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Sheep Updates 2015 - Merredin

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- 9:00am **Welcome**
Roy Butler, Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (DAFWA)
- 9:05am The Sheep Industry Business Innovation project
Bruce Mullan, DAFWA
- 9:25am Western Australian sheep stocktake
Kimbal Curtis/Kate Pritchett, DAFWA
- 9:45am Wool demand and supply – short term volatility, long term opportunities
Chris Wilcox, Poimena Analysis
- 10:15am **Morning tea**
- 10:45am Myths, facts and the role of animal welfare in farming
Lynne Bradshaw, RSPCA WA
- 11:15am Latest research and development in breech flystrike
Geoff Lindon, Australian Wool Innovation (AWI)
- 11:45pm Lamb survival project and 100%+ club
Katherine Davies, DAFWA
- 11:50pm How to boost your lamb survival
Joe Young, R.B. Young & Son
- 12:20pm **Lunch**
- 1:05pm Using genomic technology to increase genetic gain
Stephen Lee, Sheep CRC & Dawson Bradford, Hillcroft Farms
- 1:55pm Impact of lamb growth rate on meat quality
Khama Kelman, DAFWA
- 2:25pm Economics of feedlotting – to feedlot or not?
Lucy Anderton, DAFWA
- 2:55pm The National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) for sheep
Jaq Pearson, DAFWA
- 3:15pm **Afternoon tea**
- 3:35pm Labour supply and training in the sheep industry
Jackie Jarvis, Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA
- 3:55pm Opportunities and challenges facing youth in the sheep industry
Ben Patrick, 2014 Peter Westblade Scholar
- 4:30pm Closing statements
Tanya Kilminster, DAFWA
- 4:35pm **Close. Sundowner sponsored by Landmark, Primaries and Elders**

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The Sheep Industry Business Innovation project

Bruce Mullan, Sheep Industry Development Director, DAFWA

Presentation outline

The Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (DAFWA) has embarked on a four year, \$10 million project to support the Western Australian (WA) sheep industry to capitalise on growing markets for sheep products.

The Sheep Industry Business Innovation project will work with industry to build capacity to supply new markets for sheepmeat and live exports, particularly in Asia and the Middle East.

The overall goal for the WA sheep industry is to be internationally competitive and grow in value in to the future.

The project's priorities in order to produce a more sustainable, investable and customer-focused sheep industry in WA are:

- To support the establishment of dedicated export supply chains that offer the returns needed to restore confidence in the industry.
- To increase the on-farm productivity of market-preferred products, through better genetic selection and higher stocking and reproductive rates.
- To improve farm business performance and production skills.
- To increase access to investment, both from within and outside of the industry, as a result of increased confidence among investors and more attractive business models.
- To establish the human and physical resources needed to research, develop and demonstrate the elements required to achieve success in the industry and the means of sustaining those resources into the future.

This \$10 million Sheep Industry Business Innovation project is made possible by the state government's Royalties for Regions program, where mining proceeds are invested into regional WA priorities including agriculture.

Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) has co-invested in the project, which is also supported with funding from the Sheep Cooperative Research Centre (CRC). The WA Sheep Industry Leadership Council is part of a stakeholder reference group that will provide direction to the project.

Information about the presenter

Bruce Mullan was raised on a wheat-sheep-pork family farm in Western Australia. He graduated with a BSc (Agriculture) from the University of WA (UWA) in 1978 and spent the next four years as a regional adviser with DAFWA, which was then known as the Department of Agriculture.

He then undertook a PhD in pig nutrition, also at UWA, before spending more than two years doing research in the United Kingdom and a further three years with the Victorian Institute of Animal Science.

He re-joined DAFWA in 1992 and became manager of the pig research group. During this time he travelled extensively through Asia and Europe providing nutrition support to the animal feed

Western Australian sheep stocktake

Kate Pritchett and Kimbal Curtis, Research Officers, DAFWA

Presentation outline

The key market indicators for the sheep industry are all at the higher end of the range recorded during the last 10 years. While good for producers, high prices make doing business difficult for processors and exporters. With around 80% of Western Australian sheep meat exported, the softer Australian dollar provides some support.

