

## **BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Newsflash - 13/2/09**

This Newsflash email is funded by Australian Wool Innovation and Department of Primary Industries.

What's happening in the BWBL groups - check the [website](#) to read about coming activities in the groups across the state and coming events organised by the program.

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### **Victorian Bushfires**

Our hearts go out to those who have been affected by the recent bushfires - personally the tears have been running down my face each night as I listen to the news and the stories.

The most helpful websites that I have been able to find for those who need more information and help is the [Victoria Online website](#), the [VFF website](#) and the [Disaster Assist website](#)

Producers wishing to donate fodder, assist with agistment or donate to the VFF's Disaster Relief Fund can do so via the VFF's website or via phone on **1300 882 833**. The VFF's website also contains a list of key contacts as well as other relevant bushfire information.

### **State and Federal Government Bushfire Support**

The Prime Minister has announced a special payment for people who have lost their farm, business or place where they work because of the bushfires. The payment will be made fortnightly for 13 weeks at a rate equivalent to the Centrelink Newstart Allowance. No activity tests or job searches will be required. Funeral/memorial and related costs assistance of up to \$5,000 is available to the immediate family member of an Australian who has died as a result of the January/February 2009 Victorian bushfires. This assistance is to support families with a funeral or memorial and related costs.

For information on eligibility, contact the Australian Government Victorian bushfires Hotline on **180 2211**.

### Immediate Government Support

The Australian Government is providing immediate, additional assistance to the people who have been adversely affected by the series of bushfires in the state of Victoria, which commenced on 29 January 2009 and may continue into March 2009.

Payments of \$1,000 per eligible adult and \$400 per eligible child, will be available - criteria exist for this payment.

For more information on eligibility or any queries contact Centrelink on 180 2211 or [Centrelink website](#)

### Temporary Living and Re-Establishment Grants

A temporary living and re-establishment grant is available to people whose principal place of residence has been made uninhabitable by bushfire.

Metropolitan - Eastern Region 9843 6000 - North & West Region 1300 664 977 - Southern Region 9213 2111

Rural - Barwon-South West 5226 4540 - Gippsland 5177 2500 - Grampians 5333 6669 - Hume 5722 0555 - Loddon-Mallee 5434 5555

**Local Government Support** - People seeking assistance should also contact their local municipal council to ensure they are aware of the full range of assistance available to those affected by fire or other emergencies - visit [www.mav.asn.au](http://www.mav.asn.au)

### Elders Vic Sire Evaluation Field day

**WHEN:** Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February

**WHERE:** Tuloona at 10 00 am (5kms south of Harrow on Coleraine-Harrow Rd) - Final display of 2007 drop  
And at Mokanger at 2.00pm (7kms east of Cavendish on Mokanger Rd) - First display of 2008 drop  
Guest speaker - speaking about the Sheep CRC Information Nucleus at 4.00pm followed by a BBQ and refreshments - at Mokanger.

**Contact is Tom Silcock - Ph (03) 5388 2238 and Tania Rentsch - Ph (03) 5576 5051**

### EverGraze Field Days

Could lucerne fit into your farming system? What lucerne can do for you & how to make it all work.

**WHEN:** Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2009

**WHERE:** Brewster Hall, Kayley's Lane, Brewster - Followed by visit to Stuart Ellis's EverGraze Field Site

**TIME:** 9.30am to 12.30pm

**WHAT'S COVERED:** See how Stuart Ellis is using dry land lucerne to finish lambs within a winter cropping operation. - Guest presenter, Simon Falkiner from the Grain&Graze program with address

- What is the opportunity for lucerne in the region and how it fits into grazing & cropping farming systems
- How to maximise the benefit of lucerne - volume of feed & timing of feed availability
- Preparation for sowing lucerne, grazing & weed management to gain the best utilisation and longevity from the stand

**Contact Raquel Waller by Monday 16<sup>th</sup> February on 52264071 or 0419 513 376**

AND

Lucerne productive and profitable - How to grow and use and new varieties for western Victoria

**WHEN:** Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2009

**WHERE:** Hamilton DPI Office, Mount Napier RD

**TIME:** 9.30am to 3.00pm - lunch provided

**WHAT'S COVERED:**

- Genetic improvement in lucerne, past, present, future with international speaker Bill Knipe, Manager Forage Genetics International USA
- If you can grow lucerne you should! With EverGraze site leader Ralph Behrendt
- Establishment, which cultivar? With Reg Hill, PGG Wrightson
- Animal nutrition, getting the best from grazed lucerne with Sean Miller, Rural Solutions SA
- Panel discussion with all speakers & agronomist Will Osmond and local producer Mark Jarvis
- Field visit to the EverGraze lucerne plots

**Contact Anita Morant by Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> March on 5573 0732 or 0427 329 541**

### [Fox Stop 2009 - Taking Action on Foxes](#)

A new generation partnership between peak hunter groups and the Brumby Government to reward fox hunters will aim to reduce the impact of foxes in Victoria.

The Hunter Reward program will be managed by Field and Game Australia (FGA) and Sporting Shooters Associations of Australia (SSAA) who will actively reward their members for participating in fox control activities.

Launching the new program at a property near Ararat, Agriculture Minister Joe Helper said the Brumby Government would commit \$400,000 to support the establishment of the program over the next four years. Both FGA and SSAA are ideally placed to manage this program; they are committed to ethical hunting and have significant links to the outdoor recreation industry who can further build this initiative by becoming a program sponsor.

