

WAMMCO Info

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



WAMMCO International
A DIVISION OF THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MEAT MARKETING CORPORATION

Supporters since 1978

TWO more pioneers of the Katanning meat processing plant, Lana Lloyd and Alimah Kassim have recently been farewelled by WAMMCO.

In a small ceremony at the plant last week, WAMMCO Katanning manager Tony Bessell said Lana joined Metro Meats in 1978 and was joined by Alimah from Christmas Island in 1979.

He said the couple typified the loyal and reliable

migrant workforce that helped to build WAMMCO's global reputation.

Alimah spent most of his 28 years as a knifehand in the boning room and Lana worked in a variety of roles during her 29 years at Katanning.

☐ Pictured with the couple were Darren Miles (left), Aklie Laurie, Robert Panting and Tony Bessell.



New Focus on Currency

THE dollar has risen back above the 96cent mark to the US currency and continues to erode export returns, according to WAMMCO's marketing manager Damien Giumelli.

"While selling prices have increased significantly in past weeks and American consumers are now paying more for our lamb, the soaring dollar continues to negate the price advantages that should be flowing through to WA producers," he said.

"The WAMMCO team will continue to test all markets to provide better returns including

closer supply arrangements with the domestic market.

"Domestic sales are making up a larger proportion of our business compared to last year, helping us to overcome the impact of the dollar," he said.

Damien leaves WA this week to attend a meeting of WAMMCO's US partners, and will also visit customers in Europe and the UK, where currency, prices and rising farmer production costs will be on the agenda.

More New Zealand Workers for Katanning

WAMMCO is actively seeking more specialist meatworkers from New Zealand this season.

Kiwi slaughtermen and boners have been regulars at Katanning for many years, as they 'migrate' to Katanning during the New Zealand off-season.

"This year, there is a further rationalisation of processing capacity in New Zealand as their sheep numbers also decline, and we are hoping to attract more skilled workers either on an exchange or permanent basis," Katanning manager Tony Bessell said this week.

Quality Lambs Boost US Trade

A CONTINUING high proportion of heavy lambs has enabled WAMMCO to maintain solid sales of quality lamb into the US market.

"We have been surprised by the volume and by the condition

and quality of lambs over the past few months, and pleased that some of our regular producer suppliers have been achieving returns around the \$100 mark," Katanning manager Tony Bessell said this week.

Watch Your Score

WITH producers feeding lambs to meet specifications of WAMMCO's heavy forward contracts, some growers are experiencing fat score 5 issues. Members concerned that their lambs may be too fat should contact a member of the Livestock team as early as possible so that the problem can

be managed.
WAMMCO Livestock contacts are:
Peter Krupa 0427 810 613;
Wayne Radford 0429 944 733;
Brian Norsworthy 0427 955 694;
Rob Davidson 0429 380 195.

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York winners average \$99

A DRAFT of 1300 store Prime SMM cross lambs purchased in February, enabled the Boyle family of 'Hawkhurst' York to take off WAMMCO's Producer of the Month title for May.

The lambs went onto lupin stubbles on 'Hawkhurst' for several weeks before being finished on Wesfeeds pellets in paddock feedlots for six weeks and going on to Katanning.

The winning draft of 630 lambs from the group weighed an average of 25.04 kg per head and returned an average of \$99.14 per head, when killed on May 2.

David, Chris and Simon Boyle of 'Hawkhurst' are third generation, York lamb producers who have traditionally bred crossbreeds as well as trading and fattening store lambs.

"One of the biggest changes for us was adjusting our lamb weights up from 15 kg to 24 kg when WAMMCO became a cooperative and took us into the USA market," Mr Boyle said.

"We have probably delivered about 90 percent of our lambs, or about 20,000 lambs to WAMMCO since then."

The Boyle's successful breeding program for the past 30 years has been based on Border Leicester-Merino mothers and Poll Dorset sires - currently from Don and Bill Handscombe of Quairading and Bruce Gentle and Laurie Fairclough at York.

"We normally mate 2,000 ewes to Poll Dorset rams and achieve 105-115 percent lambs depending on the season," Mr Boyle said.

