

ASHEEP NEWS



Record cattle field day

Anita Chalmer, ASHEEP Project Officer

The annual ASHEEP cattle field day was held in September this year and showcased three very different grass fed finishing programs. There was a record attendance of 55 people. Many cattle operations in Esperance rely on growing and finishing steers off grass as the main profit driver of their cattle enterprises. Grass finishing as opposed to selling weaners utilises pastures (and grazing crops) with relative ease to turn off a heavier carcass of high value product.

Thanks to the relationships built with stock agents, abattoirs and retailers, a premium for high grade grass finished beef can be achieved. Tom Wilding from Woolworths spoke of the importance of these relationships up and down the supply chain.

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Annual ASHEEP cattle field day

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Ryan Willing has been managing Katanka. The goal is to sell steers at 16 months old with a 280kg carcass weight into Woolworths in September. The steers were weaned in December and needled with drench and a multimin. They were then put onto Pearler millet over summer. Ryan emphasised the importance of uniformity across the herd, selling the top draft >350kg in February to avoid over weight penalties. The steers then grazed pastures over a dry autumn before getting another round of multimin, B12, drench and Compudose 200 and moving onto a sacrificial wheat crop where weight gains of 1.7kg/hd/d were recorded. Ad lib straw and a calcium magnesium mineral lick are provided when grazing the wheat.



Ryan is a participant in the MLA Swans Vet ASHEEP Fixed Time AI project spearheaded by the fast talking Dr Enoch Bergman who can condense two half hour presentations into 20 minutes. The project which is supported by MLA subsidises costs for farmers to trial the synchronisation and AI of heifers to improve calving ease, heifer pregnancies and early return to estrus as a first calver. Results are interesting and have shown the program to be a success. Dr Bergman also discussed the merits of early weaning in a dry year and how to use best practice to ensure the best results from calving.

Image: Dr Enoch Bergman, Swans Veterinary Service, discusses the results of the Fixed Time AI Project.

Next site was a visit to Rob Revell who manages Mount Howick Station for McVay Pastoral Co. Rob supplements his pasture-fed steers with grain in lick feeders to actively manage the tail end of the mob with the goal of selling finished cattle direct to the abattoir rather than as stores. In February, the cattle are introduced to the feeders with oats and ad lib hay and transitioned to roller milled barley and minerals. They are given B12, Selenium, Copper and 100day Compudose. Lick feeders are put out at a rate of 1 per 50 head, this reduces the incidence of bullying and shy feeders. 2.5kg/hd/d at the end of finishing.

David Howey from Elanco explained the difference between types of HGP and what scenarios are best fit.

Last stop was at Orleans Farms where Simon Fowler finishes around 2000 cattle on grass for Woolworths each year. Flexible management is key to the success of the operation. The steers and cull heifers are split into two management groups based on weight. The lighter group get priority to ensure they will reach the target weight before the grass-finished market window closes. Simon has a heavy focus on ensuring the cattle have excellent feed available to them all through the year. This is done by utilising summer fodder crops, ryegrass silage, crop grazing and high quality pasture production.

The day finished at the Condungup Tavern where thanks go to Elanco and Esperance Livestock Transport for sponsoring the bar.



Market Report: News from the wool bin

Andrew Beaton, Account Manager Wool, Landmark



It's been a while since I have published any news regarding the wool market and I can tell you a lot has happened since my last article. I won't go on too much about what has been happening in this space I haven't the room or time but in summary over the last 6 months the market has been influenced mainly by geopolitical carry on. USA/China trade wars, political unrest in Hong Kong and BREXIT are the main culprits. They have created so much uncertainty in the wool market it is near on impossible to try and work out what direction the market will take week on week.

Since July the market has experienced the sharpest drop in price in it's entire history. From the last sale before the winter recess in the second week of July 20 micron quote in the eastern market was 2040 cents clean, after the 3 week break and 4 selling weeks it dropped to 1489 cents clean. The market has since clawed it's way back where now the same 20 micron quote is 1727 cents clean. Lately the market has been up one week and down the next and doesn't seem to be showing any sort of direction.

When we try to analyse any market there are some tools we can use to do this with usually some accuracy but in the case of the wool market and the outside influences it is experiencing these tools i.e. fundamentals like supply, demand and currency exchange rates, are next to useless and are having no effect on the market.

What is the market going to do I hear you all ask. Well if we apply our usual fundamental tools as below.

1. Supply: From now until the Xmas break supply of wool will diminish, and the sales will reduce in size. This **should** create more demand in the sale room.
2. Currency: The exchange rate for the Australian dollar seems to be sitting under 70c US and has been there for quite some time. Most economists will tell you they don't expect this to change any time soon so a low exchange rate equals increase demand.
3. Consumer sentiment: This may be the elephant in the sale room. When the market was at its peak last year the sold wool then is now a product on the retail shelf. It is made up of very expensive wool and therefore moving much slower than it normally would. We now have a block or bottle neck in the supply chain which has created a ripple effect back to the producer.

If we look at the wool market in a big picture this up and down movement week in week out tells me this is where it is trying to settle so I wouldn't expect too much upward or downward movement in the short term lets say until early next year. I am not game enough to go out any further than that especially while the current world leaders are carrying on.

The Forward wool price is echoing all of what I have mentioned above. It seems to be steady as we go and tending to be on the side of caution. But hey, most growers are able to achieve 1000 cents sweep the floor for their wool clip and I think that is pretty good money in any language.

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Case Study: Vandenberghe Partners

ASHEEP interviews David & Katherine Vandenberghe



David and Katherine Vandenberghe are well known for the quality of their stock and their progressive approach to adapting new technology and information to evolve their farming systems. ASHEEP was fortunate to steal a few moments of their time during harvest to find out more.

Background

The Vandenberghe's home farm was a new land conditional purchase block in 1963 and they went on to expand throughout the late 80's and early 90's. David and Katherine began succession in early 2000 and shortly afterwards the business implemented some changes including getting into cattle and purchasing Wattle Dale Merino Stud in 2004. By 2014 they had transitioned away from cattle and have focused on expanding their land holding over the last five years. The succession process completed in 2016 and the business is now 50/50 cropping and sheep.

2019 in a nutshell

The year started out with feeding sheep and no summer rains, followed by poor winter rain. The Vandenberghe's are currently heading for their driest year in 120 years. Despite this, David explained that the "livestock enterprise has coped fairly well with reasonable lambing percentages and increased ewe base, although the crop enterprise is about 50% of average." They are now back feeding sheep and water is becoming an issue. According to David, the sheep coped with the frost far better than the crop.

Wattle Dale Merino Stud - buyer change and new technology

Over the last 15 years since taking over Wattle Dale Merino Stud, the Vandenberghes have seen changes in client expectations. The discerning sheep producer has become more figures based when purchasing rams and very aware of the impacts the ram figures have on their flock. They are targeting animals with higher growth and have less focus on lower micron. Some clients still select on visual appraisal alone but the majority use a mix of visual, measurement and breeding values to make their purchases.