In mid-2014, there were 14.4 million sheep and lambs in WA including 8.0 million breeding ewes. With a projected turn-off of 5.4 million head in 2014/15, and a normal level of on-farm losses, a marking rate in the mid-90's would be required to maintain the sheep population. A more likely scenario is a marking rate in the high 80's and a closing number for mid-2015 of just on or below 14 million.

While high sheep prices and therefore increased profitability provide some incentive to grow the flock, or get back into sheep, they also make it more expensive; either through the direct cost of buying ewe hoggets or by way of the cash flow foregone by retaining extra ewe lambs. However, expected growth in demand suggests this investment is worth considering.

Sheepmeat exports of over \$320 million in both 2013/14 and 2014/15 make these the two largest grossing years of the last decade. The volume shipped in these two years is significantly higher than was shipped between 2009/10 and 2012/13, and equivalent to that shipped in 2008/09 and earlier when the flock was over 18 million and declining by around two million head per year.

Despite the jump in sheepmeat exports during 2013/14 and 2014/15, export prices also rose suggesting that demand was growing faster than the growth in supply. Contributing to this imbalance has been the impact of China where growth in sheepmeat consumption is diverging from growth in production, with the difference being picked up by imports. Western Australian sheepmeat exports to China have grown from 5000 tonnes in 2010/11 to 13 900 tonnes in 2013/14 and 12 900 tonnes in the first 11 months of 2014/15. China is now Western Australia's largest single market with a share of just over 20%.

Information about the presenter

Kimbal joined DAFWA as a research officer when the WA flock was 30 million, and before it peaked at 38 million. He blends his science degree, computing skills and access to industry statistics to analyse and report on the sheep and cattle industries in WA. Kimbal lives in Fremantle, port of loading for the live sheep trade.

Kate completed a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture through Charles Sturt University as a distance education student while living and working in the Kimberley. She joined DAFWA in 2014 (flock 15 million) with several years' experience on a number of iconic Kimberley cattle stations. She undertakes livestock industry analysis and reporting, providing data and interpretation to support decision making in DAFWA, including for the Sheep Industry Business Innovation project. Working from the Katanning office, Kate is experiencing her first Upper Great Southern winter.

Wool demand and supply – short term volatility, long term opportunities

Chris Wilcox, Principal of Poimena Analysis

Presentation outline

After rising between September 2014 and April 2015, wool prices surged and then fell back in May and June. Prices for some wool types have performed particularly well, notably cross-bred and broad wool as well as carding types. Medium merino wool (20 to 23 micron) continues to perform well, trading at around the 95th percentile or even better. In contrast, superfine wool prices have been rather lacklustre, continuing the pattern seen since 2011. Even so, in general wool prices are well above the levels a year ago.

What demand factors are driving these higher prices? Why is there the difference between the different wool types? How long will the better prices last? Sheep producers may also wonder what will be the impact on the wool market of the recent economic and financial events in Greece and China.

An equally important question, at least for long term planning, is whether global demand can be sustained at levels which encourage producers to stick with wool in their enterprise. If so, what products will drive demand in the future and what does that mean for the type of wool growers produce? And, what can wool growers do to meet the short and medium-term volatility and take advantage of the long term opportunities?

The presentation will look at these questions and explain the economic drivers of the wool market in the short, medium and longer-term. It will also address what sheep producers can do to address the short-term volatility and take advantage of the longer-term opportunities.

Information about the presenter

Chris Wilcox is the world's leading analyst and commentator on the global wool industry. He has 23 years' experience in conducting and guiding economic research, market intelligence analysis and strategic assessment of key issues in the global wool industry, in a career of over 35 years in Australian agribusiness.

Chris has a number of roles in the global wool industry, including: Executive Director of the National Council of Wool Selling Brokers of Australia; Chairman of the International Wool Textile Organisation's Market Intelligence Committee; and Board Director of the Australian Wool Testing Authority. He prepares the International Wool Textile Organisation's annual Market Information statistics publication and is a regular contributor to the Australian-based Mecardo market information and analysis website and service (www.mecardo.com.au).

Chris is a member of the Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee, and provides the analytical and secretarial support to the Committee. He is also a member of MLA's Australian Lamb Forecasting Advisory Committee. Chris was Chief Economist at The Woolmark Company and the Australian Wool Corporation for 12 years until 2008 and is now the principal of his own business, Poimena Analysis.

