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RED MEAT UPDATES

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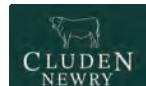
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RED MEAT UPDATES

TASMANIA

PROGRAM 8.45am – 5.30pm | Friday 26 July 2024 | The Tramsheds, Launceston

'Staying ahead of the curve: adapting to change and building momentum'

8.00am Registration desk opens, tea & coffee available

8.45am Proceedings commence

Session 1: Welcome

Welcome – Sarah Cole, Red Meat Updates Working Group Chair

Session 2: MLA Update

Chair: Sarah Cole, RMU Working Group

MLA update – Andrew Cox, Meat & Livestock Australia

Session 3: Industry Champions

Chair: Tom Youl, RMU Working Group

Nutrien Ag Solutions Industry Innovator: Having a voice in industry: why bother? – Felicity Richards, Furneaux Agriculture

Incitec Pivot Gate to Plate: Producing Lyndall Lamb – George Shea, Lyndall Lamb

Tasmanian Angus Breeders Group & Angus Australia Emerging Leader: Emergence to maturity: growing a farm business

– Robert Arvier, West Pine

10:35am – 11.05am Morning Tea

Session 4: Pasture Updates 1

Chair: Rob Winter, Barenbrug

Accelerating performance through pastures – Basil Doonan, Pinion Advisory

Session 5: Pasture Updates 2

Chair: Heather Cosgriff, DLF Seeds

Knowing your stuff – soil fertility and fertiliser 101 – Jason Lynch, Pinion Advisory

Session 6: Primary Session 1

Chair: Stuart Whatling, Rabobank

Margin mastery – thriving under cost pressure – John Francis, Agrista

1.15pm – 2.00pm Lunch

Session 7: Sheep Updates

Chair: Sandra Knowles, TAS Farm Innovation Hub

Prioritising animal health

Dr Paul Nilon, James Cook University

Why eID in the Australian sheep industry?

Bonnie Skinner, Sheep Producers Australia & Beth Green, Magnify Agriculture Global

Beef Updates

Chair: David Findlay, Zoetis

Utilising carcase information from the myFeedback platform

Will Atkinson, Meat & Livestock Australia

Weaning for production in beef systems

Dr Shane Thomson, Holbrook Vet Centre

Session 8: Primary Session 2

Chair: Elizabeth Pietrzykowski, Private Forests Tasmania

A case study of business diversification – Andrew Archer, Chester Partnership

Session 9: Virtual Farm Tour

Chair: Tony Butler, Pasture Trials Network

Pasture Trials Network Virtual Farm Tour – Will and Ed Bowden, RV Bowden & Son – Cluny, Bothwell

Session 10: Conclusion

Chair: Sarah Cole, RMU Working Group

Wrap-up, red meat raffle, networking drinks

4.30pm Networking drinks

5:30pm Event concludes



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Thomas Green

The Glen, Cressy

Tom Youl

Quoin Trust, Flinders Island

Justin Cooper

Gallagher Animal Management

Andrew Morelli

Meat & Livestock Australia

Emily Hall

Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture

Conference coordinator: Pinion Advisory

WELCOME



Sarah Cole, Chair – Red Meat Updates Working Group
Woodbourn, Cressy TAS

Sarah Cole is a producer from Cressy in the Northern Midlands of Tasmania where she owns and manages an intensive mixed farming operation with her husband and business partner, Lauchie.

After completing tertiary studies in agribusiness, graduating from Marcus Oldham College, she worked in a range of corporate agribusiness roles in marketing and finance nationally before returning to Tasmania in 2007. Sarah is always seeking opportunities to grow and improve their business, industry and community with a commitment to sustainability both economically and environmentally. She is passionate about agriculture and its future for Tasmania and Australia.

Along with her position as Chair of Red Meat Updates Working Group, Sarah has also been a Director of Toosey Aged Care and Tasmanian finalist and winner of the Encouragement Award at the AgriFutures Rural Women's Award in 2019. Sarah has also been involved in community roles in local council and sporting clubs.

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MLA UPDATE & ADDRESS



**Andrew Cox, General Manager
– International Markets**
Meat & Livestock Australia, Singapore

Andrew is the General Manager – International Markets for Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), based in Singapore. He manages a team of approximately 50 staff in 17 locations throughout Asia, the Middle East, Europe and North America. In partnership with industry, his responsibilities include offshore promotion of Australian beef, lamb and goat meat, customer relations/business development and activities to improve market access.

Prior to moving to Singapore, Andrew lived in Tokyo for six years, where he managed MLA's programs in Japan and Korea. He joined MLA from the market research agency Kantar Millward Brown, where he managed consumer and customer insights projects for large clients such as Unilever, Kellogg's and Ferrero.

Andrew's family have run a mixed grazing, cropping and vineyard/cellar door operation in Mudgee, NSW since 1822.

Abstract

As the world increasingly turns its attention to high-quality protein sources, Australian beef, lamb and goatmeat finds itself in high demand globally. But in order to thrive in future, we must be awake to what drives consumer and customer demand.

Andrew's presentation will highlight key initiatives and successes from across MLA's program, showcasing how MLA's efforts are supporting producers and driving the growth of the Australian meat and livestock sector.

Then, drawing on his career in consumer insights and over a decade spent living in Asia, Andrew will examine the major global trends impacting the demand for Australian beef and lamb.

Andrew will explore factors such as the growing global population, increasing disposable incomes in emerging economies, globalisation of food, changing ethical considerations, media and e-commerce impacts, and the heightened awareness of the health benefits associated with red meat.

