

## SA Sheep Industry Forum – Issues and Opportunities - March 2014

Grouping	Issues/opportunities
Industry governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the socio-economics to rural communities of the declining sheep industry (SL)</li> <li>• Lack of strategic directions (2)</li> <li>• 10 year projection?</li> <li>• Benchmark the industry (2)</li> <li>• Lack of shearers (2)</li> <li>• Labour – lack of skills (2)</li> <li>• Political rep (1)</li> <li>• Education/communication urban/rural (1)</li> <li>• School opportunities for Ag</li> <li>• Maintenance mechanics etc.</li> </ul>
Business management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Business management – cost of production</b> (9) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Knowing cost of production – tools, improving adoption (GP)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Skills and capacity</b> (9) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Manage change skills (2)</li> <li>○ Encourage youth (1)</li> <li>○ Private sector</li> <li>○ Education of merchandise sales people and encouragement of them to use/be informed by tools such as WormBoss, Lifetime Ewe etc. (Immediate)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Labour efficiencies (3)</li> <li>• Enterprise challenges – planning succession <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Succession planning (2)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Dealing with seasonal variability – farmer friendly tools</li> <li>• Economics of recommendations</li> </ul>

<p>Sheep health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Farm Biosecurity</b> (8)</li> <li>• Food safety (2)</li> <li>• Review of footrot management programs in high rainfall zone and removal of the stigma associated with it that is preventing producers seeking help/advice (Medium).</li> <li>• Carcass condemnation (1)</li> <li>• Nutrition (1)</li> <li>• Transparency re food chain</li> </ul>
<p>Sheep management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ASBV's</b> (8)</li> <li>• <b>Increase pasture utilization</b> (5)</li> <li>• Lack of adoption – LTEM/Condition scoring etc. (3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Poor adoption of technology – (BWWF - less than 20% know how to condition score, about 20% pregnancy scan and very few know how to do an energy budget) (KS)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Remote Monitoring (1)</li> <li>• Wild dogs (4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The increasing destructiveness of wild dogs and feral pigs and its true financial impact on the sheep industry</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Independent evaluation of “feel good products” e.g. blocks and licks etc., and possibly development of quick tests to identify deficiencies (long term)</li> <li>• Efficiencies – kg/ewe/kg/ha (1)</li> <li>• Reproduction</li> <li>• Water security</li> <li>• Cost of water)</li> <li>• Technologies – What is around, \$\$ cost, accessibility</li> <li>• RFID – tags vs chips</li> </ul>
<p>Animal welfare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Perceptions of general public misunderstandings</b> (6)</li> <li>• Rib fractures</li> <li>• Quality of stock</li> <li>• Enhanced feedback from kill</li> </ul>
<p>Natural resource management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance environment &amp; production (3)</li> <li>• Invasive animals – rabbits (1)</li> </ul>

## Group discussion

### Business Management / COP

*The issue: Lack of adoption*

- Don't know how business is performing
- Lack of capacity at training level i.e. Consultants
- MLA: Advisor coaching
  - o **MLA/AWI to develop ,advisors deliver**

Need an appealing opener/ "feeder courses"

- e.g. LTEM, BFWF, Lamb loss
- Lead into business management/higher level
  - o Develop package – 1 to 2 years

Easy informative data collection to achieve business analysis

- COP workshop is basic starter
- Then KPI's
  - o 2-5 year delivery

Business management Workshops

- Either as individual e.g. \$12k /group e.g. \$2k cost

### Farm Biosecurity

*The issue: Lack of awareness at farm level (animal, plant)*

Lack of government resources for emergency animal disease response

**Urgency:** Immediate – on going

**Responsible:**

- Individual producers (BS Plan) with minimum STD's
- Industry (raise awareness, expertise, develop standards)

**Recommendations:**

1. Raise awareness on (whole) farm biosecurity (grain, animals, horticulture)
2. Commit more funding to biosecurity programmes
3. Implement/develop an audit/QA system for farm biosecurity

## Pasture Utilisation

1. Quantify size of problem and the barriers (prod/beliefs/social)
  - Other state experience
  - Other industries
  - SA situation (past/current)
  - Different countries
2. Now – no time like the present
3. Who    Lead – PIRSA/SA  
          Support - from RDC's
4. Quantify
  - Paired paddock demo
  - Facilitated learning
  - Measure 'Sheep Efficiency

## Australian Sheep Breeding Values

*The Issue: Lack of uptake (Merino – both stud & commercial)*

- Labour and time in performance recording
- EID & software too
- Generational change
- Traits to improve in Mo –meat (Carcass/culls) & /Repro (NLW)

Immediate – things are happening already but more is needed

- Create commercial reality
- Proof in value of improving accuracy
- More industry support and funding - AWI/ MLA

Genomics is next step – don't get left behind!

- Sometimes you don't know what you don't know

## Public Perception

Opportunity/gap:

- Public perception – the ability to influence this

Recommendations:

- Powerful/effective agri-political bodies
- Transparent well communicated guidelines
- Work with food & wool retailers to enhance welfare perceptions
- Truth in labelling

Urgency

- Animal welfare – immediate
- Stability of agri-political entities (funding/direction) – immediate

Who responsible:

- Retailers – peak bodies

## Skills and Capacity

*Of the private sector and younger generation*

Private sector skills is those service providers – consultants, agents, vets, nutritionists

Independent/impartial advice is required for providers to make good decisions

Mentoring partnership programs for young producers and others

A sounding board, confidence, provocative, not answers and solutions

Time for planning. Strategy.

The ability to develop those skills does currently exist. How do we get people to engage?

How do we help people identify what training will assist them?

What are the best mediums to deliver the information?

On-farm practical, electronic

Who can address the issue? Those who already have the knowledge

Farmer trusts to fund/ sponsor extension of knowledge