The lamb/feedlot operation fits well with a wheat/lupin cropping program and an export oaten hay business the Boyles have run for many years.

All lambs are finished in paddock feedlots and are turned off to WAMMCO once they exceed 50 kg.

The family normally buys in up to 2,000 store lambs each year and saw an opportunity to buy the 1300 Prime SMM lamb draft when Beverley producer Pat Curtin retired in February.

"We were not intending to buy stores this season because of the high feed prices, then Pat's lambs came up and we decided to take a punt," Mr Boyle said.

"We had seen SAMMS meeting the market for later lambs, with



☐ Team Effort: At Hawkhurst, (left) Wayne Radford of WAMMCO, stockman Peter Newhill, Simon Boyle, Jim Millar of Landmark York, and Tony Boyle.

good growth rates and low fat scores and these lambs certainly confirmed those traits."

WAMMCO forward contracts are used for around 80 percent of the Boyle family's annual lamb turnover.

Like April WAMMCO winner Jim Alexander of nearby Beverley, Mr Boyle is also a foundation member of WAMMCO and a long-respected advocate for WA's lamb industry, recently returning to Sheepmeat Council of Australia for his sixteenth year.

He is supporting renewed efforts by new federal ministers Tony Burke and Simon Crean to win a greater EU lamb quota for Australia.

Son Simon (24) recently returned to 'Hawkhurst' after completing an apprenticeship with Westrac.

WAMMCO Continues To Gain Membership

A CONTINUING stream of lamb producers are signing up for membership of WAMMCO.

Cooperative chairman Dawson Bradford said a strong membership response since August had enabled WAMMCO to exceed the 90 percent member participation criteria needed to obtain key taxation concessions.

"New members are also finding that WAMMCO pool bonuses can provide a valuable top-up to their prime lamb enterprises, and that there are other tangible benefits flowing from membership," he said.

Mr Bradford said his directors had recently decided to pay pool bonuses on qualifying mutton to members.

"This is a further incentive for members to support their cooperative and to help to keep the Katanning plant at maximum operating

capacity," he said.

Mr Bradford said the Australian sheep industry was experiencing the same change from wether wool sheep to breeding ewes that New Zealand went through some years ago.

"We are seeing less sheep in Australia, but we are not yet seeing any major decline in prime lambs," he said.

He said WAMMCO would keep its focus squarely on heavier lambs for the US and similar markets.

"However as we have been saying for some time, future profit margins will continue to depend on the efficiencies that both producers and processors can achieve," he said.

Mr Bradford is currently visiting the US where he will attend a meeting with WAMMCO's partners in the US.

\$100 plus

A NUMBER of producers have been achieving \$100 per head plus for lambs consigned to WAMMCO.

They include:

R.W. & P.M. Taylor, Lake Grace: 363 Prime SMM xb lambs, average weight 28.6kg, average return per head \$109.30, top value \$124.02/hd.

B.T. & P.A. Brennan, Goomalling: 144 xb lambs, average weight 27.01kg, average return per head \$112.37, top value \$130.38.

M. Cooke & Sons, Grass Valley: 243 South Suffolk cross lambs, average weight 26.36kg, average return per head \$105.99, top value \$126.69.

Clint Willis, South Stirlings: 610 Poll Dorset cross lambs, average weight 24.63kg, average return per head \$101.72, top value \$124.64.

Benchmarking WA Standards

A PERFORMANCE benchmarking project with the Alliance group in New Zealand and the decision to appoint a new 'innovations manager' by WAMMCO are expected to result in improvements to processing standards at Katanning.

Katanning manager Tony Bessell said the performance comparisons with New Zealand had indicated boning room advances in New Zealand that would be incorporated in the Katanning plant.

"We have commissioned a

New Zealand company to carry out the necessary scoping and design for Katanning that will see us retrofit key improvements to our boning operations," he said.

WAMMCO was also working with MLA to appoint an innovations manager to set new development strategies for the Katanning plant incorporating the latest global technology as well as effective improvements suggested by staff at Katanning.

On the audit side, WAMMCO Katanning recently passed its formal inspection for European accreditation.