Myths, Facts and the role of animal welfare in farming

Lynne Bradshaw, President, RSPCA WA

Presentation outline

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (RSPCA WA) was established in 1892 in response to public concern about poor treatment of working animals such as horses. RSPCA WA is the state's oldest, largest and leading animal welfare charity. RSPCA WA's objectives today reflect its early objectives and apply to domestic, wild and farm animals.

So, what is the difference between animal welfare, animal activism or animal rights?

RSPCA WA supports farming of animals for food or fibre and seeks to work with producers to achieve the best possible humane and practical animal welfare outcomes. Animal activist or rights groups do not support the farming of animals for food and fibre. RSPCA has an approved farming scheme which helps producers tap into the Australian consumers' desire to know where their food comes from and to pay higher prices for food produced to high welfare standards. The approved farming scheme involves many producers of chicken and turkey meat, eggs and pork. We continue to work with the Sheepmeat Council of Australia providing them with community feedback and welfare advice.

RSPCA WA is a barometer of the community's expectations about animals used for food and fibre. We will explain why the general public trust RSPCA, how we work with DAFWA and other government agencies and farming groups and also discuss the RSPCA position and policy on performing husbandry procedures on sheep. We will be able to dispel some of the myths and provide some facts about why we are not the same as animal rights groups.

We will have several members of the RSPCA team available on the day to take questions.

Information about the presenter

Lynne Bradshaw was elected President of the RSPCA WA in 2004 after joining the RSPCA WA Council in 1997. She was also the National President of RSPCA Australia from 2006 to 2013.

Lynne has had a 30 year career in business development in the healthcare industry, with experience in senior management and director positions in both public and private entities, locally and internationally. Her focus has been in building businesses, either from inception and start-up, or by taking SMEs through acquisition and merger to eventual sale or public listing. Lynne has a particular interest in supporting locally developed medical technologies through commercialisation as part of the growth strategy for these businesses.

Lynne has strong skills across business development, strategic marketing, financial and business management, as well as product management, commercialisation and market development.

Before moving to Australia in 1985, Lynne was a committed member of RSPCA UK. She has also been an active member in the Fauna Rehabilitation Foundation (now Native Animal Rescue) and is a sitting member of the Telethon Institute Animal Ethics Committee, the Ausbiotech WA Committee and is the RSPCA WA representative on the WA Animal Welfare Advisory Committee.

Latest research and development on breech strike prevention

Geoff Lindon, Manager Productivity and Animal Welfare, AWI

Presentation outline

The focus of AWI's Breech Strike Prevention Program is to provide woolgrowers with a range of options now and in the future, to choose the best method of breech strike prevention for their climate, country and sheep type. The Program consists of;

- Breeding for breech strike resistance
 - Lower breech wrinkle, dags, urine stain, breech cover
 - Genomics, odour and bacteria
- Breech modification
 - Clips
 - SkinTraction
 - Liquid Nitrogen and laser
- Pain relief products
 - Tri-Solfen
 - Buccal Meloxicam,
 - Broadening use approvals
- Chemical prevention
 - Monitoring resistance
 - Fly genome
 - Future control options
- Rebalance of existing husbandry options
 - Time and length of joining
 - Time of crutching and shearing
 - Chemical use, sheep type
- Assessing lifetime animal welfare
 - Comparison of control options
- Wool declarations and market analysis
- Woolgrower communication and training
 - ParaBoss, National Mulesing Accreditation Program, MERINOSELECT
- Supply chain transparency
 - Program audits, retailer advice
 - Supply chain standards & liaison with animal welfare groups

Information about the presenter

Following *studies at (?)* Roseworthy Agricultural College and the University of New England, Geoff worked on Bungaree, Egelabra, and Bononke/Wanganella Merino studs. He then managed the Trangie Agricultural Research Centre, was Livestock Operations Manager for the Twynam Agricultural Group from 1996-2007 and then joined AWI.

Lamb Survival Initiative and 100%+ Club

Katherine Davies, Development Officer, DAFWA Northam

Presentation outline

Just over 6% of Western Australian merino producers and 9% of dedicated prime lamb producers achieve marking rates of over 100%. This means that less than 500 producers across WA achieve the 100%+ benchmark in any given year.

