

Blueprint launch targets sheep industry growth

By Deanna Lush

A new strategy aimed at driving a 20 percent increase in South Australian sheep industry productivity by 2020 was launched at Hahndorf last month before a crowd of about 190 producers and industry stakeholders.

The SA Sheep Industry Blueprint will boost the SA sheep industry's production and value from \$1.48 billion in 2015 to \$1.8 billion by 2020.

Livestock SA partnered with the SA Sheep Advisory Group to instigate the Blueprint, which was supported with funding from Primary Industries and Regions SA as well as a five-year agreement with the University of Adelaide on its implementation. A Working Group of 15 industry leaders has been working on the Blueprint's development.

Blueprint Working Group Chairman Allan Piggott, Moorlands, said the launch heralded a new, united and coordinated push to boost SA's world-leading sheep and wool industries.

"The SA sheep industry employs 15,000 people on 7000 properties so our industry is a significant contributor to the state's economy," he said. "We feel the direction the Blueprint provides will help to grow our industry, leverage our SA sheep levies by collaborating with other stakeholders and investors to maintain or gain our share of the SA workforce. It's an exciting time to be a sheep and lamb producer."

The Blueprint identifies five key objectives as well as a series of areas to focus on to deliver the productivity increases. The objectives are:

- Grow the SA sheep industry's production and value from \$1.48 billion in 2015 to \$1.8 billion by 2020 while maintaining international competitiveness.
- Develop a united value chain workforce plan to 2020 and beyond to attract new and energetic people to the industry.
- Support a 20 percent increase in the engagement of quality consultants and advisers with increased use of business decision-support tools.
- Act as a conduit for greater research, development and extension collaboration along the value chain at a regional, state and national level and develop a measure of greater adoption and uptake.
- Develop a proactive and progressive industry communication plan that, through advocacy and champions, gives greater consumer confidence to increase demand and engage the whole value chain.

"We have set five key ways of measuring success by 2020, such as increases in SA's flock size and a 12.5 percent increase in the number of lambs weaned. We also want to see 35 percent of sheep supplied by direct consignment having individual feedback with payment to suppliers for quality and yield differences, as well as a 2 percent increase in processing efficiency.

"The thing that is different about our Blueprint is that it has a series of actions and tasks that will ensure it is not just a plan that sits on a shelf but plays a vital role in guiding our growth efforts in the medium term."

More information: Read the Blueprint at www.livestocksa.org.au/Blueprint