

MEDIA RELEASE

WoolProducers Australia committed to Foot and Mouth Disease Preparedness

19 August, 2019

The peak grower representative body for the Australian wool industry, WoolProducers Australia (WPA) continues to strengthen its commitment to Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) preparedness on behalf of the Australian wool industry.

The WPA Board resolved to co-fund a number of industry positions with the Department of Agriculture for real-time training for FMD in Nepal, which helps trainees to be better equipped to recognise and report FMD symptoms hence assisting Australia in its early warning and response capacity.

WoolProducers is calling for nominations from people who are interested in applying to attend the next course, which is being held from 25 - 29 November, 2019. Nominations close on 29 August, 2019. Further information can be acquired by emailing info@woolproducers.com.au. WPA covers trainee's flights, visa, accommodation, meal and vaccination expenses.

Mr Ashley Cooper, WPA Policy Manager completed training in December 2018.

"The course was a valuable opportunity for attendees as we were each able to gain a better understanding of our industry roles in an FMD response, should an outbreak occur in Australia. Being able to learn in a practical environment really puts the theory into practice and this solidifies your knowledge better than any desk-based course."

"I would encourage any industry person who may assist in an emergency animal disease response with a connection to the Australian wool industry to apply." Mr Cooper said.

These courses are designed for producers, stock handlers, private and government vets and animal health policy makers, and are delivered by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

"FMD is something that all producers hear about but this training has enabled me to think about what an outbreak would actually mean in an Australian context." Mr Cooper continued.

"The course opened my eyes to the wider policies surrounding an FMD response in Australia and how they will impact not just on-farm activities but the whole livestock supply-chain, including the devastating implications for trade."

WPA remains committed to FMD preparedness and has sent wool industry representatives, including producers, agents and private vets from all sheep producing states in Australia as part of this funding round.

ENDS

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About WoolProducers' Australia

WPA plays a critical role in working closely with companies and entities funded by woolgrower funds including compulsory levies or fees for service.

Its mission is to develop constructive and profitable outcomes for woolgrowers nationally.

The agency is responsible for appointing a director to each of the Australian Wool Exchange and the Australia Wool Testing Authority, promoting good corporate governance and ensuring that the interests of growers are met.

WPA maintains a working relationship with Australian Wool Innovation as the voice of woolgrower shareholders. It aims to contribute to AWI's programs for the benefit of growers, promoting responsible use of levy funds and ensuring good corporate governance.

WPA is the sole wool industry member of Animal Health Australia, and as such, carries a significant responsibility for decision making on behalf of the industry in the event of an emergency animal disease outbreak.

As the only wool grower organisation with membership of the National Farmers' Federation, WoolProducers is responsible for providing key policy advice on behalf of our members, and other wool growers, to Australia's peak farm body.

WoolProducers also works closely with the Federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources on key issues such as animal health and welfare, biosecurity, pest management control, natural resource management, drought preparedness, emergency animal disease outbreak preparedness and industry development, including research and trade.