The Lamb Survival Initiative provides support for producers to lift their sheep enterprise's lamb turn off through access to an experienced consultant, use of key management tools, and a subsidy on pregnancy scanning for multiple births. Local grower groups are involved to provide coordination of activities.

In order to build producers' confidence and skills to lift marking rates to 100%+ we encourage producers to:

- undertake pregnancy scanning for multiples
- record and submit data on the reproductive rate, marking rate and weaning rate, so that it can be benchmarked against other producers
- attend at least one training course or workshop focused on reproduction
- work with industry professionals on reproduction rates of their flock.

The 100%+ Club celebrates the success, expertise and contribution of Western Australia's leading sheep producers to rebuilding the state's flock to a sustainable level.

Average marking percentages for Merino flocks across the state are about 80%. Our leading producers are achieving in excess of 100% and prime lamb producers with their finger on the pulse are achieving above 120%.

To keep the WA sheep industry alive we need to boost lamb marking percentages which in turn increases both farm and industry profits – more lambs make good cents!

The Lamb Survival Initiative and 100%+ Club are funded by Royalties for Regions through the Sheep Industry Business Innovation project.

To find out more about the Lamb Survival Initiative or to nominate yourself or someone you know for the 100%+ Club contact Katherine Davies on +61 (0)8 9690 2169 or katherine.davies@agric.wa.gov.au.

Information about the presenter

Katherine was raised in York and always had a keen interest in animals, particularly livestock. She graduated from Murdoch University with a Bachelor of Animal Science with First Class Honours in 2011 and began working with DAFWA from the Moora office in 2012.

Katherine has worked on a number of projects in both sheep and grain production and is now involved with the Royalties for Regions funded Sheep Industry Business Innovation project running the Lamb Survival Initiative and 100%+ Club.

How to boost your lamb survival

Joe Young, Sheep Consultant, R.B. Young and Son

Presentation outline

There are a few main points when investigating how you can boost your lamb survival. Many of these come from findings out of the Lifetimewool project and have since been integrated into Lifetime Ewe Management courses.

Firstly, think about lamb survival and the factors that drive it.

- Ewe nutrition
 - Ewes lacking energy to birth the lamb increase the likelihood of traumatic lamb birth and possible ewe mortality.
 - Hungry ewes produce inadequate milk supply and increase likelihood of lamb abandonment or mismothering.
- Lamb birth weight
 - Is affected by ewe nutrition during pregnancy.
 - Light lambs risk increased threat of malnutrition, exposure and predation.
 - Heavy lambs risk dystocia and traumatic birth.

Given these factors (and many others) affecting lamb survival, there are a number of strategies that can be put in place to counteract.

- Condition scoring ewes
 - Allows management of ewe nutrition throughout the reproductive cycle, ensuring that ewes are in optimal condition to produce viable lambs.
- Pregnancy scanning for multiples
 - Allows you to manage ewes according to litter size, allocating nutrition to the twin bearing ewes that need it, while rationing feed to dry and single bearing ewes to reduce the risk of dystocia.
- Feed budgeting
 - Calculated using condition scores of the flock and Feed on Offer (FOO) in the paddock: are they getting enough? It takes the guess work out of feeding.
- Lambing paddock preparation
 - A sheltered paddock reduces the risk of exposure and smaller mob sizes decrease the risk of mismothering.

Information about the presenter

Joe graduated from Lincoln College in New Zealand in the early 80's and farmed a mixed farming operation in Esperance before returning to the family farm at Kojonup.

Initially Joe ran the Jingalup Ram Breeding Co-operative for the AMS before branching into a sheep trading operation in early 90's.

He has facilitated local Lifetime Ewe Management groups, helped design and present The Sheep's Back course and is currently facilitating the Southern Dirt Lamb Survival Initiative.

Using genomic technology to increase genetic gain

Stephen Lee, School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences, University of Adelaide and Sheep Cooperative Research Centre (CRC)

Presentation outline

DNA technology has developed rapidly over recent decades and we can now generate information relatively cheaply from the DNA of individuals. The Sheep CRC has developed a number of DNA tests useful for sheep enterprises. These are the Low Density (LD) genomic test, parentage test and poll test. A DNA test requires the collection of a small blood sample on a blood card. This can be done, for example, by making a small cut on the ear. Blood cards are provided when ordering tests; they are specially designed for collecting blood for the purpose of DNA testing. The cards are barcoded and the identification number of the animal that the sample belongs to must be provided on the card.

