

Fact sheet 8 - Acid Root Mat

Issues

- Acid Root Mat
- Low fertility
- Poor pasture composition
- Low pH



Actions

- Aeration
- Smudging
- Fencing into smaller paddocks
- Installing water troughs
- Rotational Grazing
- Application of chicken litter, lime & compost tea
- Extensive tree planting



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Costs (approximate, as at July 2009 excl GST):

Capital

- Spike Aerator: \$3,000 - \$10,000 (1.2 – 3.0 m wide)
- OR Aerator hire rates: \$160 – \$200 per day (2.0 – 3.0 m wide)
- Fencing: \$5-8 per metre
- Troughs & fittings: \$500 each
- Smudger: homemade from railway iron

Ongoing Management & Maintenance

Aeration (estimate for 3 m wide aerator):

Diesel cost: \$3 - \$8 per hectare (at \$1.20 per litre)

Labour cost: 20 to 30 minutes per hectare

Smudging (estimate):

Diesel cost per hectare: \$2 - \$5 per hectare (at \$1.20 per litre)

Labour cost per hectare: 20 to 30 minutes per hectare

Chicken litter: \$23 - \$30 per cubic metre (depending on distance from supplier)
plus spreading cost

Benefits

- Root mat has become open, porous and humic
- High productivity & stocking rates
- Very low fertiliser input requirements
- Improved pasture quality without pasture renovation or over sowing
- Improved water infiltration