The presentation will cover how industry can adapt to meet the evolving demands of consumers to build and maintain a competitive edge for Australian red meat in global markets.

Further information:

- **MLA market trends and analysis**
 - MLA's market information analysts examine and interpret developments in, and prospects for, the Australian domestic market, key export markets and major competitors, producing a wide range of publications: <https://www.mla.com.au/prices-markets/Trends-analysis/>
- **MLA Global Market Snapshots**
 - MLA Market Information produces export summaries and market snapshots of our major red meat destinations: <https://www.mla.com.au/prices-markets/overseas-markets/>

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INDUSTRY CHAMPIONS



Chair: Tom Youl, Red Meat Updates Working Group
Farm Owner/Manager, Quoin Trust, Killiecrankie TAS

Tom and his wife Jo run Quoin and Tilba Farms, encompassing 1100 hectares of grazing area. Located on Flinders Island they run 1100 Angus breeding cows and followers, supplying to store and finished markets.

Since taking on the farming role nine years ago, Tom has focused on pasture developments to increase desirable pasture species, production and fertility. Exclusion fencing of native fauna has been key to this process.

E: tom@quoin.com.au

Notes

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INDUSTRY INNOVATOR



Having a voice in industry: why bother?

Felicity Richards, Director

Furneaux Agriculture, Tamar Valley TAS

After completing a law degree at the Australian National University, Felicity pursued a career in policy development and regulatory frameworks for ten years. Returning to the family farm in Tasmania in 2013, some rogue cattle led to a romance across the boundary fence. She and her husband Mark now manage a beef enterprise across Tasmanian properties at Flinders Island, Wynyard and the Tamar Valley.

In the family business, the demands of three small children and a (tragic) love of good governance and administration means Felicity's portfolio includes human resources,

accounting, workplace health and safety, biosecurity, compliance and risk. She jumps at the opportunity to get on her horse and out in the paddock around livestock whenever time permits.

Felicity juggles her family and farm responsibilities with work on various boards. Since returning to Tasmania, she has worked with Epilepsy Tasmania, Harvest Launceston Community Farmers' Market, Primary Employers Tasmania and the Tasmanian Red Meat Industry Steering Committee. She is currently chair of the Tasmanian Biosecurity Advisory Committee, Farmsafe Australia and the Tasmanian Livestock Processing Taskforce. She has completed the Tasmanian Leaders I-Lead program and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Foundations of Directorship.

Abstract

Felicity Richards is a Flinders Islander by birth, a policy expert by training, and a beef farmer by marriage. She asks why we should bother responding to the endless calls for feedback on government policy and regulation, when we've all got better things to do, surely?

Felicity points to the experience of French farmers in early 2024 – frantically campaigning against burdensome regulation – and suggests that we all need to consider what happens when industry fails to speak to government, and to the public.

In Felicity's presentation, she will talk through the pros, and some of the cons, of having a voice in industry.

Notes



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Notes

GATE TO PLATE



Producing Lyndall Lamb

George Shea, Owner/Manager
Lyndall Lamb, Hamilton TAS

George and his family produce high quality grass-fed lamb for numerous high-end restaurants and retail outlets in the greater Hobart area.

George grew up in Tasmania with his family owning farms in the southern midlands and northwest Tasmania. After finishing school, he worked in the channel country of southwest Queensland for five years, before returning to Tasmania to the northwest coast. George then moved to King Island where he had a farm and was a livestock manager at the KI abattoir. From there he went to a large irrigation property in the Riverina. He then went back to Queensland to work for AMH (now JBS) and Elders International, before returning to Tasmania in 2010 to purchase Lyndall.

George was also on the Red Meat Updates working group for six years and is currently the chair of the Tas Farmers Meat Council.

Abstract

George Shea is the owner/manager of 'Lyndall', situated in Tasmania's Derwent Valley. Lyndall is predominately a sheep production property and produces prime lambs from a self-replacing Composite ewe flock with approximately 18,000 lambs finished each year. All lambs are finished on-farm at Lyndall, on irrigated pastures sown for their high production and quality. 'Lyndall Lamb' is processed locally with product being supplied directly to butchers, stores and restaurants across the greater Hobart region.

George is passionate about the 'paddock to plate' experience and the involvement he retains across all facets of the supply chain through the Lyndall Lamb business model. George will share the story of how Lyndall Lamb began and why it works, including the challenges faced, the opportunities arising, and achievements celebrated.



Notes



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- LivEXCHANGE Scholarships · Beef Australia Scholarships

In addition, the Tasmanian Angus Group offer:

- The John Wear Travel Bursary to attend the Angus Youth Roundup

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Notes

EMERGING LEADER



Emergence to maturity: growing a farm business

Robert Arvier, Managing Director
West Pine, Penguin TAS

Robert is the Managing Director of West Pine, a farm and project management business based in Penguin, on the north-west coast of Tasmania. Robert cofounded West Pine in 2018, with the aim of creating a replicable, employee-owned farming business model that had triple-bottom line impact – good for people, planet, and production.

Having grown up regionally, Robert had farming aspirations from a young age and was keen to pursue a career in the industry despite an initial failed attempt as a dairy hand. He completed a Bachelor of Agricultural

Science with the University of Tasmania, initially working as a production agronomist, before taking a role with an international agribusiness based in Victoria. This role enabled him to study a Masters of Agribusiness with the University of Melbourne, undertake a Nuffield Scholarship, and provided profound insights into the global agri-food system. These experiences have culminated in a “think global, act local” approach that Robert has carried forward to West Pine.