The Vandenberghes have implemented a major overhaul in the technologies they use to manage sheep in order to meet changing demand, refine their product and achieve efficiencies. Beginning with indexing within flock, they went on to adopt electronic tags, ASBVs, an extensive AI program, full parentage pedigree, genomic/DNA testing, sire evaluation, and MateSel (a tool to assist with mate selection). They have also incorporated new infrastructure in shearing sheds, sheep yards, handling equipment, auto drafter and dedicated computer and software.

Snapshot

Location: Scaddan, Grass Patch & Gibson

Area: 6072ha

Cropping: Wheat & Barley
3000ha 50/50

Pasture: 3000ha Serradella
Medic and Sub Clover/Rye
Grass, Kikuyu

Stock: Sheep 8000 head
Stud Ewes 1600
Commercial Ewes 1900
Mated to terminal 1200

Team: David & Katherine, plus
2 full time staff

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Making use of ASBV's has significantly impacted the sheep the Vandenberges breed. David outlined the Stud's targets as aiming for "+25 cfw, +5 ywt, and to maintain -2fd." "Recently we have looked to increase fat and eye muscle. Whilst it is difficult to achieve all of these traits at once we are getting closer to our goals. The end result would be an animal with good frame profitable wool cut and good carcass quality."

"As clients rely on our decisions to breed rams that are profitable, we take this very seriously and therefore employ a team of specialist to assist us. This team consists of stud classer Craig Wilson, data manager and consultant Sally Martin and geneticist Tom Granlese. The input this team has is valuable in setting direction, industry relevance and identifying new ideas."



Pastures

David is quick to admit he has a passion for pastures and works to ensure they have the most suitable varieties for the area.

Currently the Vandenberges are trialling new species of legumes for the Dryland Legume Pasture Systems project in conjunction with ASHEEP. They have reinoculated with rhizobia on the majority of their farms.

Image: David Vandenberghe with workmate Savvy.

Current challenges and future goals

According to David, probably the most challenging aspect of their current farming operation is the inconsistent rainfall making it difficult to manage stock numbers appropriately. He also sees animal activism as a continued threat to the market and stock management practices.

Looking to the future, the Vandenberges have a range of focuses that will enable them to grow their business and refine their practices. These include growing new pasture species on a variety of soil types, drought proofing with some perennials and to successfully succession plan to hand over to the next generation.

Thanks to David and Katherine Vandenberghe for taking the time to share an overview of their farming operation. David is Vice President of ASHEEP, his contact details are available on the final page of this newsletter issue under the Committee & Staff Contact Details.

Vetch Survey - more respondents required

Preliminary results from ASHEEP's recent vetch survey indicate that across 17 respondents:

- 16 people planted 14,523ha of Vetch in 2019
- 47.06% planted RM4 followed by Rasina, Capello, Lauguedoc, Barloo & Volga
- 23 varieties were planted, some have planted more than one variety
- Most have used Vetch for Nitrogen and Grazing



ASHEEP would like to get a clearer picture of vetch use in our region to build a case for increasing the limited pool of funding currently available for vetch breeding. Check your email for the short four question survey or contact eo@asheep.org.au for a copy to fill out.

China poised to become Australia's largest beef market in wake of African Swine Fever



Rabobank

Article by Rabobank

China is on the cusp of becoming Australia's largest beef export market in 2019, with little sign of demand abating anytime soon, as Chinese consumers shift away from pork to other proteins in the wake of African Swine Fever. And it is not just China that has been gripped by the disease, with the virus recently confirmed in East Timor and South Korea and now prevalent in many other South-East Asian countries, parts of Europe and Africa.

Rabobank's senior animal proteins analyst for China, Chenjun Pan – who was recently in Australia – said with the Chinese pig herd halving over the past year to 200 million pigs as a result of African Swine Fever (ASF), the increase in demand for other meats, including beef, had risen significantly. “This has resulted in a serious shortage in animal protein, with the market shrinking by eight million tonnes – even with the considerable increase in imports this year,” she said.

“Chinese beef imports have risen by 53 per cent so far this year, while imports from Australia have increased by 65 per cent in the year-to-date (July) – with China overtaking the US and Japan to become Australia's largest export market for beef,” she said. “This is a total turnaround from just 10 years ago when China was a net exporter of beef and an increase on last year, when 20 per cent of the country's beef was imported.”



Angus Gidley-Baird and Chenjun Pan in Roma, QLD

While beef makes up around nine per cent of China's total animal protein consumption – with pork coming in at around 65 per cent and poultry at 20 per cent (pre-ASF) – Ms Pan said demand for beef has been increasing in recent years not only due to the substitution away from pork but increased demand among the growing middle class.

“There is a structural supply shortage in China,” she said, “with the national cattle herd declining from around 127 million head in 1999 to around 88 million head in 2018. This has been driven by resource and environmental constraints while the industry is highly fragmented with little in the way of research into genetics.”

Implications for Australia

Australian-based senior animal proteins analyst Angus Gidley-Baird said China's increased demand for beef has “helped prop up the Australian beef price” this year. “China has absorbed much of the increased slaughter that has been going through the system at the moment,” he said, “and if they weren't there, prices would be softer than where they are currently.” Mr Gidley-Baird said while ASF offers great opportunity for the Australian beef sector, particularly over the next 12 to 24 months, “our competitiveness will fall once we get rain and cattle prices increase”.

“The Chinese market is very sensitive to price, and while we are competitive with the likes of South America at the moment, once our prices increase – and they are coming off a high base – they are likely to remain high,” he said. “This means the risk is that when our own supply comes back on board, it could be at a time when there is a lot of supply from South America and the US on the global market.”

