

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword .....	ii
Acknowledgements .....	iii
Glossary .....	xii
Introduction .....	1
Origin .....	1
Industry Structures .....	1
Markets .....	2
Herd Size .....	2
Quality Assurance .....	3
Investment and Economics .....	3
Quality Assurance .....	5
Introduction to Quality Assurance .....	6
The Australian Deer Industry QA Program Model .....	6
The Australian Deer Industry QA Program .....	7
The Deer Quality Assurance and Management Analysis Program (Deer QAMA) .....	8
Market Focus on Venison Quality .....	8
Benefits for Deer Farmers .....	8
Registered Quality Assurance Marks .....	9
Species in Australia .....	11
Classification of Deer .....	12
Choice of Species .....	13
Species Farmed In Australia .....	14
Summary Comparisons .....	22
Fencing .....	25
General .....	26
Construction Considerations .....	33
Cost Considerations .....	40
Some Alternate Fence Types .....	41
Tips and Hints .....	46
Handling and Yards .....	51
General .....	52
Facilities .....	57
Selection of Breeding Stock .....	61
Nutrition .....	67
Physiology .....	68
Deer Digestion .....	69
Important Components of Nutrition .....	70
Seasonal Periods .....	75
Energy Requirements of Breeding Females .....	76
Energy Requirements for Growth .....	82

Energy Requirements for Mature Breeding/Velveting Males .....	87
Protein Requirements .....	90
Dry Matter Requirements .....	91
Effect of Live Weight on Energy Requirement .....	91
DSE Comparison .....	94
Feed and Water Requirements .....	95
Determining Nutrient Requirements .....	96
Nutrient Availability from Pastures .....	97
Supplementary Feeding .....	99
Calculating Feed Requirements .....	101
Dry Matter Intake .....	102
Combining Alternate Feeds to Provide a Balanced Ration .....	103
Supplementing Existing Pasture .....	104
Combining Two Feed Supplements .....	106
Energy and Protein Rule of Thumb .....	107
Buying Feed .....	107
Introducing Deer to Grain .....	107
Changing Supplements .....	109
Manufactured Feed .....	109
Processing Feed .....	109
Frequency of Feeding .....	110
Mineral Supplements .....	110
Urea .....	110
Lick Blocks .....	111
Water Requirements .....	111
Drought Feeding .....	114
Pasture Assessment and Management .....	123
PROGRAZE Training Courses .....	124
Grazing Management of Deer .....	125
Pasture Assessment .....	126
Livestock Production From Pasture .....	130
Pastures And Grazing .....	137
Grazing Management Options .....	153
Measuring Herbage Mass - Median Quadrat Technique .....	159
Drying Pasture Samples .....	161
Sample Preparation for Nutritive Value Analysis .....	161
Guide Target Live Weights .....	164
Variations to Targets .....	164
Target Live Weights for Breeding Females .....	164
Target Live Weights for Breeding Males .....	166
Target Live Weights from Weaning to 18 Months .....	169
Reproduction .....	173
Male Biology .....	174
Female Biology .....	175
Mating Management .....	178
Sire Effect .....	178
Joining .....	179
Body Weight and Condition Score .....	183

Artificial Breeding .....	186
Pregnancy Diagnosis .....	187
Hybridisation .....	187
Summary Considerations .....	189
Calving/Fawning Management .....	191
Season Length .....	192
Dam Preparation .....	193
Paddocks .....	193
Calving/Fawning .....	193
Post Calving/Fawning Management .....	195
Rearing Orphans .....	197
Temperature .....	198
Colostrum .....	198
After Feeding .....	199
Red Deer .....	199
Fallow Deer .....	200
Wapiti/Elk .....	202
Rusa Deer .....	202
Weaning .....	203
When to Wean .....	204
Pre-Rut Weaning .....	205
Mating Weaning .....	205
Post-Rut Weaning .....	206
Soft Weaning .....	206
Fence-Line Weaning .....	207
Weaning Management .....	207
Health .....	211
Introduction .....	212
Available Veterinary Products .....	212
Vaccination .....	213
Bacterial Diseases .....	213
Viral Infections .....	218
External Parasites .....	219
Internal Parasites .....	220
Strategic Internal Parasite Control .....	223
Metabolic Diseases .....	227
Trace Elements .....	228
Summary .....	232
Velvet Antler .....	235
Antler Growth .....	236
Farmed Male Deer .....	237
Production Guide .....	238
Maximising Velvet Production .....	239
Harvesting Velvet Antler .....	241
National Velvet Accreditation Scheme .....	247

