



WAMMCO AGM SET TO INFORM

WAMMCO'S 2014 Annual General Meeting in Perth on Wednesday, October 22 will serve to update producer shareholders on the continuing growth and solid performance of their co-operative.

The meeting is scheduled for 3pm on October 22, at Fraser Suites, 10 Adelaide Terrace, East Perth.

CEO Coll MacRury said he and Board chairman Dawson Bradford would be discussing the co-operative's trading highlights and announcing major new items of capital investment for both the Katanning and Goulburn plants designed to keep them ahead in the meat processing technology race.

"The new freezer complex being planned for Katanning is very high-tech and will give us future capacity to expand to double shifts if necessary," Mr MacRury said.

"Together with another big rebate to producers, and ongoing diversification into key global markets, WAMMCO continues to shine as Australia's only producer-owned meat processing and marketing co-operative."

Mr MacRury said WAMMCO's Katanning and Goulburn plants were shifting into top gear, including overtime and Saturday shifts to handle big spring lamb flushes in both the East and the West.

"At this point it appears that lambs are plentiful and in peak condition. Some overseas markets have not yet recovered as strongly as we would like, but continue to show signs of improvement," he said.

The CEO recently urged producers via WAMMCO "Lambline" to fully consider the increasing benefits of co-operative membership.

"Producers in WA need to remember that WAMMCO has spent millions of dollars developing a range of unique global markets capable of sustaining a viable return for their heavyweight lamb production, and providing the processing technology needed to remain globally competitive," Mr MacRury said.

"WAMMCO also continues to offer weight and grade purchasing with comprehensive feedback and is keen to work with members to guarantee and improve supply and to ensure minimum disadvantage in periods of oversupply.

"We also believe that a bonus payment to members in years of strong trading performance, is the fairest way to share buoyant trading conditions.

"WAMMCO shares come with participation and our dividends are much bigger than financial."

BIG CARBON TAX SAVING

THE removal of Australia's Carbon Tax by the Abbott Government in September has delivered an immediate tax saving of around \$150,000 to WAMMCO by slashing power costs at the Katanning plant.

Katanning manager Tony Bessell said the power saving was equivalent to \$18.90 per megawatt hour and it came as a bonus for the Katanning plant as it re-opened for the spring season. He expected further savings to materialise as WAMMCO suppliers were able to remove carbon tax components from the cost of their products and services.

The decision to install an automatised mutton trunking unit is also enabling WAMMCO to increase the volume and range of mutton products from sheep at the heavier end of the scale.

The new season has started with the return of seasonal workers from New Zealand and a complement of 60 new employees joining the core Katanning workforce. These include a number of humanitarian refugees and a group of 12 Afghan migrants who formerly served as interpreters for the Australian Army in their country. There are also several former workers from Tammin, who have moved their families to Katanning to take advantage of year-round, rather than seasonal employment.



NEW RECRUITS

THE first group of former Afghan interpreters formerly employed by the Australian Army in Afghanistan included Sayed Jawad (left) and Zubair, who arrived at WAMMCO's Katanning plant when it re-opened in August.

The pair studied English in Kabul and worked as interpreters in their country for the Australian Army for nearly two years before migrating to Australia.

Both single, they were among 12 former interpreters from Afghanistan recruited in Perth by WAMMCO and have settled quickly into the local community and the Katanning workforce.

Sayed has a keen interest in cooking while Zubair is interested in business studies.



FOUR CANDIDATES FOR WAMMCO SEAT

WAMMCO Chairman Dawson Bradford has urged members of the co-operative to ensure their vote is registered to elect a Member director to the board, before the ballot closes on Thursday, October 16.

"This is the first four-candidate election for a Member seat on the board since the co-operative was formed in 1999, and I am delighted that all four candidates are of the highest calibre, with impressive corporate and management credentials," he said.

The nominees are retiring director Tony Boyle of York who has been a strong advocate for WAMMCO over the past four years and is seeking a second term, WA Meat Scientist Dr Kelly Manton-Pearce who is also a lamb producer and farmer at Yealering with

husband Alan, Bradley Ipsen of Manjimup, a leading State and national producer and marketer of prime lamb, vegetables and fruit and Bill O'Keefe, a keen 'grass roots' commercial lamb producer and farmer at Gnowangerup.

Background on each candidate was mailed with ballot papers to members from September 22 and they are asked to complete and return their ballots by Thursday, October 16.

The result of the election will be announced at WAMMCO's AGM in Perth on Wednesday, October 22. Members will also be asked to ratify the appointment of Rod Madden as a Member Director and Mr Greg Kirk as an Independent Director.

Rod resigned as an independent director

from the WAMMCO Board in January 2014 and this position was filled by Greg Kirk, Managing Director of WA agricultural consulting firm Planfarm Pty Ltd.

Rod was appointed to fill the casual vacancy following the resignation of Mr Gerard O'Brien as a Member director in January 2014 and has now been nominated by the Board for appointment by members for a further two years.

Company Secretary Bruce Ede said members and partners were welcome to attend the AGM at 3pm on Wednesday, October 22 and for refreshments and snacks after the meeting.

RSVP to WAMMCO's Katanning office on telephone 1800 199 197

HANDLING THE HUMBLE SHEEPSKIN

A 30 year career in handling and caring for sheepskins and the global community that deals in them, has just ended for WAMMCO's well known Katanning skins manager Jim Gracie.

Jim started with Borthwicks in Albany and moved to Katanning in 1991 after the takeover of the Albany and Katanning plants by Metro Meat. As an employee of WAMMCO from 1999 he oversaw substantial changes in skins management as demand changed from air-dried, predominantly Merino skins that were sold to Europe, to green cured, salted crossbred skins for China and other new markets.

A stark memory for him was the mass burial at Albany and Katanning of hundreds of thousands of sheepskins, rendered unsaleable on world markets by Australia's infamous Flock Reduction Scheme.

However major changes in skin handling and processing technology took place throughout the 1990s, keeping pace with parallel advances in meat processing.

"Keeping our customers happy was a personal role for me and our opinions were regularly sought by many major overseas buyers, who also regularly visited Katanning," Jim said.

At a recent staff presentation, Tony Bessell applauded Jim for his valued service and loyalty to the co-operative and wished him well in his retirement.



□ Tony Bessell (left), Jim Gracie and Rob Panting at Katanning last week

NEW AWARD FOR NEW SEASON LAMB

AUSTRALIA'S biggest and richest lamb competition is under way for 2014/15, with a new section for new season lamb and host WAMMCO and sponsors again lining up with more than \$20,000 in cash & prizes.

Rob Davidson said the new class for new season lamb was for 2014 drop, crossbred, unshorn lambs processed by December 12, 2014.

Other categories were for *Overall Heavyweight (22.1-26 kg) *Trade Weight *Consignments larger than 300 lambs and *Best overall result for traditional first cross lamb (terminal sire over Merino dam).

Primaries, Elders, Farm Weekly, Milne Feeds, NAB agri business, Gallagher Animal Management and Superior Livestock Services have already joined WAMMCO as major sponsors.

The competition is open to minimum consignments of 100 lambs delivered to WAMMCO Katanning between September 8, 2014 and May 29, 2015, identified on the vendors's declaration.

Further details and entry forms are available from Rob Davidson on 0429 380 195, Judy Cameron at Katanning on 9821 2000, Primaries or Elders.