Abstract

West Pine began in 2018 with the negotiation of a 15-year farm lease. A “foot in the door”, this was a catalyst for additional leasehold, as well as owner-backed investment into water security, which has enabled operational scale and efficiency. The business growth has been underpinned by strong collaboration with local businesses, as well as a relentless persistence and willingness to diversify – particularly during the pandemic.

Today, West Pine currently manages \$33 million in assets including 200 ha of land and 300 ML of water, growing root crop vegetables, cereals, beef and lamb. This created a pathway for the purchase of 70 ha of irrigated cropping land last year. During this time, Robert, cofounder Hannah Lewis and farm manager David King, have also been growing breeding stock numbers under a share farming arrangement.

Despite this, the sustainability of the farm management business remains reliant on off-farm revenue derived from agri-food project management. Robert and the West Pine team have gained cross-sector experience from leveraging networks and delving into a range

of projects including a straw bio-energy trial, building Australia’s first molasses extract processing facility, and the creation of a retail and hospitality business in the local town (The Penguin Pantry).

Over the past six years, Robert and the team have encountered plenty of tripping hazards – tripping on most of them – however he firmly believes these experiences and learnings underpin the strength of the business, building it into what it is today, and providing the platform for what is to come.

Although West Pine has had to pivot, the business’ vision remains profoundly focused on a sustainable future, through partnerships with best-practice leaders, welcoming innovation, and supporting great people through meaningful employee ownership.

PASTURE UPDATES 1



Chair: Rob Winter, Regional Agronomist

- Southern Australia

Barenbrug Australia, Longford TAS

Rob is the southern (temperate seed market) agronomist working with research, sales and marketing. Rob helps to identify market needs and challenges, direct the research effort and develop and deliver extension resources. Previous experience includes twelve years in technical sales, nine years in pasture and forage seed production agronomy, and three years in retail mixed-farm agronomy. Rob has also experienced four years in small-seed harvest operations and logistics.

Rob completed a degree in Agricultural Science from the University of Tasmania in 1999. Rob lives in Longford and his interests include travel, reading, languages, and shaping iron shots out of the trees.

E: rwinter@barenbrug.com.au

A black and white photograph of a field of tall, dry grass. In the background, several dark-colored cattle are grazing. Overlaid on the image is text for a pasture mix product.

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PASTURE UPDATES 1



Accelerating performance through pastures

Basil Doonan, Technical Director
Pinion Advisory, Devonport TAS

Basil Doonan has over 25 years of experience in farm business management, grazing management, training and consultancy. He has worked in Australia and overseas in grazing industries, primarily consulting to farm business owners and managers. Basil has also developed producer supported learning programs on topics such as pasture management, strategic planning, irrigation management and herd fertility. Basil has a sound understanding of pasture and business management, soil and animal nutrition, animal husbandry and agronomy gained over his time in the agricultural industry. Basil has a Bachelor of Agricultural Economics and a Post Graduate Diploma in Farm Business Management.

Abstract

The consumption of homegrown feed is a (and in most cases 'the') significant driver of business profitability. It becomes an important skill to know how to measure pasture production and identify underperforming pastures, to then judge the acceptable shortfalls or opportunities to improve or renovate.

The subsequent results after making the decision to improve or renovate pastures can vary, depending on climate and under different farming systems and management practices. Understanding the Return on Investment (RoI) for pasture redevelopment can assist producers in identifying what the opportunities and shortfalls may be before making the final decision to renovate or not.

Perennial pastures are a significant investment but can be expected to provide reliable performance for many years, assuming the pastures have appropriate inputs and are subjected to correct grazing management practices. The decision to use annual/short-term pastures or forage crops in certain circumstances should be based on considerations such as appropriate pasture renovation programs, timing, seasonal factors, and realistic expectations for dry matter production, quality and economic returns.

Having a clear pasture renovation program and establishing the requirements and triggers on when to renovate is beneficial to the decision-making process, as well as having a good grasp and understanding of the economic impact of undertaking renovation activities.

Basil will discuss how to approach the decisions behind managing and improving pasture production to help maximise the financial returns in a grazing system, including the beneficial tools and key considerations producers can use to assist in the decision-making process.

| **E:** bdoonan@pinionadvisory.com

PASTURE UPDATES 2



Chair: Heather Cosgriff, Sales Agronomist
DLF Seeds, Deloraine TAS

Heather has been with DLF Seeds in the role of the Tasmanian Sales Agronomist since March 2022.

Hailing from a mixed dairy/beef farming enterprise in the foothills of the Otway Ranges, Victoria, Heather has spent over 25 years working in broadacre, horticulture and pastoral segments of the agricultural industry, the last 16 years being in Tasmania.

While she may never truly qualify as a local, Heather's passion lies in helping Tasmanian producers optimise their profitability through the provision of good pasture species choices and sound agronomic and grazing management advice, supported by ground-truthed pasture research.

E: hcosgriff@dlfseeds.com.au



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PASTURE UPDATES 2



Knowing your stuff – soil fertility and fertilisers 101

Jason Lynch, Senior Consultant
Pinion Advisory, Devonport TAS

Jason Lynch is a senior consultant with Pinion Advisory, an agronomist by profession, and a generalist by experience. He works with land owners, managers and producers to improve the productivity and sustainability of pasture and livestock production systems, and is passionate about assisting producers to maximise the efficiency of system inputs and their resource base.

Abstract

A good understanding of soil types, soil fertility and fertilisers (components and uses) is of key importance for all land managers to optimise nutrient levels, fertiliser inputs, and pasture productivity. It is also critical for being able to extract value for money from fertiliser applied and to minimise any potential environmental harm.