Market Report: Sheep meat

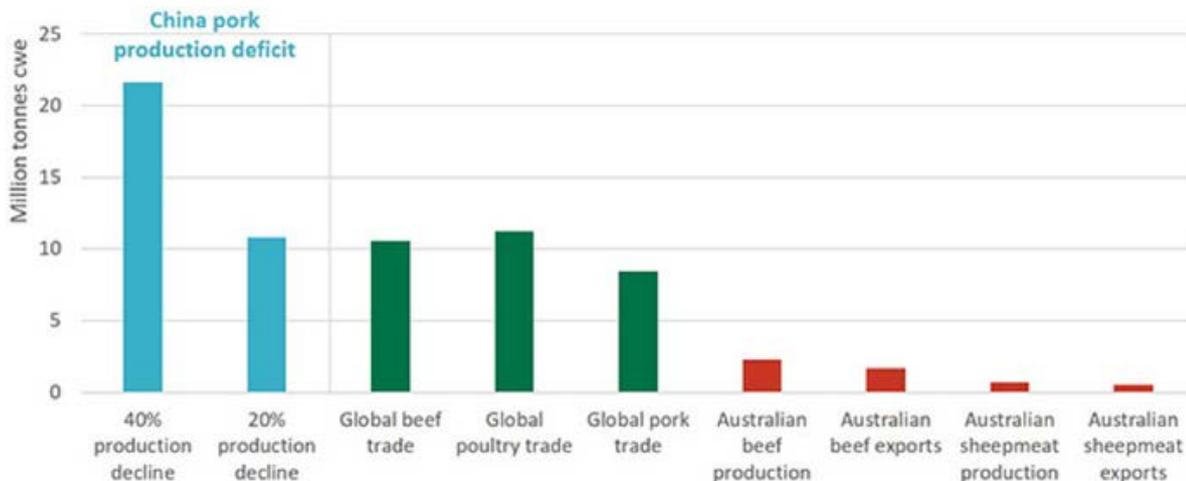
Rob Davidson, WAMMCO International



Whilst the Australian sheep meat market is influenced by international demand, competing protein prices, affordability, currency, market access and availability due to drought conditions, the number one factor currently impacting the world sheepmeat market is the devastating impact the African Swine Fever (ASF) has had on the Chinese pig herd and more recently on other key pork markets including Korea, the Philippines and other South East Asian nations.

ASF first broke out in China in August 2018 and has since spread to all mainland Chinese provinces. It is a highly contagious and fatal viral disease infecting both domestic and wild pigs however, humans are not susceptible to ASF. China accounts for nearly half of the world's pork production and pork accounts for over 60% of the meat consumed in the region, so simply due to scale even small changes in China's production and consumption of pork will have a profound impact on global trade and prices. Estimates of the world pork production dropping by 20-40% represent a significant shortfall and there simply isn't enough surplus meat traded on the international market to make up for the shortfall. Since the outbreak with pork supply tightening, the consumption of competing proteins (chicken, beef and sheepmeat) have all recording substantial increases.

Putting ASF pork shortage into perspective...



Source: MLA, ABS, USDA
All based off 2018 figures

WAMMCO has participated in the recent rally, with China now the Co-operative's number one volume market. Where once it was a significant market for "off cuts", the country's surging demand for sheepmeat sees WAMMCO product now sent to the region that would traditionally have been sent to other parts of the world.

Besides China, WAMMCO continues to receive strong demand from North America, Middle East and Europe with all regions attempting to secure orders leading into Christmas. The development of the Hormone and Antibiotic Free range of lamb products sent to North America has been extremely well received and is expected to continue to expand in the years ahead.

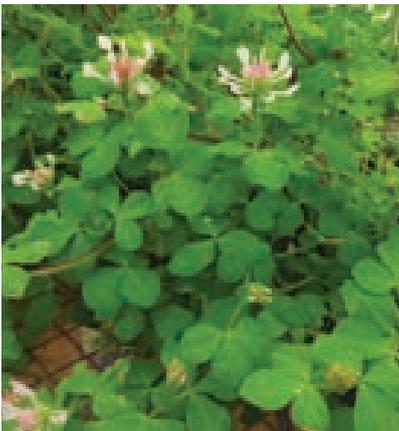
Looking forward, WAMMCO's guaranteed minimum priced lamb contracts released in late September for delivery in January 2020 have been well supported. We encourage all growers with stock to be marketed in the coming months to discuss their options with their local livestock agent or to contact Peter Krupa (0427 810 613) or Rob Davidson (0429 380 195) for the latest prices.

ASHEEP Winter Field Day Review 2019

Jan Clawson, ASHEEP

The 2019 Winter Field Walk was held on Friday 23rd August 2019. It was a very wintry, freezing cold day. We had over 33 people brave the cold for the afternoon which started at David Vandenberghe's Scaddan farm looking at the Dryland Pasture Legume System Project's Variety Trials.

Dr Brad Nutt, DPIRD showed the participants 52 genotypes of Medics, Clovers, Trigonella and Scorpions Tail in 4 replicates. The best performers at the time at the site were PM250 Strand Medic and some of the Helmet Clovers (*Crifolium clypeatum*), Bladder Clover (*T. Spumosum*) and Sickle Pod Fenugreek (*Trigonella Balansae*). The poor performer was Scorpions Tail (*Scorpiurus Muricatus*).



Helmet Clover

Sickle Pod Fenugreek

The next stop was Geoff, Faye and Nate Sanderson's at Grass Patch. The Sandersons have recently replaced the old 3 stand shearing shed which was an extension to the original workshop. The sheep yards were built by Geoff and his father Ted on a very tight budget. We had lunch in the beautiful new 4 stand shed, purpose built and fitted out by Auspan, and looked through the sheep yards built by Commander Ag-Quip. We then stopped to look at a paddock of Vetch. They had been struggling to get a legume crop to grow profitably on this farm, so now plant paddocks of oats and vetch for grazing. This helps ensure they can maintain their sheep numbers.



Left top: Lunch at the Sanderson's new shearing shed.

Left bottom: A great turn out for a freezing cold day. Sanderson's Vetch and Oats.

Right: Looking at nodules on the Vetch.



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The next stop was Tim Starcevich's at the end of Circle Valley Road. Tim had a paddock of Rye Grass with self-sown Barley and Medic. The paddock had been locked up because the dam had gone dry. Following a rain in July which put water back in the dam, Tim had run 1200 merino lambs on it for 6 weeks and 380 merino ewes for 3 weeks at the time of the field day.

The final stop for the day was Sam Guest's north of Salmon Gums. Sam has been planting Cappello Vetch for the last few years and has noticed the hard-seeded germination after one cereal crop. This regeneration has become part of his pasture phase.



Above: Tim Starcevich discussing the Rye Grass paddock with self-sown Barley and Medic.



The day concluded with a barbeque and a few drinks at the Salmon Gums Recreation Centre and a chance to finally get warm.

A big thank you to the ASHEEP Committee for running a successful day.

Thanks also to Rabobank for sponsoring lunch.

Left: Finishing the day at Sam Guest's with a beer.

Livestock Inspector & Government Vet

Sarah Brown, Executive Officer, ASHEEP

The ASHEEP Committee has undertaken to engage with DPIRD and the State Government in regard to the imminent retirement of Livestock Inspector Peter Spicer, in the concern that Esperance may be left without a replacement. This follows the removal of the Government Veterinarian position several years ago.

The Committee has raised that Esperance could be looking at a situation where the nearest Livestock Inspector is 400km away (Kalgoorlie), while the nearest Government Veterinarian already located some 500km away (Albany, Narrogin). This could have the potential to compromise effective biosecurity amongst other issues.

ASHEEP has requested the opportunity to discuss the above issues with the relevant Government representatives and recently met with Hon. Colin de Grussa MLC who has offered his support investigating the matter. Conversations are ongoing and ASHEEP will update members with relevant information as it arises.



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Agro Spot: Pasture quality – early summer weed control pays big dividends

Greg Warren, Agronomy Manager, Farm & General, 0428 720 888

If you are planning to summer sow legumes (hard seeded serradella / vetch in particular) in February/March next year, its success will be greatly improved if summer weeds are controlled early.