Sheep CRC LD test

The LD test provides information about an animal's breeding value for four breeds of sheep Merino, White Suffolk, Poll Dorset and Border Leicester. Information from the test is combined with pedigree and performance data in the Sheep Genetics database to increase the accuracy of Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBVs). The LD test increases accuracy of breeding values, especially for young animals and for traits that are generally measured later in life or not measured at all. This is important as genetic gain in sheep breeding programs is made by identifying and selecting the best animals. Greater genetic gain is achieved when animals can be more accurately selected and mated at younger ages.

The LD test is expected to increase rate of genetic gain for Merino breeders that use the test by between 10-15%. Importantly, it is expected that testing about the top 20% of the ram drop will give more than 90% of the potential genetic gain. Terminal ram breeders are also expected to benefit from use of the LD test as it provides ability to identify and select rams that are superior for lean meat yield (LMY) and eating quality traits. To date, terminal ram breeders have successfully used current selection indexes and measurements for growth, muscle and fat depth to achieve substantial genetic gain. The LD test will allow breeders to incorporate selection for eating quality, for which there was previously limited information.

Sheep CRC LD 12K test key points

- Genomic tests increase ASBV accuracy and, therefore, rate of genetic gain.
- The increase in ASBV accuracy is highest when there are limited measurements available, for example in young animals.
- The most cost effective use is to test mainly rams.
- Testing about 20% of the ram drop to achieves most of the extra genetic gain.
- Commercial sheep producers can benefit by purchasing rams with superior genetic merit based on Sheep Genetics ASBVs.

Information about the presenter

Stephen is based at the School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences at the University of Adelaide where he has a multifaceted role focused on applying technology in the livestock industries. Stephen works with the Sheep CRC and sheep breeders on effective implementation of genomics into sheep breeding programs. This includes developing strategies to optimise investment in genomics for genetic gain.

Further information:

Detailed information on the DNA tests developed by the Sheep CRC and order forms for the tests can be found at <http://www.sheepcrc.org.au/genetic.php>

The impact of lamb growth on meat quality

Khama Kelman, Research Officer, DAFWA

Presentation outline

Lamb growth is a key profit driver for producers in the Australian sheep industry. Lambs with higher growth rates will reach market weights earlier, resulting in an overall lower cost of production per lamb, and an increase in farm profitability. As Australians have among the highest sheep meat consumption in the world increasing efficient lamb production is vital.

Consumers are becoming increasingly concerned with meat quality however the effects of increased growth on meat quality are largely unknown. Indicators of meat quality include the intramuscular fat, consumer overall liking, meat colour (myoglobin concentration) and nutritional content (iron and zinc concentration).

In one experiment, lambs from eight sites of the Sheep CRC information nucleus flock experiment were weighed at birth, weaning and every two weeks thereafter. Growth curves were fitted to the weight data. Weight at weaning (100 days) and post weaning (150 days) were estimated as not all lambs were weighed on the same day. Meat samples were taken at slaughter and intramuscular fat, myoglobin, iron and zinc concentration were measured. A consumer taste panel was used to determine overall liking.

There was a resulting impact on growth at birth, weaning and post weaning:

Intramuscular fat: increased with lamb growth

Consumer overall liking: did not change with lamb growth

Myoglobin concentration: increased with lamb growth

Iron concentration: increased with lamb growth

Zinc concentration: increased with lamb growth

In conclusion, increased growth in lambs currently has positive effects on meat quality. These meat quality traits can be influenced by changing lamb growth. The window for the greatest influence is between birth and weaning, highlighting the importance of ewe nutrition.

Information about the presenter

Khama has recently completed a PhD at Murdoch University investigating the impact of lamb growth on meat quality. The research presented was funded by the Sheep CRC and based on the information nucleus flock experiment.

In her current role as a research officer with DAFWA, Khama works on dedicated value chains within the Sheep Industry Business Innovation project. Khama lives in Woodanilling where she and her husband run a Merino based wool enterprise.

Economics of feed lotting – to feed-lot or not?