Venison .....	251
Ideal Sale Times .....	252
Target Sale Weights .....	253
Body Condition Scoring .....	254
Species Particulars .....	258
Summary Management Calendar .....	261
Red Calendar .....	262
Fallow Calendar .....	264
Wapiti/Elk Calendar .....	266
Rusa Calendar .....	268
The Australian Deer Industry Code of Practice for the Welfare of Deer .....	269
Disclaimer .....	270
Preface .....	270
Introduction .....	271
Producers' Skills and Responsibilities .....	272
Animal Considerations .....	273
Farm Facilities .....	278
Transportation .....	279
Humane Destruction .....	281
Documentation .....	282
Wild and Escaped Deer .....	282
References .....	283
Index .....	293
Appendix .....	
Relationships of Living Deer .....	Supplied chart

## LIST OF COLOUR PLATES

Plate 1:	Typical Red deer hinds .....	I
Plate 2:	8 year old Wamham hybrid (left) and 6 year old Pure Wamham (right) stags .....	I
Plate 3:	4 year old Hungarian Red deer stag .....	II
Plate 4:	Typical European Fallow deer .....	II
Plate 5:	Fallow deer .....	III
Plate 6:	Pure Danish Fallow buck .....	III
Plate 7:	Pure Mesopotamian Fallow buck .....	IV
Plate 8:	Pure Canadian Wapiti/Elk stag .....	IV
Plate 9:	Pure Canadian Wapiti/Elk hinds .....	V
Plate 10:	Moluccan Rusa stag .....	V
Plate 11:	Javan x Moluccan Rusa weaners .....	VI
Plate 12:	Sambar stag and hinds .....	VI
Plate 13:	Two year old Chital stag .....	VI
Plate 14:	Body Condition Scoring Chart for Red Deer .....	VII
Plate 15:	Body Condition Scoring Chart for Fallow Deer .....	VIII

## LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Figure 1:	Damage to posts caused by male red deer .....	29
Figure 2:	Electric wire outrigger to protect posts .....	29
Figure 3:	Gates enlarged for deer .....	30
Figure 4:	“V” gates along laneways fence .....	31
Figure 5:	A three-way gate system .....	33
Figure 6:	Box style end assembly .....	36
Figure 7:	Stay and bed log end assembly .....	37
Figure 8:	Corner stay (strut and bed log style) .....	38
Figure 9:	Reverse (box style) stay .....	39
Figure 10:	Bed log stay on fence curve .....	40
Figure 11:	Internal deer fence 1 .....	42
Figure 12:	Internal deer fence 2 .....	42
Figure 13:	Topped cattle fence .....	43
Figure 14:	Converted cattle fence .....	44
Figure 15:	Plain wire deer fence .....	45
Figure 16:	Temporary electric fencing used for paddock subdivision .....	46
Figure 17:	Crank Strainer .....	46
Figure 18:	Wire joined with a gripple , .....	47
Figure 19:	Heyes crimping sleeves and pliers , .....	48
Figure 20:	A watering trough with cover to minimise splashing by deer .....	50
Figure 21:	Typical drop floor crush .....	60
Figure 22:	Typical manually operated walk through crush .....	60
Figure 23:	Typical hydraulically operated walk through crush .....	60
Figure 24:	Velvet Stick Terminology .....	243
Figure 25:	Frozen, Unprocessed Whole Velvet Antler Stick .....	245
Figure 26:	Dried Whole Velvet Antler Stick .....	245
Figure 27:	Velvet Antler Slices .....	246
Figure 28:	Velvet Antler Powder .....	246
Figure 29:	Deer Velvet Capsules .....	247

## LIST OF DIAGRAMS

Diagram 1:	“V” gates included in a laneways .....	31
Diagram 2:	A four-way gate system .....	32
Diagram 3:	A three-way gate system .....	32
Diagram 4:	Box Assembly - guide measurements only .....	35
Diagram 5:	Diagonal Stayed Assembly - guide measurements only .....	36
Diagram 6:	A reverse (box style) stay attached to a corner strainer .....	38
Diagram 7:	Bed Log stay on fence curve – guide measurements only .....	39
Diagram 8:	Stylised figure-8 knot .....	48
Diagram 9:	Cutting point for mesh .....	49
Diagram 10:	Joined mesh .....	49
Diagram 11:	Pathways of grazing management decision making .....	125
Diagram 12:	Influence of herbage mass on the intake of sheep and cattle .....	130
Diagram 13:	Pasture digestibility declines as pasture matures .....	133
Diagram 14:	Intake of legumes may be higher than grasses of the same digestibility .....	134
Diagram 15:	The trade-off between digestibility and herbage mass .....	136
Diagram 16:	Simplified growth curve of plants .....	141
Diagram 17:	The median quadrat .....	160

## LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 1:	Estimated energy requirements for a Red hind - 100 kg at mating .....	77
Graph 2:	Estimated energy requirements for a Fallow doe - 45 kg at mating .....	79
Graph 3:	Estimated energy requirements for a Wapiti/Elk hind - 240 kg at mating .....	80
Graph 4:	Estimated energy requirements for a Rusa hind - 90 kg at mating .....	81
Graph 5:	Guide Energy Requirements for Red Hind Growth .....	82
Graph 6:	Guide Energy Requirements for Red Stag Growth .....	83
Graph 7:	Guide Energy Requirements for Fallow Doe Growth Requirements .....	84
Graph 8:	Guide Energy Requirements for Fallow Buck Growth Requirements .....	84
Graph 9:	Guide Energy Requirements for Wapiti/Elk Hind Growth Requirements .....	85
Graph 10:	Guide Energy Requirements for Wapiti/Elk Stag Growth Requirements .....	85
Graph 11:	Guide Energy Requirements for Rusa Hind Growth Requirements .....	86
Graph 12:	Guide Energy Requirements for Rusa Stag Growth Requirements .....	86
Graph 13:	Guide Red Stag Energy Requirements .....	88
Graph 14:	Guide Fallow Buck Requirements .....	88
Graph 15:	Guide Wapiti/Elk Stag Requirements .....	89
Graph 16:	Guide Rusa Stag Requirements .....	90
Graph 17:	Guide live weight targets for a Red hind - 100 kg mature weight .....	165
Graph 18:	Guide live weight targets for a Fallow doe - 45 kg mature weight .....	165
Graph 19:	Guide live weight targets for a Wapiti/Elk hind - 240 kg mature weight .....	166
Graph 20:	Guide live weight targets for a Rusa hind - 90 kg mature weight .....	166
Graph 21:	Guide live weight targets for a Red stag - 220 kg mature weight .....	167
Graph 22:	Guide live weight targets for a Fallow buck - 105kg mature weight .....	167
Graph 23:	Guide live weight targets for a Wapiti/Elk stag - 420kg mature weight .....	168
Graph 24:	Guide live weight targets for a Rusa stag - 140kg mature weight .....	168
Graph 25:	Guide live weight targets for female Red deer weaners .....	169
Graph 26:	Guide live weight targets for male Red deer weaners .....	169

Graph 27: Guide live weight targets for female Fallow deer weaners .....	170
Graph 28: Guide live weight targets for male Fallow deer weaners .....	170
Graph 29: Guide live weight targets for Wapiti/Elk female weaners .....	171
Graph 30: Guide live weight targets for Wapiti/Elk male weaners .....	171
Graph 31: Guide live weight targets for Rusa deer female weaners .....	172
Graph 32: Guide live weight targets for Rusa deer male weaners .....	172
Graph 33: Pattern of variation in venison price .....	252
Graph 34: Average price of Red deer venison .....	253
Graph 35: Average price of Fallow deer venison .....	254

Table 32: Suggested maximum number of Wapiti/Elk hinds per fertile sire .....	182
Table 33: Feeding Schedule for Hand Reared Wapiti Calves .....	202
Table 34: Estimates of daily mineral requirements for deer .....	228
Table 35: Guide minimum annual antler weight (first cut) for Red deer stags .....	239
Table 36: Guide minimum annual antler weight (first cut) for Wapiti/Elk stags .....	239
Table 37: Example of the general relationship between live weight and antler weight .....	241
Table 38: Guide Body Condition Scores for All deer .....	255
Table 39: Guide carcase condition score for fallow deer .....	256
Table 40: Guide carcase condition scores for Red deer .....	256
Table 41: Average live weight .....	259
Table 42: Live weight and Carcase Data .....	260
Table 43: Comparative Carcase Data .....	260