Whilst this will only be relevant if we receive summer rainfall over the next 2 months (although history points to this being likely after such a dry 12 months!), it will contribute to a far more productive pasture.

The photo below (taken in late March) shows the difference between controlling summer weeds and not. The area on the left received an Ester/Garlon herbicide mix in late January, a month before a late February rain. It controlled the mintweed (goosefoot), cudweed, wireweed and melons present at the time (seen on the right of the photo).

This unsprayed area had a far poorer stand of clover which struggled for survival and was out competed by the established weeds – the first and best germination of clover was lost.

An added bonus of early weed control is removing any alleopathic (soil sterilising) effect that weeds such as mintweed have on germinating pastures, and it conserves valuable soil moisture for the pasture as it establishes itself.

After the March rain the only thing that germinated in the sprayed area was clover and ryegrass, producing an almost 100% pasture stand. If you sow serradella, bladder clover or vetch in February/March after a January weed control spray, you could expect a very good stand of your pasture species. This then gives you a very good probability of higher feed production during the normal feed-gap autumn period.



Annual pasture (Summer weeds sprayed on left vs unsprayed on the right).

The moral of the story:

The most productive pasture stands (summer sowing and regenerating) are achieved where summer weeds are removed early, irrespective of when the break of the season occurs.

ASHEEP Spring Field Day Review 2019

Jan Clawson, ASHEEP

ASHEEP held an action-packed Spring Field Day with a great turn out on 26th September 2019. The course of the day took the bus (hosted and sponsored by Dr Tim Watts, WA Livestock Research Council) through some great sites, starting with Wayne Lewis's Fleming Grove where Theo Oorschot, Esperance Rural Supplies and Chris Poole, Murdoch University took us through a range of trials.



Theo Oorschot, Esperance Rural Supplies, talking through the trials at Fleming Grove.



Forage Turnip at Fleming Grove.



Pasture variety trials at Fleming Grove.



Chris Poole, Murdoch, Rhizobia Trial at Fleming Grove.

Next stop was at Ash Reichstein's on Whitnoom Hills Road where the group had the opportunity to observe a crop of lucerne under canola and a site of grazer oats.



Lucerne under canola, Ash Reichstein's.



Grazer oats, Ash Reichstein's.

Continued from Page 12.

The third property visited was the Leiper's at Old Smokey Road for the Landmark Pasture Variety Trial, before heading on to view a range of pastures at Rhys Morcombe's on Muntz Road where Dr Angelo Loi, DPIRD addressed the group.



Above & below, pasture at Rhys Morcombe's.



Landmark Pasture Variety Trial.



The bus then rolled on to Simon Fowler's Willyama Station where the group took in a number of sites including grazing canola, serradella and heard about his experience fattening lambs on vetch.



Serradella, Willyama Station.

The day wrapped up nicely at the Condingup Hall where congratulations went to Wayne Lewis for being crowned the 2019 "Nod King". Thanks to Floyd Sullivan and Alosca for the prize of 500kg of any Alosca product. We're sure Wayne will put that to good use.

A big thanks also go to Elders Stuart Matthews and Alosca for their sponsorship of the bar, WALRC for sponsoring and hosting the bus and the Condingup Playgroup for the BBQ catering.



Grazing canola, Willyama Station.



"Nod King" Wayne Lewis with Alosca's Floyd Sullivan.



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Widespread drench resistance¹ is a significant challenge for Australian sheep producers. It means your drenching program may be far less effective than you think and the time to take action is now.

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Important Information

DO NOT USE in lambs under 6 weeks of age or less than 10kg body weight.
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Resistance may develop to any chemical. Ask your local veterinary practitioner or animal health advisor for recommended parasite management practices for your area to reduce development of resistance. It is advisable that a resistance test be conducted before any parasite treatment is used.

Always use in accordance with the registered label directions and regional drench decision guidelines (www.wormboss.com.au).

Meat Withholding Period: DO NOT USE less than 14 days before slaughter for human consumption.

Export Slaughter Interval: DO NOT USE less than 84 days before slaughter for export.

Re-treatment interval: DO NOT re-treat animals for 42 days after last treatment.

References: 1. Playford, M.C. et al. (2014). Prevalence and severity of anthelmintic resistance in ovine gastrointestinal nematodes in Australia (2009-2012). *Aust Vet J* 92(12):464-471.
2. Monepantel is a member of the Amino-Acetonitrile Derivative (AAD) class of anthelmintics. 3. Refer to registered label. 4. Baker, K.E. et al. (2012). Efficacy of monepantel and anthelmintic combinations against multiple-resistant *Haemonchus contortus* in sheep, including characterisation of the nematode isolate. *Vet Para* 186(3-4):513-517.

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Innovative granular legume inoculant provides solutions

Article by ALOSCA

ALOSCA Technologies' bentonite clay based granular inoculant developed for West Australian conditions has revolutionised the way pasture and cropping legumes are sown here in WA.

West Australian R&D Company ALOSCA Technologies Pty Ltd is now in its 16th commercial season supplying a range of dry granular legume inoculants to agriculture which provide many new application options and freedoms not afforded to the traditional peat slurry method of legume inoculation. Much of the logistical freedom provided by ALOSCA inoculants are underpinned by the nature of the product to protect the viability of the incorporated nitrogen fixing Root Nodule Bacteria from temperature and moisture stresses commonly encountered during minimum tillage operations.

Independent evaluation at Murdoch University's Centre for *Rhizobium* Studies has shown the favourable environment for *Rhizobium* in ALOSCA's inoculant carrier system to provide enhanced bacterial survival when seeding to dry or marginal conditions and/or delays in germinating rainfall occur.

Field evaluations have shown ALOSCA granules can be **effectively mixed with seed or fertiliser on-farm, sown into moist or dry seeding** conditions and the unique buffering properties of the carrier clay provide the opportunity to apply pesticide seed dressings typically harmful to legume inoculants.

The new application options coupled with the unique ability of the granule to activate on the same seasonal moisture triggers as the sown legume has seen growers identify the advantages of the West Australian developed range of inoculants. Alosca saves time & money in labour costs, and the opportunity to dry seed & summer sowing techniques.

Simplicity is the key to Alosca, not to over-mix the product before transferring it to the seeder. Grower experience has reported adequate mixing can be achieved through the regular transfers of fertiliser or seed from the shed or silo to the grouper bin and then onto the seeder. ALOSCA-fertiliser mixes should then be delivered single shoot and not banded separately to the seed.

Alosca Novel Method of Top-dressing old pastures to reinvigorate them, by spreading the Alosca granules with fertiliser or lime, along with the method of drilling granules with cropping fertiliser or seed in the season prior to the pasture coming back into the rotation to introduce new more effective strains of inoculant to the soil have been shown to be effective for pastures.

ALOSCA Novel granular Head start inoculation incorporating with cropping fertiliser the year prior provides a cost-effective options to introduce new strains to pasture seed-banks without adding inoculants to pasture coming back into the rotation.

