

Health and Welfare Advisory Committee

Executive Summary

3 May 2023 | Zoom

Chair opened the meeting at 9:00am.

Matters arising

Rob Barwell to circulate an email to the committee to test the enhanced MyMLA- MyFeedback platform.

The CEO to circulate the 2018 update of the of live exports to the Australian Wool Industry' conducted by CIE which will form the basis of WPA's submission and discussion with the panel during the webinar.

The draft WPA (live export) submission will be circulated once complete

General Manager Report

GM presented a report, highlighting the following key information:

PAIN RELIEF DECISION SUPPORT FOR LAMB MARKING

GM provided an overview of the pain relief decision support document was developed by AHA in collaboration with WPA & SPA

TEXTILE EXCHANGE

WoolProducers GM had recently been appointed as a member of the Textile Exchange Animal Fibres Animal Welfare Working Group, along with a representative from Australian Wool Innovation. The group is made up of grower representatives, academic and animal rights representatives globally and seeks to identify opportunities to enhance animal welfare outcomes through certified integrity standards and collaborative efforts.

SAFEMEAT

WoolProducers remains actively engaged as an observer to the SAFEMEAT Advisory Group and Partners meetings. Current issues include ensuring that revised NLIS standards and proposed changes to the National Vendor Declaration continue to serve producer needs.

INTEGRITY SYSTEMS COMPANY

WoolProducers have been actively engaged with ISC through both the Supply Chain Taskforce and the Sheep Health Project to ensure increased producer engagement with data collected through the Sheep Health Monitoring Project.

ANIMAL WELFARE TASK GROUP

WoolProducers have met with the AWG within DAFF, expressing that there would be missed opportunities if an update process was started now for Sheep Welfare Standards and Guidelines. Given the level of industry investment in sheep welfare RD&E starting a review process in two years' time would provide the opportunity to take a more relevant update that does not become obsolete as quickly.

Sheep Health

FOOT HEALTH PROJECT PROPOSAL

The committee heard from Mark Ferguson (Nextgen Agri) and Andrew Thompson (Murdoch University) on a project proposal to undertake a sire evaluation and cull ram challenge in relation to sheep feet health. The project will assess information to inform the development of ASBVs and management tools for selection of animals that are resistant to negative feet health conditions such as footrot and foot scald.

The committee was supportive of funding the proposal in collaboration with other stakeholders.

FLURALANER (FLEXOLT) ORAL LOUSICIDE FOR SHEEP

The committee received a presentation from MSD Animal Health on the registration, use and availability of Fluralaner 10 g/L Lousicide for Sheep.

Biosecurity and Market Access

SHEEP EID IMPLEMENTATION

WoolProducers provided a summary of the recent meeting of the sheep and Goat Traceability Taskforce. The recent meeting agreed that it was important that stakeholders understood that the taskforce was an advisory body, not a decision-making body. This is now stated on the departmental website along with the PWC cost modelling that was developed by PWC.

Following a review of the NLIS Standards for Sheep and Goats (EID) WoolProducers, Sheep Producers Australia and the Goat Industry Council of Australia have engaged with members of the Jurisdictional Traceability Group. The discussions have focused on further need to simplify and streamline the standards to ensure national harmonisation and consistency.

IWTO BIOSECURITY FRAMEWORK UPDATE

WPA GM will present the finalised framework to the next meeting of the IWTO Trade Biosecurity Working Group in Kyoto, Japan on 15 May. Gratitude was expressed for the significant contribution of WPA's South African colleagues, as well as AWI who provided funds to engage a consultant to assist in the drafting, writing and review process.

EAD RESPONSE LEVY

WoolProducers are undertaking activities to pursue the establishment of an EAD Response Levy to ensure industry's ability to meet cost sharing obligations in the event of a significant EAD incursion.

Sheep Welfare

SHEEP SENTIENCE

The Committee agreed to put the following resolution the WPA Board:

That WoolProducers endorse the adoption of the following policy within "Animal Welfare" of the WoolProducers policy document:

Sentience

WoolProducers acknowledges that sheep are sentient beings that can feel and perceive the world around them through both positive and negative experiences.

Legislation and regulation to safeguard animal welfare must be based on peer-reviewed evidence informing the scientific understanding of sheep sentience.

In acknowledging sheep sentience, WoolProducers maintains that:

- Sheep do not have the same feelings as humans
- Sheep can be owned for legally permitted activities (farming and associated permitted husbandry procedures are legally permitted activities as prescribed by relevant legislation)

General Business

LIVE EXPORT UPDATE

The CEO advised that WPA is supportive of broader efforts to oppose this policy, however, does not take a lead role as it is more appropriate for other organisations to do so.

The Committee were advised of a free industry webinar developed collaboratively between WPA, SPA, ALEC, PGA & WA Farmers and focussed on how to complete a submission relating to the opposition of this policy. The Webinar commences 8pm AEST, 8th May 2023.

Meeting closed 12:05pm (AEST)