Optimal soil fertility levels for pasture production are well established:

Analyte	Soil Type		
	Sand	Loam	Clay
pH _{water}	5.6-7.0		
Phosphorus (Olsen, ppm)	18-25		
Potassium (Colwell, ppm)	110-170	130-190	150-220
Sulphur (KCl-40, ppm)	8-16		

Below these optimal levels, nutrient deficiencies occur in the soil, and pasture production will be constrained as a result. Soil nutrients present at above optimal levels will NOT lead to increased production levels due to the law of diminishing marginal returns/productivity.

Soil fertility levels need to be balanced; and pasture productivity will be limited by the least available nutrient as stated by Leibig's law of the minimum.

Soil testing should be undertaken on an ongoing basis with the frequency determined by the intensity of the land use activity (e.g. irrigated pasture every 1-2 years or dryland every 3-4

years). Collect representative soil samples down to 10cm topsoil depth, and ideally follow the same sampling path every time.

Prior to applying any fertiliser, it is important to conduct a nutrient budget which should take into account nutrient exports (e.g. nutrients removed from the system through liveweight gain or fodder production and environmental conditions), imports (e.g. bought in fodder and residual nutrients from cash crop production) and address any nutrient deficiencies or excesses. A 'one size fits all' approach to fertiliser application across a property is often inappropriate due to differences in soil type and land use activity.

Soil fertility, economic circumstances, environmental conditions, productivity levels and production systems (e.g. dryland or irrigated) change, and so the amount of nutrients applied should be adjusted to reflect the actual requirement. We can all benefit from improving our understanding and knowledge of soils, soil fertility and fertilisers and it is a worthy investment of your time.

Further information and reading:

- <https://www.soilquality.org.au/>
- <https://nre.tas.gov.au/Documents/Soil-Guide.pdf>
- <https://nutrientmanagementtasfarming.com.au/>

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Rabobank 

PRIMARY SESSION 1



Chair: Stuart Whatling, Area Manager Tasmania
Rabobank, Richmond TAS

Stuart leads the Tasmanian Rabobank business that has dedicated agribusiness bankers servicing the needs of clients throughout the state. They have offices in Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Smithton, providing local service with the capability of a leading global specialist food and agribusiness bank behind them.

Originating from a small farming community in East Anglia in the UK, Stuart obtained an Honours Degree in Agribusiness from London University's Wye College before embarking upon a career in banking and finance that has stretched from the UK to Australia, when he emigrated twenty years ago.

E: Stuart.Whatling1@Rabobank.com

Notes

PRIMARY SESSION 1



Margin mastery – thriving under cost pressure

John Francis, Director/Consultant
Agrista, Wagga Wagga NSW

John is a farm management consultant based in Wagga Wagga NSW. John has developed an understanding of productivity and profitability in farm businesses by examining the performance of a portfolio of farms with over \$3 billion in asset value annually.

John works at a strategic and tactical level with corporate and family farm owners and managers to improve productivity and profitability by:

- assessing business productivity and financial measures annually
- designing livestock systems to match feed supply with demand
- conducting feed budgets to plan and manage feed deficits and surpluses
- monitoring performance year on year.

Conversation starter: John survived an epic, sleepless two-day hitch-hiking trip with a poncho wearing hippy from New Orleans, Louisiana to Telluride, Colorado in the 1990s, but is now the beneficiary of a few interesting stories as a result.

Abstract

The 23-24 financial year has seen many livestock production businesses come under severe cashflow pressure. For some, the cashflow pressure has come from additional debt associated with farm expansion while for others it is low commodity prices and inflationary pressures that have induced the pain.

Many of the same businesses that now have free flowing red ink over their financial statements were, only a year prior, looking for the next place to spend the surpluses. The last few years have demonstrated the extent to which commodity agriculture is a volatile beast. Pricing in some commodities has moved from the highest prices ever seen to the lowest prices of the last 10 years.

The problem when prices increase is the cost structure tends to follow. When the good times roll, the business discipline wanes, and cost control is lost. A reduction in prices with an inflated cost structure mines the margin which is exactly what has been experienced by livestock producers across commodities.

This presentation will deliver an approach to widening the margin under price and inflationary pressure. Using farm productivity and financial data, John will demonstrate how a low cost of production is achieved in livestock production businesses, the steps to take to achieve it, and the level of discipline that is necessary for managers to regain control of their destiny.

| **E:** info@agrista.com.au

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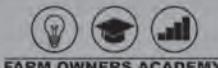
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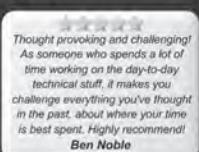
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TESTIMONIALS



BEEF UPDATES



**Chair: David Findlay, Professional Sales Representative, Livestock
Zoetis, TAS**

David manages the Tasmanian territory for the Zoetis Livestock team. His role covers animal health products and programs relating to sheep, beef and dairy cattle as well as genomics in both beef and dairy cattle for the company.

David attended Curtin University of Technology WA (Muresk Campus). Livestock is a common thread through his career so far, having been involved in livestock (beef and sheep) farming, as well as occupying buying, marketing and livestock cartage roles in the sector.

E: david.findlay@zoetis.com

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Will Atkinson, MSA Business Development Officer
Meat & Livestock Australia, Brisbane QLD

Will grew up on a breeder cattle property in the Southern Tablelands of NSW, where he worked on his family property and for mixed farming enterprises in the region. After completing a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at Charles Sturt University he moved to Brisbane to work for MLA in the MSA program. Here he spends his time working closely with MSA producers, processors, and product consumers to help the

supply chain improve the overall eating quality of beef and sheepmeat and better utilise the products on hand.

