

AROUND THE STATE

Good markets call for innovation

By Alicia Harrison - North West

The new CEO of Australian Wool Innovation made one of his first appearances since his appointment to the role at the NSW Farmers' Association annual wool forum earlier this month.

Over 60 growers attended to hear from industry leaders answering questions about genetic solutions to flystrike and lice eradication, a significant topic given that an estimated 80 per cent of the NSW flock is currently affected.

The common parasite reduces the quality of wool and costs the national sheep industry in excess of \$123 million per year.

AWI CEO Stuart McCullough outlined the significant marketing push the company will be making over the next four years and demonstrated new consumer tools developed for the iPhone and iPad platforms.

The theme for the event was 'progression through innovation; ideas for a dynamic wool industry'. Positive international and domestic wool markets are enabling wool growers to really look at investing in innovation.

The Forum provides focused on potential innovation and prospects for



NSW Farmers' Association regional membership coordinator Stuart Murdoch, with wool growers Lou Armstrong (Dunedoo), John Manwaring (Cootamundra) and David Clarke (Rylstone).

improvement including softness measurement in apparel wool, market access, sheep health and the availability of genetics for plain bodied sheep.

The agenda featured special guests and key speakers including Jessica Richards and Gemma Junk from Investment & Industry NSW, Jim Murray of NSW TAFE, Ian Evans from AWI and

Jane Walton from the Walton Group.

Meanwhile the Association, through chairman of the Wool Committee John Manwaring (pictured second from the right) took the opportunity to give Members an outline of the Wool Committee's policy objectives and open discussion was held on a number of issues.

Hartley Branch takes lead on dogs

By Graham Blatch - Central

With wild dog attacks on livestock costing the farming sector some \$50million annually, one branch of the NSW Farmers' Association is turning their frustration into action.

Oberon District Council Chair John Lowe and the local Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA) instigated a series of public meetings, after the local wild dog population continued to swell over a decade, with the aim of achieving a unified approach to controlling the pest.

Local landholders were interested in participating in a concentrated baiting process so, 18 months ago, they all undertook a chemical training accreditation sponsored by the NSW Farmers' Association. The course saw a number of new Members join the Association and become intrinsically involved in the eradication plans.

But it wasn't until media reports of wild dogs attacks in an urbanised part of the Blue Mountains earlier this year that the Oberon District Council and Hartley Branch of the Association had a catalyst to start an all-encompassing local eradication program.

"We gained the services of two trappers on two different occasions. First provided by the LHPA and second by National Parks DECC and Forests NSW," John said.

"We went from a stage where people didn't talk about the problem to a series of really progressive meetings with local farmers, the Livestock Health and Pest Authority (LHPA), State Forests and National Parks," John said.

"Support that we have had from our Local LHPA ranger over the last 12 months has been excellent. Good lines of communication have dramatically improved Josh's (the local LHPA ranger) ability to help us with our problems."

The next step is to improve the effectiveness of eradication at a grassroots level with an LHPA training course in 1080 baiting for small landholders in the area.

Inspiring young irrigators

By Ben Poynter - South West

Beetroot, pumpkins, melons, wheat and cotton were the stars of irrigator success stories when Hillston farmers hosted young irrigators from around the State.

As part of the Young Irrigation Network, members of the NSW Farmers' Association participated in the tour organised by Industry and Investment NSW.

Young farmers Andrew Desprez (Yenda), Mathew Cavaso (Darlington Point), Lorenzo & Anna Pellizzer (Griffith Viticulturists), Graham Menzies (Hanwood) and Janette Naismith (Goolgowi) reported that the tour was inspiring and worthwhile.

The Association and our business partner NAB joined the tour with the aim of supporting industry growth and spreading grassroots good news stories from irrigators.

The tour included a look at olive harvesting, crushing and processing as well as cotton picking, beetroot and melon operations.

Visit to Montoro Olive Oil processing plant and Watsons Farm illustrated successful operators who have identified their target markets and overcome challenges.

By allowing young irrigators to peer over the fence at different operations, the tour showed participants what forward-thinking operators are implementing to stay viable even when water and finances might be limited and seasons unpredictable.

The tour was followed with a future diversifications workshop to get participants thinking outside the proverbial square.

The tour was supported by the Drought Support Worker programme funded by I & I NSW. The Association has been lobbying for a long time to have the DSW program continued beyond the current ongoing drought in the south west.

Kleenheat warms up local member



Riverina Kleenheat Business Manager John Scanu presenting Coleambally Member John Mannes with his prize.

NSW Farmers' Association Member John Mannes was delighted to win the Kleenheat prize at the recent Riverina Field Day.

John Mannes was presented with his prize by Riverina Kleenheat Riverina Business Manager John Scanu.

Coleambally farmer John Mannes picked up a terrific gas patio heater after filling out a survey that outlined his gas usage on farm.

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