



**WAMMCO International**  
A DIVISION OF THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MEAT MARKETING CORPORATION

# WAMMCO Info

Ph: PERTH 08-9262 0999, KATANNING 08-9821 2000 FREECALL 1800 199 197

## TONY TAKES HIS SEAT



□ Tony Boyle

WAMMCO's newest director, prominent York producer Tony Boyle, is keen to see the co-operative foster increased producer loyalty as the key to rebuilding WA's sheep and lamb industry.

"With prices at record levels, and world demand rapidly exceeding supply, there has never been a better opportunity to rebuild producer confidence and support in the sheep industry," Mr Boyle said.

"WAMMCO has created the resources and has the marketing and processing capacity to promote a 'new age' of long term, profitable lamb production in WA.

"I believe we can change lamb's traditional 'low price culture' by being the clear leader on livestock pricing, and we also need to review our rebate and penalty systems so that they extend to all non-saleyard producer sales."

Appointed in October following the retirement of foundation director, the late Mick Quinlivan, Tony brings a wealth of practical marketing, production and processing experience to the co-operative.

His family pioneered a major feedlot at York that continues to prepare lambs for WAMMCO under the control of son Scott.

Established in 1999, the York facility was originally contracted by WA's former lamb board to supply prime lamb for Tesco

supermarkets in the UK.

It has also supplied both Coles and Woolworths, contracted to major livestock shippers, and explored opportunities to process WA lambs for export.

"I am totally removed from the feedlot operation now, but the experience should assist me with my contribution to WAMMCO," Tony said.

The York family farm is now run by son Charles and middle son Craig is a lawyer with a major WA law firm.

Tony and wife Sally recently moved to York which now serves as base for his other interests: the Wheatbelt Development Commission, the Avon Community Development Foundation, the Shire of York and the York Race Club.

Tony said he welcomed contact with producers in his area, particularly those who were unsure about investing or re-investing in the sheep industry.

He can be contacted on 0429 882 497

## LAMB REVIVAL

A strong revival of interest in lamb has resulted in record entries for WAMMCO's 2010/2011 State Lamb Competition.

"Both entry numbers and lamb carcasses evaluated, are well above our previous best, with several growers submitting more than one, and up to 14 separate entries," Rob Davidson said this week.

The 2010/2011 winners will be announced at the WAMMCO State Carcase Competition presentation day at the "New Lodge", Katanning on Tuesday, March 22, starting at 2pm. Guest speakers are MLA'S Tim

McRae, CSBP's Kirk Reynolds and Associate Professor, John Milton of UWA.

"We are delighted with the state-wide spread and quality of entries, with all of the best performing breeds well represented," Rob said.

"The cash and prize pool of over \$15,000 is only possible due to the generosity of long term competition sponsors including Primaries of WA, Milne Feeds, Superior Livestock Services, Farm Weekly and WAMMCO International."

## Low Cost Tools Offer Big Gains

WAMMCO's lamb production specialist, Rob Davidson has reminded existing and intending lamb producers that they can capitalise on high prices for lambs – and help to rebuild WA's sheep flock – by using a range of low cost tools.

"It is now a fact that recent summer rains have destroyed any residual value in paddock feed," Mr Davidson said.

"Ewes should therefore be confined in smaller areas with adequate feed and water to ensure that they do not 'walk off' the vital energy they will need to produce lambs."

He urged producers to consider joining DAFWA'S Lifetime Ewe Management Program for a net cost of around \$400 after rebates.

"This is an excellent one-stop opportunity for producers to gain management skills that will greatly boost their lamb returns, while also making the job easier," he said.

"WAMMCO strongly supports this program, which deals with everything from pasture assessment, pregnancy scanning, condition scoring, and caring for ewes and lambs in varying seasonal conditions."

Rob said interested producers could obtain further information from himself, or from Jonathon England at the Department of Agriculture and Food, WA Narrogin office on 9881 0208.

Rob also urged producers to utilise the services offered by commercial pregnancy scanning operators, have grains and hays analysed for nutritional value, learn how to condition score and consider the benefits of lick feeders to boost their lamb enterprise.

"Pregnancy scanning costs relatively little, but it provides the grower with vital information – ie identifying ewes that are in lamb, those carrying more than one lamb, and those that are dry," he said.

"Grower options are to arrange appropriate care for the pregnant ewes, to rejoin ewes, or if it is too late to rejoin but he wishes to retain breeding flock, to run dry or cull for the buoyant mutton market."

Rob said some of the stubbles baled during harvest had exceptional energy levels and could maintain pregnant ewes with a small lupin supplement when fed in confinement.