Keep an eye out for the 2020 Alosca \$50T Cash Back offer.



New methods - Head Start inoculation

Beckom NSW sown wheat 2013 Alosca BS added to fertiliser



When you're on a good thing, do you stick with it?

Theo Oorschot, Esperance Rural Supplies, 0427 715 166



A pasture legume trial was initiated by Esperance Rural Supplies this year on the property of Wayne and Tracey Lewis, north of Gibson. A number of key objectives were documented and included:

1. How much feed can we grow? Measure dry matter production.
2. Validate weed control by using a number of herbicide options.
3. Trial new to be registered herbicide Thistrol Gold.
4. Rate herbicide tolerance across the legume species trialled.

The six species I selected were Paradana Balansa clover, Dalkeith sub-clover, Mawson sub-clover, Margurita serradella, Santorini serradella and RM4 woolly pod vetch. This trial was sown on the 23rd April, triple replicated, on marginal moisture. Growing season rainfall April-October was 235mm with no summer rain.

If you had the opportunity to walk over these trials either at our Esperance Rural Supplies field day or the ASHEEP field walk, the following is a summary of the trials.

- Always apply Spinnaker when sowing serradellas. In this trial Spinnaker 100 gm/ha was applied PSPE and the level of capeweed control I rated was adequate. Spinnaker is well tolerated by the serradella's. I was surprised how tolerant RM4 and the sub-clovers were with biomass reductions of 25% and 15% respectively, when initial ratings done 111 days after application of Spinnaker.
- Post emergent applications were applied 86 days post sowing and tolerance rated 25 days after the application of the herbicide. The appropriate recommended adjuvant was used.
- Raptor 40 gm/ha was well tolerated by the serradellas and the Balansa clover. Dalkeith had a biomass reduction of 24% with RM4 at 28%.
- Thistrol Gold is a co-formulation of Broadstrike+MCPA+MCPB. Thistrol Gold rates of 2 and 4 Lt/ha was well tolerated by Dalkeith sub-clover. Thistrol Gold will be registered into sub-clover pastures for the season 2020, but, I'd be cautious when experimenting with serradellas as the biomass reduction for both Margurita and Santorini was unacceptable in this trial.
- Jaguar at 1Lt/ha was too harsh on the serradella's.
- Bromoxynil at 1.5 Lt/ha + Broadstrike 25 gm/ha was well tolerated by Dalkeith. Margurita lost 19% biomass reduction with Santorini suffering 37%.
- However, what has to be kept in perspective is, what would you lose under heavy weed burdens and no two seasons are the same.

The adjacent table shows how much top was actually grown. Cuts were taken 148 days post seeding and dried. Margurita being later maturing certainly picked up some more production with the reasonable rainfall achieved in August.

Legume	Kg/ha Dry Matter
Balansa	2000
Dalkeith	1460
Margurita	3930
Mawson	1660
RM4	3460
Santorini	2660

Continued from Page 16.

The trial soil type had a pH of 4.4. The lack of nodulation was observed with all the species other than the serradellas. The serradella's have made their mark on the acid sandplain and they don't suffer from Red Clover Disease! What was interesting was the amount of biomass RM4 grew. With the possibility of new acid tolerant rhizobia being available in the near future, we may see vetches creeping south into the sand plain district.

In summary:

- *'When your on a good thing stick with it' and I'm of the opinion the serradellas fit that bill. Margurita certainly on a late finish can give you that bit more production.*
- *Always, use Spinnaker for helpful capeweed control when sowing serradella.*
- *Pick the right legume species according to soil type and pH.*



Above: Wayne Lewis kneeling in a plot of Margurita serradella. In front is Santorini serradella, behind is Dalkeith sub-clover 5/11/19.

Maiden ewe reproduction performance industry benchmarking study

Murdoch University is calling for survey submissions from producers to understand reproductive performance of maidens relative to adult ewes. The surveys form part of a study to benchmark maiden ewe reproduction performance across Australia.

The key benefits for farm businesses from this study will be benchmarks to compare the reproductive performance of your sheep against regional and national targets, and better understanding of the opportunities available to improve reproductive performance of young sheep across a range of different farming systems.

To take part contact:

Elise Bowen
 PHD Candidate
 Murdoch University
 0428 420 981
 elisejbowen@gmail.com



Wormboss

Anita Chalmer, ASHEEP Project Officer

The two year sheep intestinal worm and drench resistance project is supported by AWI through Wormboss. We have been monitoring worm numbers and performing subsidised drench resistance testing. Worm numbers have been down this year with most participants unable to find high enough burdens to conduct a drench resistance test. Ideally undrenched weaners would be used for testing but any class can be used if a drench history is known and the threshold of 300 eggs per gram reached.

There are **positions available** if you would like to participate. Contact Anita Chalmer on 0488724 88 or email projects@asheep.org.au.



A great way to start the day performing a drench resistance test at Lort River supported by AWI and Wormboss.

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Soil test sooner rather than later



Article by Summit Fertilizers

Precise sampling and accurate soil analysis is much more than just identifying major production limitations. These days, it is more a case of helping growers continually fine tune the soil's physical, chemical and biological components. 'State-of-the-art' soil monitoring involves gathering critical information on nutrient levels and also other key soil traits such as organic carbon, electrical conductivity, pH, aluminium and the soil's phosphorus buffering index (PBI).

At Summit Fertilizers we often get asked, when is the best time to soil test?

The answer really is from now through to the end of January is the absolute *best-case* scenario. So, while soil testing may not be top of mind for growers that are deep into harvest and then preparing for well earned holidays, it should be.

Here are just some of reasons why soil testing and having the results sooner rather than later is grower best practice:

- It enables farmers to make decisions before the Christmas holiday period so they are armed with the right soil information to make sure the fertilizer intended for use is in the right balance and quantities.
- Knowing correct fertilizer inputs will enable more accurate budgeting, and,
- Soil amelioration techniques such as lime or gypsum application require planning, ordering and often contracting, so best to make sure these jobs are budgeted for and assigned sooner rather than later.

For Summit, the process incorporates the best possible sampling procedure and soil analysis through an independent Australian accredited laboratory. Fully trained Area Managers are also on hand to interpret the results and provide impartial recommendations.

Your soil test reports available anytime & anywhere with SummitConnect.



With our new and improved SummitConnect online customer portal, Summit clients are now able to view and download their entire soil and plant test history, including recommendation reports.

Another exciting feature that has been added are trend maps, which allows farmers to visualize how soil nutrients are tracking over time, across different depths and in different paddocks. Ultimately it's about providing the farmer with the most accurate data, in the most accessible way, enabling them to make better decisions with regard to their fertilizer inputs for next season and beyond.

A SummitConnect trend map showing pH results at 10-20cm depth across all years.

