

# WAMMCO *Info*

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

## BONING ROOM BONUS

WAMMCO's new \$5 million Katanning boning room has paid an early bonus by helping to deliver the lowest October cost of production per lamb unit for five years.

Katanning plant manager Tony Bessell said the cost efficiencies and higher percentage of specialty vacuum packed products achieved made October a record-breaking production month for the cooperative.

He said the improved performance, which has continued into November, is assisting WAMMCO to address tight margins due to much lighter, high priced lambs at home and the soaring Australian dollar.

"We have already achieved significant savings on labour and the new system continues to offer gains as staff work to refine the operation even further," Mr Bessell said.

He said the reduction in processing cost per unit achieved in October coincided with the lowest October volume of lambs handled at Katanning since 2005.

"The achievement was even more pleasing because the number of vacuum packed outputs per lamb unit increased by



□ Premier Colin Barnett (left) and Jim Chown, MLC, were impressed with the Katanning boning room on a visit shortly after its opening.

18 per cent on our previous best in June 2007," Mr Bessell said.

WAMMCO's Katanning boning room project had also been awarded a grant of \$1,106,000 under the federal government's Regional Food Producers Productivity and Innovation Program for reducing the plant's environmental 'footprint.'

"We were able to qualify with innovative ways of increasing productivity and

value adding whilst significantly reducing waste," he said.

Agriculture and Food Minister Terry Redman officially opened the new \$5 million plant in late September before an audience of local and industry representatives and Premier Barnett made an official visit to the plant on October 8.

WAMMCO's next capital investment program at Katanning will be to upgrade the plant's 30-year-old blast freezer cells. This activity is in line with the government initiative of encouraging businesses to 'retool for climate change.'

□ WAMMCO chairman Dawson Bradford (left) and Agriculture and Food Minister Terry Redman at the official opening of Katanning's new \$5 million boning room



## New Director Welcomed



□ Bruce Wright (right) of Mt Barker, who is retiring after six years as a WAMMCO director, was pictured congratulating the newly appointed director Craig Heggaton of Kojonup at the recent AGM in Mt Barker.

WAMMCO's newest director, Dr Craig Heggaton of Kojonup, attended his first board meeting at the cooperative's head office in Perth this month.

Craig's appointment as successor to retiring director Bruce Wright was announced by WAMMCO chairman Dawson Bradford at the AGM in Mt Barker last month.

The founder of Genstock, Kojonup and of a private composite sheep breeding and farming enterprise that will turn off 12,000 prime lambs this year, Craig won in a postal ballot from Donna Lynch of Hyden and Lyn Slade of Mt Barker.

"These are challenging times for WAMMCO," he said after last week's meeting.

"However I was greatly encouraged to see how already Katanning's new boning room is assisting to cut costs and to boost efficiency.

"WAMMCO and its members will be depending more and more on innovations like that especially while lamb supplies are tight and export competition is intense."

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## Visa Audit at Katanning

A FORMAL Mintrac audit of the work of Chinese 457 Visa holders was conducted at Katanning last week as part of the process of determining their future when the four-year visas expire in February next year.

"We have 70 Chinese employees and many members of their families anxiously waiting to see if they can remain in Australia," Tony Bessell said this week.

"WAMMCO is also extremely anxious because the visa holders have grown to become integral to our operations over the past four years," he said.

Slaughterman Zutong Chen (36) and wife Chunxia Huang are planning to build a Chinese style home in Katanning if his young family is permitted to stay in Australia.

He and fellow-slaughterman Lin Xinlong (38), said they both enjoyed the WAMMCO community and the lives they had developed for their families in Katanning.



Zutong Chen (left) and Lin Xinlong were pictured at the Katanning plant with Rob Panting (centre).

## New visitors to WAMMCO

NOVEMBER has been a busy time for international visitors to WAMMCO.

Marketing Manager Damien Giumelli said visitors had included top level retailers from the UK on their first visit to WA, representatives of a major US supermarket chain and also some potential new customers from Japan.

"All of the visitors were greatly impressed by the quality of our product and by the Katanning processing facility, particularly the new boning room," Damien said.

"Positive visits such as these are of great value, especially at a time when WAMMCO

is contending with dramatic currency fluctuations, lamb supply shortages and strong competition from increasing seasonal supply out of New Zealand and Eastern Australia."

Most of WAMMCO's chilled products are shipped in sea freight containers, but there has been a recent increase in chilled airfreight consignments to a number of markets.

Weekly chilled airfreight consignments are currently being delivered to the Middle East, Belgium and Switzerland.

## Big call on mutton

WAMMCO's role as a respected global supplier of lamb has not diminished its significant on-going business in processed mutton.

"Cooperative members often overlook the fact that WAMMCO has substantial forward orders for mutton and that we offer highly competitive prices for adult sheep," Livestock Manager Peter Krupa said this week.

"A big proportion of our mutton goes to buoyant markets in the Middle East and strong mutton sales are certainly assisting WAMMCO through the current tight lamb supply in WA," he said.

Peter said WAMMCO had also upgraded its lamb schedules and would also be offering premiums on 22-30kg lambs to cover the extra grain feeding costs of producer members.

Flock owners seeking WAMMCO quotes on mutton or lamb should contact their local stock agent, WAMMCO buyers, or the office at Katanning on 98 212000.

## Christmas Greetings

WAMMCO directors and staff extend their thanks and Christmas best wishes to members and supporters of the cooperative for their support during 2009 and for a prosperous 2010.

## Slow start to lamb entries

THERE has been a slow start to WAMMCO's 2009 State Lamb Competition due to the difficult season.

However, with more than \$17,000 in cash and prizes on offer, competition coordinator Rob Davidson expected the flow of entries to increase as producer focus started to return to livestock after the 2009 harvest.

"Traditionally, the competition has rewarded the production of heavy, lean, well muscled lambs ideally averaging 24-27 kg," Rob said.

"However this season we have also introduced two new categories to run alongside the traditional competition specifications. The first is a lighter lamb

category (18-21 kg) and a second new category is for members wishing to enter larger consignments of more than 300 lambs."

Many producers, particularly of lighter lambs and bigger drafts will have three chances to win an award.

"However we are hoping many of our regular competitors will return this year and will also be encouraging new entrants before entries close on Thursday, February 25 next year," Rob said.

The competition is proudly sponsored by Elders, Landmark, Primaries, Milne Feeds, Superior Livestock Services, and Farm Weekly as well as WAMMCO International.