As part of his role Will delivers workshops to producers about how to understand their carcase feedback and identify what on-farm levers producers can pull to make a measurable difference to the quality of their livestock. This also includes helping producers better understand the MSA grading system and how they can produce livestock that provides a consistent quality product for our consumers.

Abstract

This presentation will provide an overview of the myFeedback tool available through myMLA, including how carcase feedback information can be utilised by producers to strengthen their red meat performance. Case studies on producers will be integrated to understand the on-farm changes and long-term benefits this can provide.

Released in November 2023, myFeedback is the only industry-based tool which brings together data from multiple sources, allowing for aggregated benchmarking by supply chain, region, state or national levels. It combines the benefits of carcase and eating quality data with animal disease and defect insights in one place, enabling more accurate benchmarking of carcase performance for all users. The platform is designed to help producers make data driven on-farm decisions to improve the quality and health of their livestock.

myFeedback combines analytical reports, using data derived from:

- National Livestock Identification System (NLIS)
- Meat Standards Australia (MSA)
- Animal Health Australia (AHA)
- National Livestock Reporting Service (NLRS)
- Direct Animal Disease and Defect uploads.

Coupled with the Solutions to Feedback Library, producers can be supported in making decisions that can improve productivity,

increase carcass compliance, and may reduce lost opportunity cost.

There are several different opportunities for producers in myFeedback. Producers can compare livestock performance over time, benchmark at a regional, state, or national level, and utilise carcass feedback to inform decisions on estimated breeding values to meet market requirements and compliance. The system also allows for producers to map compliance to grids and understand how their livestock meets market requirements. Lastly, myFeedback also enables producers to identify opportunities for increased profitability through proactive disease prevention and management by analysing the impact of diseases on carcase performance.

Producers can register for a myFeedback account, including linking their LPA-Accredited PIC number(s), via 'myMLA'.

Useful links and resources:

- myMLA: <https://www.mla.com.au/mymla/>
- myFeedback: <https://myfeedback.mla.com.au/login>
- Solutions to Feedback Library: <https://solutionstofeedback.mla.com.au/>

E: watkinson@mla.com.au

P: 1800 111 672 for MSA enquiries

BEEF UPDATES



Weaning for production in beef systems

Dr Shane Thomson, Partner & Veterinarian (beef production)

Holbrook Vet Centre, Holbrook NSW

Shane is a veterinarian and partner at the Holbrook Vet Centre (HVC). HVC has a strong focus on production and breeding services to the beef industry. They service the artificial breeding requirements of both seedstock and commercial producers Australia-wide; including AI, embryo transfer, bull fertility examinations and ultrasound pregnancy diagnosis. In conjunction with these production and breeding services, HVC also runs a specialised donor centre and large-scale recipient herd. Shane completed his veterinary training and a post-graduate Masters in whole farm veterinary consulting at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga. Shane owns and runs his own commercial and seedstock beef enterprise with his wife Caity and four boys, so seven days a week he is never too far from the back end of a cow!

Abstract

This presentation will cover optimising weaning practices in beef systems to maximise productivity and financial return without compromising animal health. Creating production efficiency at the breeding herd level is essential under increasing asset value and environmental sustainability pressures. By understanding the animal requirements through the production system (of both the cow and the calf) we can optimise the time of weaning to capitalise on a 10-15% reduction in energy required by the cow-calf unit, particularly at a time when less than 10% of the calf's requirement is being provided by the cow.

As calves grow and their rumen develops, there is a combination of declining lactation yields and nutrient density, rumen development and diminishing of the oesophageal groove (which allows direct bypass of milk), making the conversion of milk to kilograms of liveweight less efficient. In addition, milk in the rumen has the potential to lead to lactic acidosis in these early ruminants (>12-16 weeks of age). This results in a scenario where the benefits of the calf being on the cow are heavily diminished, justifying the recommendation that weaning from 5-7 months is optimal, with early weaning prior to this, a useful management tool during dry times. The key take home message is that weaning after this 5-7 month age is inefficient to the breeding system.

Understanding and managing this interaction promotes the opportunity to enhance productivity through better feed allocation and management of stocking rates. Modelling outcomes demonstrated that to support a two-month delay in weaning time within a standard self-replacing, spring calving feeder system,

a reduction in stocking rate by nearly 10% is required. This practice created an increase in the cost of production and resulted in a 15-20% reduction in profitability at the per hectare level.

It is important to appreciate that weaning calves at these ages is not without its challenges, the most important being the infrastructure required and knowledge, confidence and skill to supply weaners with an adequate nutrient dense diet. If not implemented correctly, this can be a cost to the system. Like most opportunities in business, the pursuit of efficiency measures does require high level management skills from those within the business. To equip producers, Shane will detail the important aspects around animal health, production efficiency and nutritional requirements necessary to implement this management practice.

Useful tools and resources:

- NSW DPI – Drought and supplementary feed calculator: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nutrition/feeding-practices/drought-and-supplementary-feed-calculator>
- MLA – Weaning: <https://www.mla.com.au/research-and-development/animal-health-welfare-and-biosecurity/husbandry/weaning>
- NSW DPI – Feed cost calculator: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/nutrition/costs-and-nutritive-value/feed-cost-calculator>

E: shane@holbrookvetcentre.com.au



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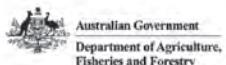
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SHEEP UPDATES



Chair: Sandra Knowles, Director

TAS Farm Innovation Hub, TAS

Sandra is the Director of the TAS Farm Innovation Hub which supports farmers to prepare for drought conditions and a changing climate.

The Hub is funded through the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund and hosted by the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture at the University of Tasmania.