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Species Comparisons at a Glance .....	23
Table 2: Heritability 'guesstimates' for Fallow deer .....	64
Table 3: Guide Conversion Factors for Energy Values .....	70
Table 4: Guide estimates of Energy content of feed relative to digestibility value .....	72
Table 5: Recommended minimum fibre concentrations (gm MAD/kg DM) for sheep and cattle diets .....	74
Table 6: Guide maximum dry matter (Kg of DM/head/day) intakes for Red and Fallow deer .....	91
Table 7: Guide average daily ME and DM requirements of Red deer hinds grazing pasture with MD 9.9 (digestibility of 70%) .....	92
Table 8: Guide average daily ME and DM requirements of Fallow deer does grazing pasture with MD 9.9 (digestibility of 70%) .....	92
Table 9: Guide average daily ME and DM requirements of Wapiti/Elk hinds grazing pasture with MD 9.9 (digestibility of 70%) .....	93
Table 10: Guide average daily ME and DM requirements of Rusa deer hinds grazing pasture with MD 9.9 (digestibility of 70%) .....	93
Table 11: Guide DSE Ratings of Different Classes of Stock .....	94
Table 12: Hind Requirements in Early Lactation .....	96
Table 13: A Guide to Average Nutritional Value of Common Supplementary Feeds .....	100
Table 14: Determining the Cheapest Feed on an ME Content Basis .....	101
Table 15: Effect of Feed Quality on DM Intake .....	103
Table 16: Guide Water Requirements of Deer .....	111
Table 17: Guide Water Requirements for Red Hinds that are 100 kg at Mating .....	113
Table 18: Guide Water Requirements for Rusa Hinds that are 90 kg at Mating .....	114
Table 19: Feed Options to Maintain Red Hinds .....	117
Table 20: Feed Options to Maintain Red Stags .....	117
Table 21: Feed Options to Maintain Fallow Does .....	118
Table 22: Feed Options to Maintain Fallow Bucks .....	118
Table 23: Feed Options to Maintain Wapiti/Elk Hinds .....	118
Table 24: Feed Options to Maintain Wapiti/Elk Stags .....	118
Table 25: Feed Options to Maintain Rusa Hinds .....	119
Table 26: Feed Options to Maintain Rusa Stags .....	119
Table 27: A Guide to Average Nutritional Value of Supplementary Feeds for Drought .....	121
Table 28: Guide estimates of energy content of feed relative to digestibility value .....	132
Table 29: Energy values of common feeds .....	162
Table 30: Suggested maximum number Red hinds per fertile stag .....	180
Table 31: Suggested maximum number Fallow does per fertile buck .....	181

## GLOSSARY

[ ]	Refers directly to a reference listed in the reference section of this book
<i>Beam - Velvet</i>	The main branch of a velvet stick
<i>BCS</i>	Body Condition Score
<i>Body Condition Scoring</i>	A system of visual live animal assessment
<i>Buck</i>	A male Fallow deer that is at least two years of age
<i>Bull</i>	Alternate name for a male Wapiti/Elk that is at least two years of age
<i>Button</i>	The calcified remnant of antler that remains on the pedicle after velvetting
<i>Calf</i>	A young of Red deer, Wapiti/Elk or Rusa deer that is not weaned
<i>Casting</i>	The natural annual shedding of hard antler or button
<i>Coronet</i>	The base of the antler adjoining the pedicle
<i>Cow</i>	Alternate name for a female Wapiti/Elk that is at least two years of age
<i>Doe</i>	A female Fallow deer that is at least two years of age
<i>DLAA</i>	Deer Industry Association of Australia
<i>Dry Matter</i>	The portion of a feed that remains after the water component of the feed has been removed
<i>DSE</i>	Dry Sheep Equivalent
<i>Dry Sheep Equivalent</i>	The amount of metabolisable energy required to maintain a 45 kg merino wether in body condition score of 2.0 to 2.5
<i>Fawn</i>	A young of Fallow deer that is not weaned
<i>Grading - Velvet</i>	The procedure of classifying velvet according to its quality
<i>HCV</i>	Hot Carcase Weight
<i>Hind</i>	A female Red deer, Wapiti/Elk or Rusa deer that is at least two years of age
<i>Hot Carcase Weight</i>	The weight of an slaughtered animal after bleeding and removal of skin, head, feet, legs and internal organs and with minimum trimming to pass the carcase fit for human consumption
<i>Hybridisation</i>	Cross breeding between different strain or species
<i>Joining</i>	Mating
<i>Maiden</i>	A female that has not produced an offspring
<i>Metabolisable energy</i>	The energy component of a feed that is available to livestock
<i>Megajoule</i>	Standard unit for measurement of metabolisable energy
<i>NVAS</i>	National Velvet Accreditation Scheme
<i>Parturition</i>	The act of giving birth

<i>Pedicle</i>	The bony protuberances on the top of the skull from which the coronet and antler grow annually
<i>PROGRAZE</i>	The pasture and animal assessment training program initiative of the Meat Research Corporation
<i>RIRDC</i>	Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation
<i>Rising Plane</i>	A gradual increase in the volume and quality of available nutrition
<i>Rut</i>	The breeding season
<i>Shedding</i>	The natural annual shedding of hard antler or button
<i>Spiker</i>	A male deer, approximately 12 months of age that produces characteristic 'spiker' velvet
<i>Stag</i>	A male Red deer, Wapiti/Elk or Rusa deer that is at least two years of age
<i>Stocking Density</i>	Stocking density refers to the number of stock grazing a unit area (hectare) at any one time
<i>Stocking Rate</i>	A measure of the carrying capacity of a paddock or the whole farm over an extended period
<i>Velvet</i>	The immature (non calcified) antler of male deer
<i>Velvetting</i>	The procedure of harvesting velvet antler from male animals
<i>Weaner</i>	An animal that is weaned but not yet 12 months old
<i>Weaning</i>	The permanent separation of an offspring from its mother
<i>Yearling</i>	An animal that is at least 12 months old but not yet two years old