



Western Sheep & Beef Producers

Newsfax No. 2 – April 2012

CATTLE COUNCIL

The Cattle Council has established a sub-committee system to assist the Board by discussing policy issues and making recommendations to the Cattle Council Board. PGA representatives on these sub-committees are:

David Lovelock, Animal Health, Welfare & Biosecurity,
David Stoaite, RDE & Sustainable Production,
Kathy Lovelock, Industry Systems & Food Safety.

AHA FMD POLICY REVIEW

Following some successful lobbying by Cattle Councilor David Lovelock, the PGA was able to broker a visit by Dr Eva-Maria Bernoth (AHA's Executive Manager, Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness and Response) to speak to AHA's response to the Matthews report into Australia's preparedness for FMD.

Dr Tony Higgs (WA Chief Veterinary Officer) also spoke on the consequences and lessons learnt from 2002 FMD outbreak in the UK.

Notes on this meeting are available from the EO by request.

A redraft of the Foot and Mouth Disease protocols is underway, and it includes the possible use of vaccination rather than the eradication by slaughter policy. This would depend on the size and location of any outbreak. With the assistance of the Chairman and Mr Lovelock, the PGA has written a submission that is currently resting with the President for approval before it is submitted.

OVINE JOHNES DISEASE

The Chairman and EO attended the WA OJD advisory committee meeting on March 12. It was dominated by debate over the new National OJD Management Plan. The plan is clearly a compromise position that seeks to recognize the various differences between states in their attitude to, treatment of and spread of OJD. The PGA continues to be disappointed at the difficulty experienced in getting meaningful abattoir surveillance happening in WA.

Other points of note were a report on the recent para tuberculosis colloquium held in the eastern states and an explanation of current vaccination techniques and their impacts. A new Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test looks promising. It is a DNA test and highly specific to OJD. It is likely to be done in a 3 day turn-around time (and not 3 months). It is 5x times more sensitive than the pooled faecal culture test. Notes on this meeting are available from the EO by request.

FOOTROT

The Chairman and EO attended the Footrot Management Committee meeting, held on the same day as the OJD Advisory Committee meeting. The PGA president has decided to withdraw from this committee and an appropriate letter has been written to the committee.

The main point to arise from the meeting was that the nature of the current industry means that most sheep are being sent to slaughter and not sold to other farming properties. This in itself restricts the spread of the disease. There is an absolute reduction in the number of properties under quarantine and this may suggest the control program is succeeding.

A suggestion was made by DAFWA to roll the FMC meetings into the SICG meeting, but this was not supported. Notes on this meeting are available from the EO by request.

OVINE BRUCELLOSIS

Sheepmeat Council of Australia wrote a letter requesting information from the PGA about our policy and current activity with respect to Ovine Brucellosis. The purpose of this is to inform its council discussions on future directions for OB control. A briefing note was prepared by the EO and circulated to the committee for comment. Useful comment was received and included in the Chairman's reply. From those comments returned, it appears PGA members are well informed about the nature of the disease.

AWI WOOLPOLL

Wayne Duffield of Darkan is the PGA's representative to WoolPoll. In fact he is the only representative from Western Australia. Wayne has already attended his first WoolPoll meeting and his comments have been reported in the rural media. Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) must conduct a poll of levy payers (WoolPoll) every three years to determine the amount of levy to be collected for industry research, development and marketing activity.

Meetings

Kimberley Div.	3 May (half day only)
Pastoral Conference (Broome)	4 May
Pastoral Executive	23 May
PGA Convention	24 May
	September