As a long-term project manager with a legal background, Sandra has strong leadership experience and demonstrated ability to enable change and drive innovation through many roles within the University of Tasmania, including the Industry 4.0 Testlab Project and the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Mission Integration Program. Sandra has extensive knowledge of Tasmanian agriculture and helps manage a mixed-farming family enterprise.

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This program received funding from the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund.

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Prioritising animal health

Dr Paul Nilon, Senior Lecturer Production Animals

James Cook University, Townsville QLD

Paul teaches undergraduate veterinary science students in sheep and beef cattle health and production (with an emphasis on southern Australian production systems) and biosecurity at James Cook University (JCU), Townsville. He is also responsible for the management of production animals kept on campus.

Paul graduated as a veterinarian in 1983 (Sydney University) and has a Masters degree in ruminant health and production from the Mackinnon Project at Melbourne University. He is also a member of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists in epidemiology.

Paul spent approximately 20 years as a mixed rural practitioner across three states, and 20 years as a sheep and beef vet/production consultant. In total, Paul spent 32 years in Tasmania before moving to JCU.

Nothing else interesting about Paul, just ask his long-suffering wife.

Abstract

Animal health costs are not (generally) a large component of the total variable costs of sheepmeat and cattle businesses. Notwithstanding, with the variability in commodity agriculture and market prices, and increased costs (inflation and drought conditions), it's timely to look at how animal health costs can be prioritised. This presentation will outline how we tend to make decisions on animal health expenditure, while describing a formal approach to animal health spending before suggesting a "middle ground" approach.

Many animal health decisions are simply made because they have always been in the calendar and are regarded by industry as "must dos" or adopted by force of persuasion. This can be wasteful, and does not always produce a tangible benefit. The formal approach to assist decision making is to do a partial budget, with or without probability estimates. This is difficult and may be problematic due to lack of actual information on benefits and risk estimates. Instead, a suggested approach is a to step through a series of questions starting with animal welfare and finishing with risk. This process can be largely intuitive and easy.

Notes

SHEEP UPDATES



Why eID in the Australian sheep industry?

Bonnie Skinner

Sheep Producers Australia, Canberra ACT

Bonnie Skinner is Chief Executive Officer of Sheep Producers Australia and one of the youngest and most influential female leaders in Australia's agricultural industry. After working in roles in animal health and biosecurity in the private and not-for-profit sectors, Bonnie joined the Sheep Producers Australia team in 2018 and was appointed Chief Executive Officer in 2022. Bonnie has extensive

networks across regional Australia, and has proven experience establishing productive relationships with stakeholders, industry partners and government officials. Her collaborative approach, combined with her comprehensive understanding of the industry, positions Bonnie as a key figure in shaping the future of the sheepmeat sector and the broader agricultural landscape in Australia.

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Beth Green

Magnify Agriculture Global, Dunsborough WA

Beth Green has an Honours degree in Agricultural Science and has worked professionally in agriculture since 1994. Beth is recognised for her livestock traceability system knowledge across Australia and has contributed to system design, national standards, legislative development and education curriculum, as well as providing on-ground training and technical assistance. Through a Churchill Fellowship in 2022, Beth travelled around the world to investigate the evolution of livestock traceability systems to

see how to achieve greater industry engagement for maximum data integrity and ultimately, for faster response to disease outbreaks.

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Abstract

The introduction of mandatory electronic individual identification (eID) for sheep and goats is one of the biggest changes the industry has experienced in the last 100 years. The decision to implement this system nationally was agreed to by Government Ministers in September 2022 after an ongoing program of monitoring and testing the visual system, technology development and industry capability. The transition to compulsory eID in Victoria between 2017 – 2022 provided the template to demonstrate capacity and reliability.

The Sheep and Goat Traceability Taskforce (SGTTF), a new government-industry body established by the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC), provides oversight of the national roll-out of eID for sheep and goats, advising Senior Officials and Agriculture Ministers on key implementation matters. It was recognised by the SGTTF that it needed to support and compliment states, territories and industries with provision of industry assistance to embed the necessary changes.

Traceability is the foundation to ensuring the longevity of our agricultural production systems. It is critical for the Australian industry to be competitive in the market, give confidence to

consumers that their food and fibre is safe and protect ourselves from an emergency disease outbreak or residue incident that could affect not only our markets and consumer confidence, but negatively impact many individual livelihoods, food security and the economy. There is evidence that an integrated traceability system with individual eID significantly increases the response speed and accuracy, resulting in the protection of more businesses, minimising the number of stock involved and ideally, regaining market access faster.

It is recognised that the investment for mandatory adoption of eID technology within farming operations can be significant and without apparent immediate return to the individual. However, it is necessary to provide surety to both the Australian sheep and goat industries and our markets that we have a robust system with maximum potential to quickly respond to animal disease and food safety threats.