For more information on soil testing and SummitConnect, growers can contact:

Nick Donkin – Area Manager: Esperance East, 0428 715 045, ndonkin@summitfertz.com.au

Tim Donkin – Area Manager: Esperance West, 0408 092 355, tdonkin@summitfertz.com.au

ASHEEP P Efficient Pastures Project Update

Inaya Stone, South East Agronomy Research

What is P Efficient Pastures?

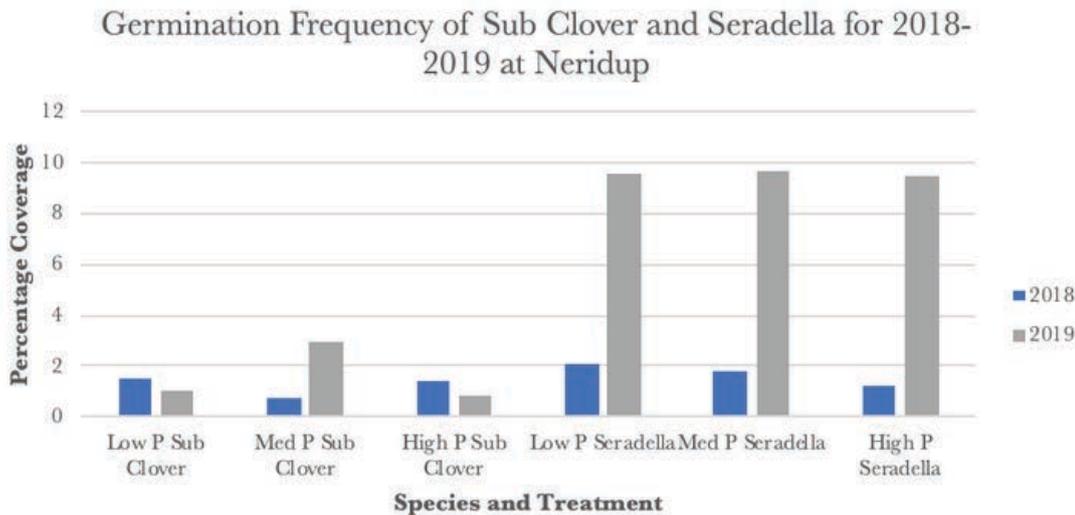
The P Efficient Pastures project is in its last year this year and has brought some interesting results despite the unfavourable year. This project aims to reduce the Phosphorus (P)-dependence of Australian temperate pastures by expanding the use of high yielding pasture legumes that have lower fertiliser-P requirements. ASHEEP has two trial sites, one located in Grass Patch and one at Neridup. The sites were chosen for their sandy, low nutrient soil profiles. The sites were sown to serradella in 2017 and treated with low, medium and high rates of P fertilizer to determine the effect of these treatments on serradella and subterranean clover production.



Figure 1: Grass Patch site.

Whilst 2019 had a very dry start to the season with no summer rain to speak of, there was still a measurable germination at the Neridup site. With the nature of the sandy soils on which the trials were sown, germination rates in both years were relatively low but consistent. Graph 1 demonstrates the yield comparison between the 2018 and 2019 seasons as a percentage of 5 x 5 cm squares occupied in a 50 x 50cm quadrant. The counts clearly show that whilst overall numbers (percentages) were low, it's clear that the serradella numbers were significantly higher this year compared to last year, with the percentage of cover only varying slightly between P treatments. The lack of significant frequency gain as P increases is promising for reducing the need for P in serradella, but we must bear in mind we have had 2 very dry starts in a row.

Sub clover germination frequency across the two years has been quite poor compared to the serradella, but despite this, Sub Clover showed no significant gains as P increases, which at this early stage also demonstrated a lack of dependence on Phosphorous.



Graph 1: Comparison of Sub Clover and Serradella Germination between 2018 and 2019.



Continued from Page 20.

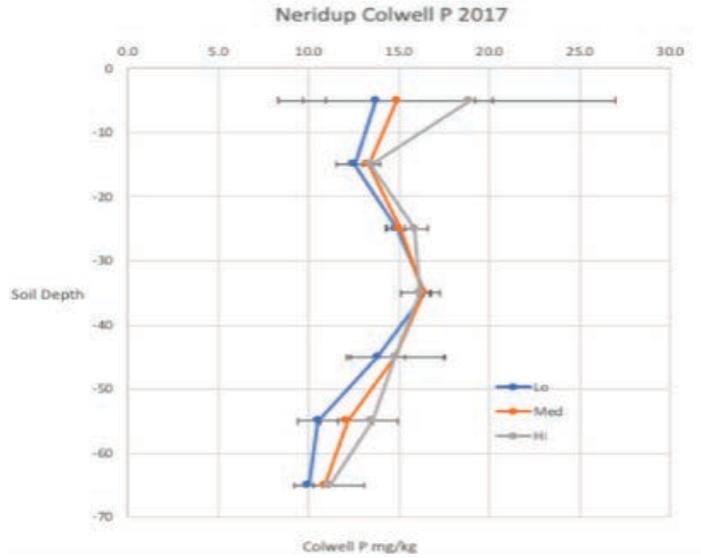
Due to the lack of summer and opening rains, germination at the Grass Patch site was very poor, with some plots having nothing but the occasional cape weed plant. Considering this, it was decided to not conduct the plant analysis measurements, but instead conduct soil sampling to gain an understanding of P levels down the profile. Cores were taken down to 90cm and separated into 10cm increments in early October.

Results from soil samples taken in spring 2019 are not yet available, however results from the previous two years testing may help explain these results.

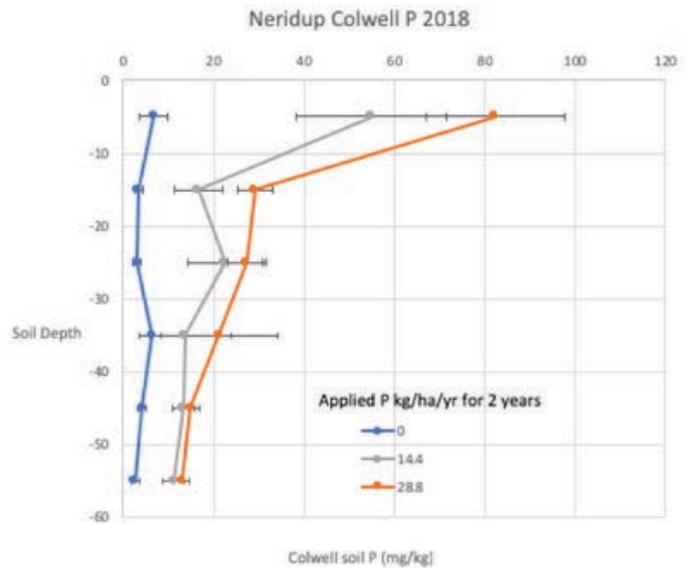
The two soil core graphs taken at the Neridup site help understand the P levels throughout the soil horizon. Both graphs demonstrate that P levels drop quickly below 15cm. P levels tend to decline through the sandy profile until a depth of 35cm where there is clay and the levels spike slightly. Soil at depths greater than 35cm are lower in P and continue to decline at depth. It was interesting to see that the P levels in the A horizon were measured to be far higher in 2018 compared to 2017. One reason why both the Sub Clover and Serradella aren't performing significantly better following the application of higher P rates is potentially due to the fact that the critical P (Colwell) levels for s Sub clover is 25-30 but lower in serradella due to Serradellas ability to forage deeper in the soil profile and access greater amounts of P. This ability for Serradella to forage to greater depths is potentially why it is performing better than the sub clover, especially in the low P plots.