FGA chief executive officer Rod Drew said this initiative recognised the valuable contribution hunters make to fox eradication and provides rewards for the volunteer members who spend countless hours and dollars on fox eradication activities.

### [All Sheep Now Need To Be NLIS Tagged](#)

Victorian sheepmeat producers and wool growers are reminded that new National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) tagging requirements commenced nationally on 1 January 2009.

The Department of Primary Industries' (DPI) Manager of the Animal Standards Branch, Tony Britt, says all sheep, as well as meat and fibre producing goats, that are leaving a property must now be identified with an NLIS (Sheep) tag.

A tagging exemption for sheep and goats sent to an abattoir on an 'over the hooks' basis and for old sheep and goats has operated since the commencement of the NLIS (Sheep & Goats)," Dr Britt said. "These exemptions have now been removed, following national agreement between the sheep and goat industries and State and Commonwealth governments.

There is national agreement that the tagging exemptions for dairy goat breeds, and also for feral goats consigned directly to slaughter, should continue.

The NLIS (Sheep) tags that are used must be printed with the Property Identification Code (PIC) of the property on which the sheep or goats are being tagged.

Breeders are encouraged to use NLIS (Sheep) breeder tags that are the correct 'year of birth' colour.

The 'year of birth' colour for 2009 is white. A pink NLIS (Sheep) post-breeder tag should be used to identify sheep and goats that are yet to be tagged but have already left their properties of birth.

Consignors of sheep and goats must provide a correctly completed National Vendor Declaration (NVD) form to the person receiving their livestock.

**For further information about the operation of the NLIS (Sheep & Goats), please visit [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/nlis](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/nlis) or call 1800 678 779 during business hours.**

### [AgriGater Program Supports On-Farm Decision Making](#)

Practical support for good farm business planning and budgeting is now more accessible with the launch of the Brumby Government's new improved AgriGater business software program.

Launching the new program in Bendigo last week, Agriculture Minister Joe Helper said the first version of AgriGater had proven to be a key on-farm business management tool.

As part of the Future Farming Strategy to boost farming services, drive growth and innovation in agriculture, the AgriGater program has been updated and expanded to include sheep, beef, cattle and horticulture industries. Significant improvements have also been made to AgriGater's ability to help farmers understand their financial situation and manage risk.

In times of dry periods, forward planning and budgeting is essential, now more than ever and the AgriGater program allows the farm business operator to take more control of their business and position it for future growth and performance.

AgriGater was developed in a user-friendly format that is uncomplicated in its appearance and easy to navigate and it doesn't require any experience with accounting, book-keeping or record-keeping.

Generated reports have the ability to provide farm businesses with critical information for farmers and their service providers, for example the finance report can be given to bankers, the input shopping list to rural suppliers and the management plan to farm workers.

Farmers can obtain a free CD of the program by calling the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186, or they can download a free copy from the DPI website [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/AgriGater](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/AgriGater)  
Ask your BWBL Coordinators about AgriGater - they have had training in how to use the program.

#### [VFF/Elders Apprentice of the Year Applications Open](#)

Applications for the 2009 VFF/Elders Apprentice of the Year Award are now open to Certificate 3 and 4 apprentices. Every applicant receives a free 12 month VFF student membership. Marcus Oldham College provides two scholarships to the week-long Rural Leadership Program in 2010, one each for the winner and the runner-up. The overall winner will also receive the latest Honda CTX200A motorbike.

**Application forms are available on request from the VFF - ph 1300 882 833.** Applications close Monday February 16, 2009.

#### [World Retailers Told Wool Supply Linked to Price](#)

A delegation representing Australia's woolgrowers has told customers throughout Europe that continued supply of Australian wool depends on a fair price being paid.

The delegation led by Yass woolgrower Barry Walker, Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) Director Dr Meredith Sheil and AWI Strategic Adviser Stuart McCullough met with processors in Italy, Germany and the UK and delivered a powerful message ... "if you want the world's best wool - produced to the world's highest ethical standards - then you just have to ask for it and pay for it".

According to Barry Walker the realisation that large amounts of ethically produced wool were already on the market came as a relief to processors.

Wool is now clearly identified and readily available through the auction system and supply chain alliances. AWI remains focused on developing viable alternatives and have in-fact increased program expenditure since the change of the AWI Board in November 2008.

Released by: Michael Gleeson Senior Media Manager Phone 02 8295 3168 or Mobile 0400 096 924

#### [Tackling Human Health Issues on Farm](#)

DPI is seeking expressions of interest from farming groups who want to be part of a Sustainable Farm Families program in their local area. Applications close on 27 March 2009.

Working long hours, often far from town, farming men and women and their families can often neglect the importance of preventative health care. Making the time for health and wellbeing is often the last thing on a busy farm agenda. Developed to bring better health, wellbeing and safety to people on the land, SFF is a program of practical, straightforward information and advice that has proved life-changing for many participants. The program provides individual health assessments, and topics covered include cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, stress, women and men's health issues, nutrition, physical activity, anxiety and depression as well as farm safety. There are practical applications for the information such as learning to read food labels, assessing the nutritional value and understanding what it means for you and your family's health. **Contact Emily Moule on 5824 5502 or your Coordinator who has the application and information.**

And from George Burns "Grief and tragedy and hatred are only for a time. Goodness, remembrance and love have no end."

Have a good weekend, Annette  
BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Administrator