

WOOLPRODUCERS AUSTRALIA HEALTH AND WELFARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

13 NOVEMBER 2024 | VIBE CANBERRA AIRPORT

MATTERS ARISING

Livestock SA Executive Officer to take the Committee's feedback on the Sheep Health Declaration back to the Livestock SA Board.

GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

The following major issues were noted in the accompanying paper, or discussed as part of the GM report.

NATIONAL WILD DOG ACTION PLAN

The NWDAP have contacted WoolProducers, looking for alternative funding resources via the drought action plan in order to continue efforts in the wild dog management space.

AUSTRALIAN ANIMAL WELFARE TASK GROUP

WoolProducers and Sheep Producers Australia wrote to the AWTG seeking an amendment to the Sheep Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Sheep. The request sought for the Standards and Guidelines to be amended to mandate pain relief for mulesing sheep at all ages.

LAP AND NVD REVIEWS

WoolProducers are participating in consultations to expand the scope of the Livestock Production Assurance (LPA) scheme through having optional modules available to producers. These modules would not be mandatory, they may cover issues such as animal welfare and sustainability.

There is a push to have some of these issues (animal welfare and sustainability considered within the NVD review process. WPA continues to push for the national vendor declaration (NVD) to be a document that supports food safety and traceability throughout the supply chain. Expanding the NVD to cover additional issues may undermine the integrity of what has been a long-standing and trusted document.

SHEEP HEALTH AND WELFARE

BEST PRACTICE LAMB MARKING PROJECT UPDATE

The committee engaged in a workshopping process with Dr Emily Buddle of the University of Adelaide to discuss the definition of best practice lamb marking and opportunities and barriers to adoption of best practice.

Preliminary findings will be reported in February 2025 with a final report to be delivered in April 2025. This report will be used to engage RDCs for development of an extension program.

CUSTOM R-PILUS FOOTROT VACCINE (REGISTRATION UPDATE AND FUNDING REQUEST)

WoolProducers wrote to Sydney University after the May H&WAC meeting to request a review of their IP licensing arrangements due to growing grower frustration on the availability and lack of progress of registration of the Custom Footrot R-Pilus vaccine, since the removal of the Emergency Use Permit ceased in late 2020.

WoolProducers have now been advised that non-exclusive licensing arrangements are now in place and discussions are underway with prospective vaccine manufacturers to progress APVMA registration of the vaccine.

The committee passed a motion supporting the use of levy funds to support the registration process.

SHEEP HEALTH DECLARATION UPDATE

The committee considered a proposal from Livestock SA to amend the draft (currently under review) Sheep Health Declaration. It was agreed that additional information and education campaigns would deliver a similar outcome to the proposed amendments and that the SHD review should progress with the draft as proposed.

BIOSECURITY AND EAD PREPAREDNESS

NSIBS UPDATE

The committee were updated on the NSIBS workshop that was held on 29th October.

Several Health and Welfare Advisory Committee members attended the workshop, with a total of 22 government, industry and associated industry attendees.

Matters discussed included producer engagement, sheep health, implementation of the EID for sheep, wording of sheep health vs biosecurity, national harmonisation, trusted sources of information, allocation and alignment of resources (government and industry), communication and behavioural change, small holders and peri-urban producers, the lack of use of vets in industry.

A draft strategy will be circulated to workshop participants for endorsement before the new strategy commences in mid-2025.

WOOL TRACEABILITY

The committee were briefed on WPAs participation in wool broker briefings in Melbourne and Sydney outlining the importance of the Australian Wool Traceability Hub(AWTH) to support an EAD response and how traceability can expedite a return to export markets following an EAD outbreak. The AWTH aims to have 90% of bales with PIC data in the AWTH by 1 July 2025.

SHEEP TRACEABILITY

EIDs will be mandatory in all lambs born from 1 January 2025.

All states now have some form of tag support / rebate, though the amount of funding and eligibility conditions vary.

WoolProducers expects that the standards, as supported by all SDAFEMEAT members, are implemented as the harmonised national minimum requirements of the traceability system.

GENERAL BUSINESS

COMMITTEE HEALTH, WELFARE AND BIOSECURITY PRIORITIES

The committee participated in a priorities workshop where the Committee discussed their respective organisation's top priorities in relation to priorities discussed at the August 2024 meeting. Topics discussed included: footrot, animal rights groups, flystrike, worms and pain relief.