He encouraged producers to have their stubbles and grains tested and to seek nutritional advice from WAMMCO or their advisers.

Condition scoring is another simple, cost effective tool that assists the producer to manage ewe nutrition during the critical placenta and foetal development stages and results in lamb birth weights being in the optimum 4-5kg range for maximum survival.

"With prices already reaching \$5.60/kg investing a few dollars in the necessary tools that result in all potential lambs being successfully born and reared, must be highly recommended," he said.

"Lamb producers in Eastern Australia are already up and running to capitalise on the tremendous outlook for lamb, and a good season in WA will hopefully help to 'turn the tide' here."

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## Industry Gears For Low Numbers

WAMMCO is preparing for the toughest supply period in its history and has announced a record incentive of \$5.60/kg to encourage producers to support the co-operative.

Retiring CEO Coll MacRury said WAMMCO would continue to play a pivotal role in rebuilding the sheep industry in WA and he would miss leading that challenge.

He said his decision to return to New Zealand for family reasons, was made with regret, but he had assured the WAMMCO board that he would continue to assist the co-operative for as long as it took to appoint a successor.

"My decision to leave WA coincides with the quietest time of the year for WAMMCO," he said.

"Producers can also be assured that we have a highly competent and proven management team to guarantee that it will be 'business as usual.'"

Mr MacRury said his greatest disappointment was that he had not been able to achieve greater growth for WAMMCO, during his two years at the helm.

He said initially, he was keen for the co-operative to consider an expansion into beef processing, but found a significant supply problem in WA.

Focussing instead on more aggressive lamb and sheep buying strategies in 2010 enabled WAMMCO to capture extra numbers of lamb and mutton that significantly boosted throughput at Katanning to record levels from September to December.

"Our decision to widen our livestock buying parameters beyond weight and grade was popular with many producers, including many who were previously not supplying WAMMCO, and also enabled us to increase the range of quality products for both international and local markets," he said.

"These initiatives were possible and profitable only through efficiency and productivity gains that came with WAMMCO's major Katanning boning room upgrade.

"However the exodus last year of more than one million WA sheep, of which about 700,000 are thought to include some of our most valuable breeding stock, poses serious immediate and medium term lamb production problems for all processors and exporters in WA.

"I believe the shortage will force at least two WA sheepmeat processors to close their doors as 2011 proves to be one of the industry's toughest ever supply years.



Coll MacRury

"On the other hand, WA's sheep producers can expect a price bonanza - with major bonuses if there is a reasonable season."

Mr MacRury said the latest predictions that WA would suffer a further drop in sheep numbers to a flock of below 12.5 million, confirmed the crippling impact of the 2010 drought.

"They also confirm the increasing need for us to play a leading role in rebuilding the sheep industry in WA," he said.

"The announcement last week of an increase in our schedule price to \$5.60/kg for 2011 represents a solid start."

## 'THE BIGGEST LAMBS I HAVE SEEN'

LANDMARK'S well known Esperance stockman Neil Brindley, believes the 240 White Suffolk-Merino cross lambs sold by his clients RN & MM Lloyd & Son, to WAMMCO for \$175 per head on-farm, were probably the biggest lambs he had ever encountered. "They weighed an average of 71.1kg with the top lines reaching 92.5kg," he said.

"The owners had purchased some crypt orchid store lambs last year and decided to try the process on some of their male White Suffolk lambs from Merino ewes."

Neil said the lambs were dropped in May and quickly started gaining weight.

WAMMCO's livestock manager Peter Krupa urged all lamb producers to have WAMMCO quote on their stock.

"We have strong money, particularly for Merino wether lambs either for processing, or for lotfeeding," he said.

## Middle East Focus on WA Lamb

WAMMCO will again be one of about 20 Australian meat processors and exporters under the MLA banner, taking part in the four-day 'Gulfood' international food fair in Dubai at the end of February.

Marketing manager Damien Giumelli and senior marketing executive Alby Baker will man the WAMMCO display at Gulfood and are again expecting strong consumer interest in the co-operative's WA product. They will also visit Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

About 30,000 world representatives of major food, hospitality and catering interests have attended 'Gulfood' each year since it became an annual event in 2007. WAMMCO has established a significant number of new supply contracts from past expos.



The managing director of APL Lines (Australia) Ted Muttiah (right) and state manager Greg Strickland discussed shipping issues at WAMMCO recently with Albert Baker (left) and WAMMCO's assistant marketing executive Ron Whyte.

APL Lines arranged shipment of the chilled and frozen lamb and mutton sample products for WAMMCO from Perth to Dubai.