Lucy Anderton, Economist, DAFWA

Presentation outline

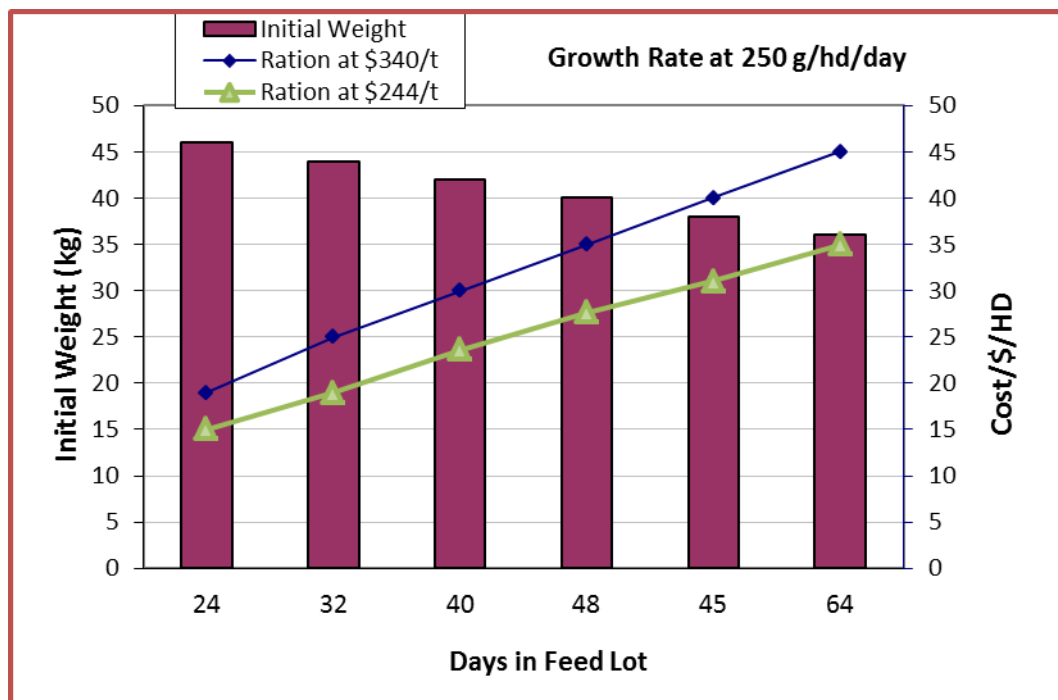
Farming systems have responded to market signals and adapted to a dual sheep enterprise producing wool and meat either as prime lambs and or live sheep for slaughter overseas. However, finishing lambs for the prime lamb market in Western Australia's Mediterranean climate and short growing season can be difficult and costly.

Decisions about time of lambing and stocking rates to achieve growth rates influence how many lambs meet market specifications by when, and understanding the end margin using market information and key profit drivers for finishing lambs may improve the final profit result.

Deciding how to finish lambs requires an understanding of these profit drivers, which are:

- Weight animal enters the feed-lot
- Growth rate
- Cost of ration

Other factors which influence the final result are the price of store sheep and sale price of the finished animal.



Information about the presenter

Lucy has worked for DAFWA since 2002 and specialises in farming systems and bio-economic modelling for live-stock systems. Her interest in understanding the drivers of whole farm performance, the interactions between enterprises and socio-economic systems stems from her history working and living on farms in W.A, which she continues to explore in her research.

National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) for sheep and goats – what is the NLIS database?

Jaq Pearson, Technical Officer, DAFWA

Presentation outline

In Western Australia, approximately 15 000 sheep are moved every day. To keep track of these as well as similar movements in the other states, a national database is used to record the details of every movement.

The NLIS allows stock to be traced from their property of birth through all subsequent properties or to the place of slaughter. The system provides:

- better traceability for disease outbreaks
- better traceability for food safety (residue detection)
- better biosecurity outcomes.

What information is recorded?

For sheep and goats, the NLIS database records mob based movements where animals move from one property identification code (PIC) to another. Information to be recorded must include:

- date of movement
- waybill number
- brand
- number of animals in mob (a single animal is also a mob)
- if the stock are vendor bred.

Who is responsible?

It is the responsibility of the receiver or purchaser of the stock to update the database, except if purchased from a saleyard (then it is the responsibility of the saleyard).

Producers need to record the following movements on the NLIS database:

- sheep purchased privately
- sheep moved between your different PIC's
- sheep moved to and from agistment properties.

