

## WOOL COMMITTEE

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## NSW Farmers Association Wool Forum

The NSW Farmers' Association Wool Committee will hold their annual Wool Forum on 25 May 2009 in Queanbeyan, NSW from 10am-4pm. The Committee has organised a number of guest speakers to present on a number of issues including:

Speaker	Organisation	Topic
<b>Brenda McGahan</b>	Australian Wool Innovation	<i>AWI Operational Priorities.</i>
<b>David Tester</b>	Sheep CRC	<i>Softness Measurement in Apparel Wool</i>
<b>Bill O'Halloran</b>	Department of Primary Industries	<i>Market Access. Through Chain Livestock ID.</i>
<b>Mick Keogh</b>	Australian Farm Institute	<i>Impact of the proposed ETS on our livestock producers</i>
<b>Geoff Lindon</b>	Australian Wool Innovation	<i>Availability of Genetics for Plain-Bodied Sheep.</i>

If you would like to attend the Conference please [click here](#) to register online or complete the attached registration form. The Forum will be free-of-charge to all Members thanks to sponsorship from Australian Wool Exchange, Elanco Animal Health and Coopers.

## 2009 Wool Poll

WoolPoll will take place this year. The Chairman of the 2009 WoolPoll Panel, Will Roberts announced the composition of the 2009 independent WoolPoll Panel. The Panel includes seven industry representatives as well as the Chairman and a representative of Australian Wool Innovation ('AWI') and the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries. The panel members are Will Roberts (QLD), Don Hamblin (NSW), Max Watts (WA), Helen Cathles (NSW), Brent Finlay (QLD), Tom Ashby (SA), Chris Komor (NSW), Jock MacRae (VIC). The Panel's role is to act as an independent scrutineer of the WoolPoll process and to make recommendations to AWI about the levy rates to be polled and the voter information memorandum and the ballot paper. Voter information kits will be mailed to wool producers by the 25 September and the Poll return day will be 6 November. Results of the WoolPoll will be announced at the AGM, held in Sydney on 20 November 2009.

## Wool Selling Review 2009

The Australian Council of Wool Exporters & Processors, Inland Wool Brokers

Association, the National Council of Wool Selling Brokers of Australia and Private Treaty Wool Merchants of Australia have initiated a survey of buyers, brokers and private treaty merchants with the aim of establishing their requirements in the short and medium term, and to conduct a cost/benefit analysis for a number of selling options. The survey is being conducted by the Australian Farm Institute ('AFI') on behalf of the above organisations. The Association responded to an invitation to comment and wrote to AFI stating our policy. The Association has asked Mick Keogh, AFI to provide producers with an update on where the review is up to at the upcoming Wool Forum.

### **Shearing Industry hours and rates**

The NSW Farmers' Association has raised concerns over the mis-information provided to farmers and shearers by the Australian Workers Union (AWU) regarding hours of work and rates of pay in the shearing industry. The hours of work and pay in the shearing industry will continue as normal for all unincorporated woolgrowers, including sole traders and partnerships, who directly employ their shearers. There will be no change for these woolgrowers until the wage rates are increased by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission in October 2009. The changes referred to by the AWU relate to incorporated woolgrowers. From 27 March 2009, incorporated woolgrowers directly engaging their shearing team cannot force the team to work a 40 hour week. For further information regarding the shearing industry hours and rates, please contact one of the Industrial Relations Officers at the Association on 1300 794 000.

### **Exotic Disease Update**

#### *Beale Report*

Following the release of the Beale Report, the Association has been working hard on recommendation #59, which stated:

*The import of positive control samples (including the foot and mouth disease virus) for the use in laboratory diagnostic research and capacity building for exotic disease pathogens is vital and should be permitted under strict import permit conditions to laboratories such as the Australian Animal Health Laboratory.*

The Association wrote to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry stating our concerns regarding the Government's apparent approval of recommendation 59 and seeking an urgent meeting with the Minister. The Chair of the Exotic Disease, Quarantine, Plant and Animal Health Committee – Peter Carter and the Association's Senior Vice President – Richard Clark along with Senator Bill Heffernan met with the Federal Minister for Agriculture Hon Tony Burke regarding the proposed importation of live FMD virus and the sale of the Cocos Islands Quarantine Station. The Association was seeking an assurance from the Government that it would not sell the Cocos Islands Quarantine Station. The Minister reiterated his commitment that there would not be any live FMD importation before an outbreak and that the Attorney Generals Department was now responsible for the quarantine station. After the meeting occurred, the Minister issued a media release stating that the Government would only consider importing the live FMD virus if an outbreak had already occurred.

#### *Closure of Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratories*

Following a motion from the March Executive Council meeting, representatives from the Association along with the Australian Veterinarians Association – NSW Division, District Veterinarians Association and the Australian Society of Veterinary Pathologists met with the Minister for Primary Industries, Hon Ian Macdonald on Wednesday 15 April 2009. The Association expressed concerns about the closure of the diagnostic facilities at Orange and Wollongbar and the transfer of services to Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute ('EMAI') at Camden. The Association's major concern is that the transfer may lead to an inferior service provided to producers. The Association is seeking that the service provided by EMAI match the current services or be improved.

### **Animal Welfare Update**

The Animal Welfare Committee would like to remind producers that during the winter months stock need extra feed to maintain their body weights. There have been some reported instances of malnourished stock and the RSPCA being called to investigate.