The SGTTF has created a Resource and Support Directory to provide easy access to industry and state / territory specific assistance: <https://www.sheepproducers.com.au/copy-of-national-traceability>



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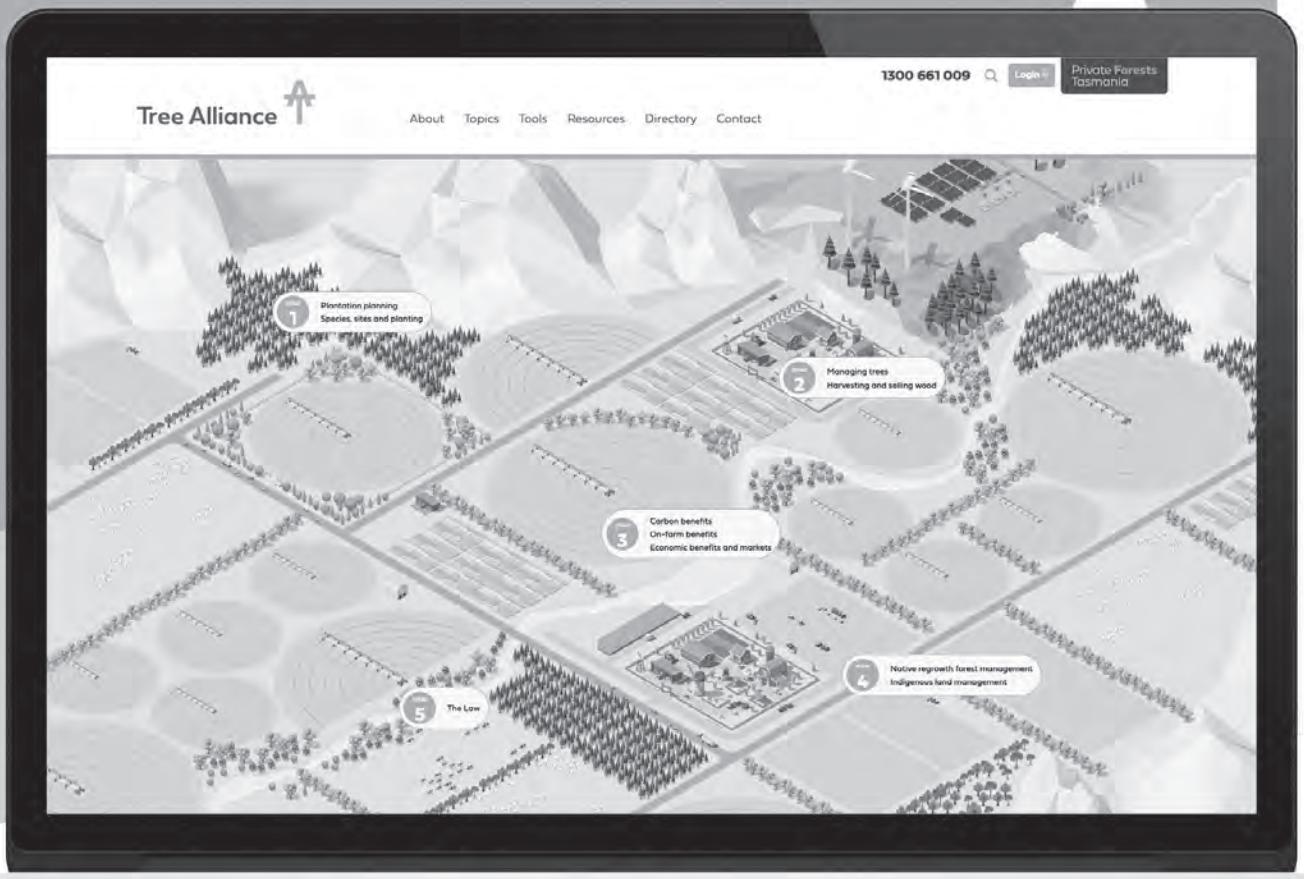
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PRIMARY SESSION 2



**Chair: Dr Elizabeth Pietrzykowski,
Chief Executive Officer**

Private Forests Tasmania, TAS

Dr Elizabeth Pietrzynowski was appointed Private Forests Tasmania Chief Executive Officer in September 2023 and is pushing forward using her forest science and industry experience to enhance the private forestry sector.

Elizabeth is a born and bred Tasmanian and has 25 years' experience in the forestry, agriculture, agroforestry, landscape restoration, mining, oil and gas sectors.

Elizabeth completed a Bachelor of Science Forest Ecology with Honors at the University of Tasmania followed by a Doctorate in Forest Health at CSIRO Forestry.

As a Forest Health Scientist and previous Greening Australia State Operations Lead, Elizabeth has provided specialty forestry solutions to the private and public forestry sector including private landowner estate

management, forest practice planning, forest health diagnosis, biodiversity assessment, and regeneration and restoration plans for forest carbon accounting.

Elizabeth returned to the University of Tasmania as the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture Commercial and Business Manager, a role she thoroughly enjoyed as she got up close with all aspects of agriculture and the amazing industry we have here in Tasmania. She also secretly desires to own and run a farm one day.

A self-motivated leader with a passion for the environment, the agricultural and agroforestry sectors, Elizabeth is devoted to ensuring a sustainable future forest resource for all Tasmanians. In her own time Elizabeth enjoys designing and building gardens, growing fruit and vegetables with her son, and riding her horse.

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Notes

PRIMARY SESSION 2



A case study of business diversification

Andrew Archer, Co-Managing Director
Chester Partnership, Westwood TAS

Andrew along with his brother Sam run the family's 2600 ha farming business in northern Tasmania. Andrew left school in 2003 and worked for 12 months on a cattle station in western Queensland, followed by another 12 months on a mixed farming operation in Central Otago NZ before returning to Australia to complete a three-year Advanced Diploma of Farm Business Management at Marcus Oldham. On completion of college in 2009, he then spent three years overseeing

a large-scale sheep operation in Mansfield, Victoria before returning home to the family farming operation in 2013. Sam followed a very similar path working in SA, WA and central Victoria in both cropping and livestock roles and completed a Bachelor of Farm Business Management at Marcus, before returning home in 2016.

After working for their parents, Bruce and Katrina, for several years, they both took over management of the Chester Partnership in 2018. Since then, they have focused heavily on improving infrastructure and intensifying both the cropping and livestock operations, with Sam managing the cropping and Andrew the livestock.