The Grass Patch sites appears to have a shorter/ poorer fertiliser (P) history, with low Colwell P in the top 15cm. As a direct result of the lower P history and low buffering (sandy soils) soil analysis shows what P that is in the profile has leached down to 35cm, where there appears to a slight increase below that level where there may be a slightly higher clay content at depth . Overall, P levels are classified as very low inadequate in this soil.

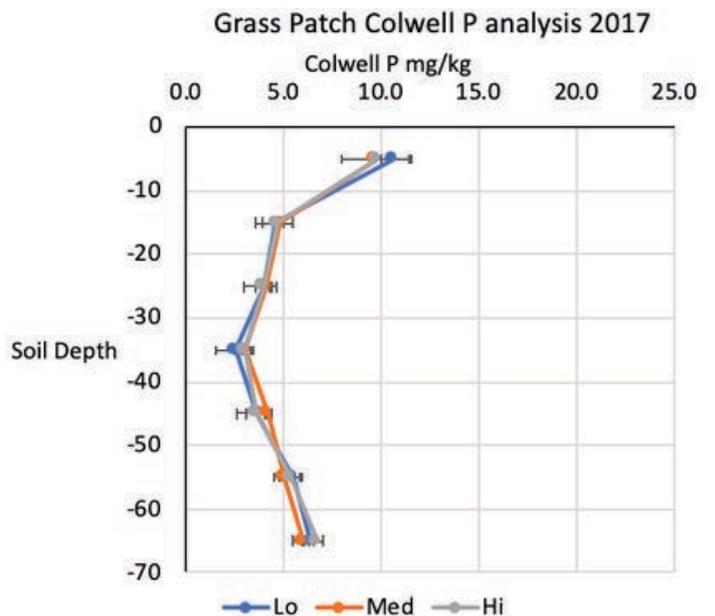
As a result of the combination of low rainfall autumns, dry, sandy (potentially non - wetting) soils, the pasture species struggled to germinate at the Grass Patch site. The fact that there is also a very low P bank would have also prohibited the germination and growth of legume-based pastures.



Graph 2: Neridup Deep Core results 2018



Graph 3: Neridup deep core results 2018



Graph 4: Grass Patch deep core 2017

Help prevent African swine fever entering and establishing in Western Australia

*Dr Anna Erickson, Veterinary Officer
State Ovine Johne's Disease Activity Leader, DPIRD*

Every pig owner, pig hunter and landowner with feral pigs has a vital role to play in reducing the risk of the serious pig disease, African swine fever, occurring in Australia. With the spread of African swine fever throughout Europe, China, South-East Asia and most recently in Timor Leste, the disease poses a major threat to Australia's pigs.

The disease is an infectious virus that usually causes high death rates in pigs and there is no vaccination available. It does not affect people.

The most likely way that African swine fever and other devastating exotic diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease could be introduced to Australia is through illegally imported meat products being fed to pigs. For this reason, it is illegal across Australia to feed pigs meat, products that contain meat or that have had contact with meat or non-Australian dairy (known as prohibited pig feed or swill feeding).

African swine fever can be spread by direct contact with infected pigs (including feral pigs), contaminated vehicles, equipment or clothing and by feeding swill to pigs. If African swine fever became established in feral pig populations, it would be extremely difficult to eradicate.



For more information and further biosecurity measures, visit the Farm Biosecurity website at farmbiosecurity.com.au or search 'African swine fever resources' on the department website at agric.wa.gov.au.

If you own pigs, you should immediately review and reinforce your biosecurity measures to prevent African swine fever.

In particular:

- Review your pig feed practices to ensure your pigs cannot access swill. Also securely fence farm dumps to exclude feral pigs from accessing food waste.
- Ensure feral pigs cannot access domestic pigs or pig facilities through appropriate segregation and fencing.
- Ensure that farm visitors and staff do not have contact with your pigs if they have been overseas in the previous seven days.
- Know the signs of African swine fever: sudden death, blotching of the skin, especially the ears, loss of appetite, huddling or hiding in corners, diarrhoea which may be bloody.
- Call your vet or the emergency animal disease hotline immediately on 1800 675 888 if you suspect the disease.
- If you suspect swill is being fed to pigs, call your local Department biosecurity officer or vet or the Emergency Animal Disease hotline on 1800 675 888.

Continued from Page 22.

Traceability

If you own pigs, even just one as a pet, you are legally required to register with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development as a livestock owner. In the case of an emergency disease outbreak such as African swine fever, we will need to be able to map the location and movements of all domestic pigs quickly. For more information about registering, contact DPIRD on 1300 WA NLIS (1300 926 547) or see agric.wa.gov.au//livestock-ownership.

Feral pigs

All landowners have a responsibility under the Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 to manage declared pests such as feral pigs on their land. Control methods such as baiting with 1080 and trapping are preferred. These techniques concentrate feral pigs and provide the best opportunities to significantly reduce feral pig abundance in your area. Hunting and the use of dogs to catch feral pigs should be avoided, as this can cause pigs to disperse or move to other areas, increasing the risk of spreading African swine fever. For more information about the best options for management on your property, contact your local DPIRD biosecurity officer or see agric.wa.gov.au/pest-mammals/feral-pigs or visit the PestSmart website pestsmart.org.au/pest-animal-species/feral-pig.

Hunters

Hunters can help in the fight against African swine fever with good hunting practices, including.

- reporting dead pigs or unusual disease signs in feral pigs to 1800 675 888.
- cleaning and disinfecting equipment and bagging all carcasses before leaving the hunting site.
- removing carcasses so that they cannot be accessed by other feral pigs and taking all food home.
- not moving live feral pigs to another location – this is illegal and can spread disease.

If you hunt feral pigs, you should not have contact with domestic pigs.

International travellers

If you have visitors or farm workers from overseas, remind them not to bring meat or animal products into Australia and to declare if they have been visiting farms or hiking. To report international mail containing meat or animal products, contact the federal hotline on 1800 798 636.

Campers/grey nomads

Campers should always take their waste with them and dispose of it so it cannot be accessed by animals such as feral pigs.



WA Shearing Industry Association Report

The WA Shearing Industry Association has had a very busy 6 months, holding a number of member events and advocating on behalf of our members over a number of issues.

Following on from the shearing school run at Condingup in July which was organized by Basil Parker and run in conjunction with AWI there will be further schools run at Northampton. This is a great initiative and hopefully a way to get indigenous and non indigenous youth involved in the shearing industry once again. As an Association we would like to congratulate Basil and those that worked with him to get the school up and running in July. WASIA President, Darren Spencer was able to go to Condingup and see the trainees and speak to them about the shearing industry. Currently WASIA is working with AWI and DPIRD to get more training schools across WA... stay tuned for more details.

Shearing Shed Safety is still a high priority for the industry. Improving shed working conditions is a key factor in attracting much needed workers. Our industry needs to be competitive, particularly with the mining industry in providing safe working conditions for staff. We also need to reduce injuries and worker's compensation claims. Many contractors are facing very high premiums over and above the gazettal rate due to claims. In some instances contractors have walked away from their business which is no longer sustainable or they have to have serious conversations with their farmers to pass on additional costs. WASIA has received funding from AWI and CGU Insurance to develop a Shearing Shed Safety Assessment program and we will provide all the details when completed.

Darren travelled to Dubbo for the opening of the "Arrow Park" shearing shed which was designed and built by Hilton Barrett in conjunction with AWI. This proved very interesting with some innovative design features and concepts. There has been a lot of work put into this shed and should anyone want to build a shed using these features it has been designed so each stand is a module and can easily be adapted to any shearing shed. Contact WASIA if you would like further information.



"Arrow Park" shearing shed, designed & built by Hilton Barrett in conjunction with AWI.

Whilst on the subject of Darren, WASIA was delighted that he has been awarded a 2019 Australian Wool Industry Medal for Shearing and Industry Services. The Australian Wool Industry Medal seeks to recognize men and women who have made an exceptional and sustained contribution to the Australian wool industry. We think that Darren's passion for, and selfless ongoing voluntary work to increase the profile and best practice of this wonderful industry makes him a very worthy recipient of the Australian Wool Industry Medal. WASIA's next member meeting is being held in Perth on Saturday January 18 from 9.30am to 3pm. You are all welcome to attend - please contact our office to let us know if you are coming along and we will provide full details.



**WA SHEARING INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION (INC)**

**ASHEEP are a group
member of WASIA.
Full details of services available
at www.wasia.com.au
or contact WASIA office:
0412 227 252
admin@wasia.com.au**

DPIRD biosecurity blitz

DPIRD's annual Biosecurity Blitz runs from 19 October to 16 November encouraging communities across Australia to get outdoors to look for insects, weeds and signs of disease, which could impact WA's valuable agriculture and fisheries industries. The aim is to discover, photograph and record as many interesting or damaging pests as possible while raising community awareness about the importance of biosecurity.

All you have to do to contribute to the Biosecurity Blitz 2019 is download one of the pest reporting apps and get out there and make pest reports. For more information contact Laura Fagan on 08 9368 3212 or email Laura.Fagan@agric.wa.gov.au.

- 1 Download a free app from your preferred app store.
- 2 Look for pests around your local area.
- 3 Send us your reports from your mobile device or create a report online.



MyPestGuide for everyone to easily report pests. Experts will identify the pest and reply back to your device.



PestFax for people in the field who are confident at identifying pests.



WA PestWatch for everyone to report new aquatic pests and monitor the spread of those already in WA.



Opportunity to get involved in on-farm research

As part of the Dryland Legume Pasture System (DLPS) project Murdoch University and ASHEEP are seeking to recruit for investigation of the benefits of legume pastures in sheep production systems.

Reproductive rates: three visits per farm to weigh and condition score 400 ewes, 200 ewes on legume pasture and 200 ewes on an alternative (can be anything). Visit 1: Weigh, condition score and allocate ewes to pastures at ~3-4 weeks prior to joining. Visit 2: Weigh and condition score at joining. Visit 3: Weigh and condition score at pregnancy scanning.

Lamb survival: This can be flexible but with a minimum of two visit per farm and will aim to use 400 twin-bearing ewes, 200 ewes on legume pasture and 200 ewes on an alternative (can be anything). Visit 1: At or after pregnancy scanning, weigh, condition score and allocate to pasture. Visit 2: At marking, weigh, condition score and counts of lambs.

All timepoints can be flexible and fitted in with normal practices on farm and all information on animal performance will be made available to producers. Pasture samples will be collected and quality results also available to farmers.



To get involved or for questions about getting involved please contact Colin Byrne on 0433 678 172.

New 'fit to load' guide released

MLA Media Release

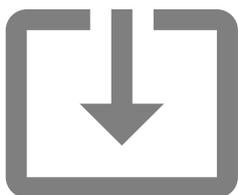
An updated guide to help producers, agents, buyers and transporters decide if an animal is fit to be loaded for transport by road or rail has been released by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA).

The 2019 edition of the national guide, "Is the animal fit to load?", includes new content to ensure best practice animal welfare when preparing, loading and delivering cattle, sheep and goats.

MLA General Manager – Producer Consultation and Adoption, Michael Crowley, said with the industry continuing to deal with ongoing dry conditions across many livestock production regions, the release of the revised guide was timely. "The Australian red meat industry is absolutely committed to animal welfare practices and ensuring livestock are cared for," Mr Crowley said.

"The guide has been developed to help livestock operators meet the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock, and decide whether an animal is fit to be loaded for transport and for the entire journey by road or rail, to any destination within Australia. "It contains new information about loading densities for livestock, managing effluent, and the chain of responsibility for all involved.

"The roles and responsibilities of consignors and transporters are clearly defined in the guide, along with checklists to help assess whether an animal is fit to load. "Knowing who the 'person in charge' of animals is at different stages of the journey and the scope of those responsibilities is important for many reasons. "If the 'person in charge' prepares to transport or transports an animal that is unfit, that person commits an act of cruelty upon that animal and may be liable to prosecution under state or territory legislation. As such, it is also unacceptable for any party to coerce or intimidate the 'person in charge' into loading an animal that is not fit for the journey.



To download the guide or to order a hard copy, visit: mla.com.au/isitfittoload

WA Livestock Research Council

WA's direct link to MLA - the WA Livestock Research Council (WALRC) - was in town recently to support ASHEEP's spring field day. Chair Dr Tim Watts hosted the tour bus and used the opportunity to extract feedback from participating members about production issues on-farm that deserve the attention of the funders.

The Western Australian Livestock Research Council (WALRC) is a structure that was initiated by Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) to improve consultation with levy payers and industry stakeholders for the WA agricultural region and southern rangelands.

The primary task of the producer members of the Council is to review R&D project proposals that come in under the R&D project call and identify those proposals that best respond to the needs of southern region WA red meat producers.

MLA will be mounting its next Producer Demonstration Site project call in April and WALRC believes ASHEEP is well placed to lodge several highly competitive project proposals based on the concept discussions held during the field day.

WALRC Newsletter



Subscribe to the WA Livestock Research Council newsletter.



www.walrc.com.au
admin@walrc.com.au
0418 931 938

February

Next ASHEEP Committee Meeting is scheduled for February 2020.

Contact a committee or staff member by Jan 31 to raise an item.

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