal or average years at season break to allow for pasture growth in other paddocks. Stock need only be in containment for 6 weeks during this time.

What are some disadvantages of building a containment area?

I find containment feeding a little bit depressing because you have the sheep contained here and it doesn't seem natural, but maybe that's because I can remember we used this area heavily in the 2006 – 2007 drought and then after the 2020 bushfire we used it heavily as well. We had sheep in here for 5 months. So maybe that's triggered the depressing part of it.

I think we usually feed 6 days a week, we feed hay one day and grain the next. We try to have a Saturday or Sunday off, it's constant work. There is an expense, yeah, but once it is done, it can be used for other things as well, like finishing lambs if you want to.



The Heinrich's containment feeding area on Ella Matta.

This project is supported by the South Australian Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub, which is one of eight Hubs established across Australia through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.



SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DROUGHT RESILIENCE ADOPTION AND INNOVATION HUB

This program received funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund