



Western Sheep & Beef Producers

Bulletin – 20 December 2012

OJD

There have been many issues raised over the past weeks and a high level of concern about the projected National OJD Market Assurance Program. The program is a joint initiative of WPA and SCA. The PGA was asked for and made a submission to SCA earlier in the year that we understand was given serious consideration. However, the program as delivered is very much owned by SCA and WPA. OJD is a very contentious issue with different opinions as to the efficacy of vaccination, testing, and even abattoir surveillance. These need to be considered, particularly the status of vaccinates, and WPA and SCA are considering how these might be addressed. Consequently, WPA and SCA have announced a six month extension to the transition period out to 1 July 2013.

BJD

As part of the Cattle Council's Animal Health, Welfare & Biosecurity sub-committee, Mrs Kathy Lovelock has been kept fully informed of developments in QLD. She has provided confidential reports to the President and head office as required. Mrs Lovelock reports that DAFWA has the situation under control. They report that 6 herds in the Kimberley have imported bulls from the QLD stud in question. DAFWA will trace these animals using NLIS and put them in quarantine, but not the properties. It is current thinking that these bulls are considered a very low risk of spreading BJD. Governments have moved quickly to maintain confidence in biosecurity and protect trading arrangements.

ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS & GUIDELINES

Committee member Ms Bindi Murray and the XO recently participated in a Sheep Welfare Standards tele-conference. There is broad understanding within the committee as to the significance of these standards becoming enforceable as regulation. This is largely due to the efforts of Dr Richard Norris of DAFWA, and to a lesser extent the Sheepmeat Council of Australia. As usual there was good exchange of views between committee members via e-mail. Livestock producers need to keep abreast of this process and make an assessment of the impact of the new standards and guidelines on their farm business.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

As last year was marked by the suspension of the live export of cattle to Indonesia, so this year was affected by the loss of control of Australian sheep exported to Pakistan, followed by their inhumane slaughter. Local sheep prices fell accordingly and the balance sheets of many farm businesses were affected.

Farm businesses and farm families have many qualities that keep people on the land. Chief amongst them is quiet perseverance and resilience. Without these important qualities Western Australian agriculture would never have developed to the extent it has. An important example of this was the Support Live Export counter-rally held in East Fremantle on November the 18th. Farmers are not natural protestors; they prefer to quietly go about their business. Perhaps the hash tag "#Hadagutful" sums it up best.

On behalf of the Livestock Committee the Chairman wishes all members and friends of the PGA a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

UPCOMING MEETINGS – 2013

Goldfields Division – 26 January

PGA AGM: - 28 February

Kimberley Division - 19 April.

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