Abstract

Chester is a 2600 ha mixed family farm operation, mating 8,500 composite ewes, 700 cows and managing an irrigated cropping enterprise of 410 ha, in addition to an annual dryland fodder/pasture renovation program of 100 ha and 70 ha of pine plantations.

After going through family succession and taking over management of the business, the boys then turned their focus to intensifying the operation. This handover occurred at the same time that land prices skyrocketed, and Andrew and Sam found it very hard to expand the operation through land purchases.

Over the last five years, the property has increased sheep numbers by 50% and cattle numbers by 30%, developed and expanded the irrigation and water program, from a producing 250 ha cropping program of peas, poppies, beans, ryegrass seed and clover to a 410 ha cropping program incorporating peas, poppies, beans, ryegrass seed, beetroot seed, carrot seed, broccoli, broccolini, onions, potatoes and red and white clover for lambs, in addition to planting 60 ha of pine plantation with the help of Private Forests Tasmania. The property has also become a demonstration sight for Private Forests Tasmania and has since planted over 10,000 additional native trees.

This has been achieved through significant subdivision of dryland pastures, with stock water and laneways established to achieve increases

in labour efficiencies, and capital investment on yards, sheds, pivot irrigation and machinery. Planted trees have also been incorporated into shelter belts, protecting waterways and utilising unproductive land.

The business model of this multi-enterprise operation is focussed on spreading risk over the property and utilising various land classifications sustainably and efficiently. The native trees and plantation enterprise has not only brought in further diversification to the business but also works in well with both the livestock and cropping enterprises through protection from various weather conditions.

Andrew and Sam still have a further 4-year plan of development to implement and plan to continue to grow the business until they have achieved their goal of creating two fully developed, financially viable operations.

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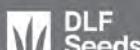
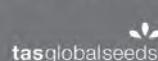


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VIRTUAL FARM TOUR



Chair: Tony Butler, Executive Officer
Pasture Trials Network, Launceston TAS

Self-described as 'pasture passionate', Tony oversees the program and team coordinating the Pasture Trials Network (PTN), an industry partnership between Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA), Dairy Australia (DA), Australian Seeds Federation (ASF) and leading Australian seed companies. PTN's objective is to support livestock producers, advisors, and supply chain stakeholders by encouraging informed pasture species selections and navigating the array of temperate grazing forage options on the market.

Since high school, Tony's passion for pasture has evolved from his post-graduate experiences of using razor blades to harvest trial plots, to encompassing experiences in grazing enterprises from his home province of Canterbury, NZ, to those in the UK. Since being drawn to what was planned to be a temporary

stop in Tasmania, Tony has forged a career in pasture science within the local and national scenes and is a big supporter of the local pasture seed industry.

Beyond PTN, you can find Tony trudging along on the sidewalks with fellow crazies in training for "some upcoming" running race, lifting things or out to sea racing his dinghy.

E: letstalk@pasturetrials.com.au

Notes

VIRTUAL FARM TOUR

Will & Ed Bowden, RV Bowden & Son

Cluny, Bothwell TAS

The Bowden family have been a part of the Bothwell community since the late 19th century and have been farming in the area since 1911 with the original purchase of the 'Cluny' property. Since the 1960's, RV Bowden & Son has undertaken significant expansion, of both land and assets. In 2024, RV Bowden & Son now consists of four properties with a cumulative land holding of 15,000 hectares in the Central Highlands of Tasmania.

Brothers Will and Ed Bowden have taken on management roles in the family business upon each of them graduating from Marcus Oldham and returning to Tasmania. Will graduated in 2017 and began a gradual hand over from his father of running the family farming business. This handover was accelerated rapidly when Will and Ed's father, Scott Bowden, was diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2021. Will ran the farm with the help of his parents, grandparents Richard and Judith, and supportive wife Millie, while Ed finished his degree. Ed graduated in November 2023 and, much to the relief of Will, keenly jumped into the management seat of cropping, agronomy, and jointly overseeing the livestock enterprise with Will. Will manages HR, irrigation, the native selective logging enterprise, capital development and farm automation, and assisting his mother Kate with account management. Both Will and Ed jointly explore and negotiate renewable energy projects and manage the sale of wool and livestock. There are 14 full-time staff across the business, including two livestock managers and the team is assisted throughout the year by loyal and reliable contractors.

The business is predominantly a livestock and cropping operation with fine wool, fat lamb, angus cattle breeding, native timber selective logging, Eucalyptus nitens plantation and potato cropping enterprises. Irrigation has been a part of the business since the 1960's, and there is now approximately 2075 hectares of centre pivot and flood irrigation across four properties with 14km of underground pipes supplying water to 25 pivot circles. A unique element of the property is the privately owned hydro-electric power plant, commissioned in 2015 to generate electricity on-farm.

The feedbase across the four properties consists of improved, semi-improved and native pastures along with lucerne and seasonal forage crop production. Pasture renovation and development has been a key objective of the business where properties have



been purchased and irrigation development has increased. Pasture selection is done with the assistance of the Bowdens' local agronomist to ensure that the correct species are sown and that time of sowing is going to optimise germination.

Will and Ed have had a focus on incorporating technology into the existing farm systems to increase management efficiency. On-farm technology includes self-hosted, non-subscription based remotely managed pivot irrigators, automated water distribution across multiple properties, soil moisture monitoring, tank level monitoring and an automated feedlot/containment feeding set up.

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- All supply chain participants will be ready to scan eID tags and upload movement data to the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) from 1 January 2025.
- From 1 January 2027 all sheep and goats that move off property need to be eID tagged.

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