The record of movement must be completed with 48 hours.

Creating an NLIS database account

An NLIS account can be created free of charge at www.nlis.mla.com.au

For assistance contact the DAFWA sheep NLIS helpdesk on +61 (0)8 9363 4150 or sheep.nlis@agric.wa.gov.au

Information about the presenter

Jacque is an experienced Biosecurity Officer with the Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia, and has a background in farming. As part of her role, Jacquie assists WA sheep producers to ensure they meet National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) electronic traceability requirements via the NLIS Sheep HelpDesk.

Sheep industry traineeships – encouraging a new generation of farmers

Jackie Jarvis – Consultant, Agrifood Labour & Skills

Presentation outline

A sheep industry traineeship program was initiated at the request of the Sheep Industry Leadership Council (SILC) in partnership with DAFWA, together with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) and the Food, Fibre, Timber Industry Training Council (FFTITC).

A nationally recognised **Certificate in Agriculture** is available to school leavers, or any other employee who wishes to ‘formalise’ the on-farm training process.

This is known as a ‘traineeship’ and works like an apprenticeship, where someone is employed on a part-time or full-time basis, with training occurring on-the-job, under the guidance of the farm owner or other senior staff member. The process is supervised by regular visits from the local Training Institute (formally known as TAFE) that ensure that the trainee can complete 16 units of ‘competency’ chosen from a compressive list. Most training occurs on the farm, but the training institute can arrange for lessons online or in a classroom environment if needed for some of the units.

Some of the unit of competency could include:

Administer medication to livestock	Maintain livestock water supplies
Identify and draft livestock	Implement animal health control programs
Implement feeding plans for livestock	Prepare animals for parturition
Rear newborn and young livestock	Plan and construct conventional fencing
Keep records for a business	Monitor livestock production
Operate machinery and equipment	Fabricate & repair metal or plastic structures
Prepare and apply chemicals	Prepare facilities for shearing and crutching

The indicative award rate of pay for a school leaver, employed under the Pastoral Award, and enrolled in an approved traineeship is \$9.92 per hour. You can choose to pay more than the award rate, and remember you will need to confirm the correct award rate prior to employing someone. Your business may be eligible for up to \$5000 in government incentives for employing a trainee.

This program will provide some guidance to assist with recruitment and you are asked to register your details if you would like further information.

Information about the presenter

Jackie Jarvis was raised in the northern Perth suburb of Wanneroo and spent her adolescence working on vegetable farms, before commencing a career in the banking sector. A work transfer saw her relocate to the South West over 25 years ago, where she and her husband Matt are commercial grape growers.

Jackie has an off-farm career specialising in agricultural labour supply issues, both domestic and international, and has managed a number of programs including the Harvest Trail; the seasonal worker program and a regional migrant employment support pilot. In 2014 Jackie was

Opportunities and challenges facing youth in the sheep and wool industry

Ben Patrick, Yarrawonga Merino Stud

Presentation outline

It is becoming more and more evident that the sheep and wool industry is not attracting the younger generation that it should. The opportunities and challenges that the youth face within the industry are directly related.

Throughout the presentation, he will cover what he see are the challenges and opportunities that he faces now and may face in the future, whilst relating his experience to Australian Sheep Breeding Values and commercial breeding programs.

Challenges and opportunities covered:

- succession
- corporate investment
- profitability
- labour costs
- new technologies.

With the continued pressures of profitability and the exciting opportunities that research and development within the industry provides us with, we must not forget where the industry has come from.

Ben will also talk about the Peter Westblade Scholarship, a program that was established to provide a hands-on approach to new technologies and provide networking opportunities to the youth of today whilst also providing young people with the ability to form a career path within the industry. He will describe what the scholarship contains, its values and how to apply, whilst relating back to his story.

Information about the presenter

Ben was brought up on a family farm on the southern tablelands of New South Wales. He studied agriculture business management via distance education (at CSU) whilst working full time on a number of corporate and family owned properties, then went on to manage a large commercial Merino operation and for the last two and a half years has been the livestock manager and stud master for Yarrawonga Merino Stud.

Following the MerinoLink conference and the Peter Westblade Memorial Wether Trial, Ben was awarded the 2014 Peter Westblade Scholarship.

Notes
