

## **BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Newsflash – 6/11/09**

This Newsflash email is funded by [Australian Wool Innovation](#) and [Department of Primary Industries](#).

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### [2008/09 Sheep Industry Farm Monitor Project](#) *Tony Berrisford, FSV*

DPI and BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB has recently published the 2008-09 Sheep Industry Farm Monitor Project Report about the production and profitability of the 2008-09 Victorian sheep industry. The report is based on information from 72 Victorian farms - 25 from the South-West, 24 from the North-East and 23 from Gippsland. The 2008-09 report reveals that:

- Top wool and prime lamb enterprises can generate good returns even with challenging conditions.
- Reduced spring rainfall resulting in poor pasture growth and high fodder prices impacted on profitability.
- The average operating profit was \$16 a hectare (ha), the second lowest in five years, and a reduction of \$121 per ha on the previous year.
- The top 25 per cent of farmers achieved an operating profit of \$200 per ha, despite difficult conditions.
- The statewide average stocking rate has reduced by 1.7 Dry Sheep Equivalent (DSE)/ha to 12.7 DSE/ha.
- The average wool price for the state was 889 cents a kilogram (kg) clean fleece weight, a reduction of 53 cents on the 2007-08 year. The lamb price on average for the state has increased by 56 cents to \$3.81 a kg carcass weight.

You can download the [report](#) containing a full break down of state and regional sheep industry data on the DPI website [www.dpi.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au)

### [Farm Improvement Grant Program](#)

**Purpose** To stimulate useful investment in farm business improvements that support drought-affected farmers.

**Details** Grants are available to implement farm business improvements for eligible farm businesses whose owners have received an Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment (ECRP) from Centrelink between 22 Oct 09 and 30 Jun 2010, as follows:

**Grant One: Northern Region ECRP Irrigators:** The grant will fund two-thirds (i.e. \$2 for \$1) of the total cost, up to a maximum grant of \$2,000 per eligible farm business. **OR**

**Grant Two: All other farm businesses receiving ECRP:** The grant will fund half (i.e. \$1 for \$1) the total cost, up to a maximum grant of \$1,000 per eligible farm business.

GST will be excluded from any grant payment. Farm businesses may only claim one grant. The farm business improvement must be purchased (i.e. ordered and paid for) on or after 22 October 2009.

All applications must be received by close of business 30 June 2010.

**Who is eligible?** Farm businesses are required to meet the following eligibility criteria:

**Grant One: Northern Region ECRP Irrigators:**

1. Farmers who have received Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payments (ECRP) between 22 Oct09 and 30 June 2010;

2. Farmer's main business is irrigated agriculture, based on the EC enterprise classification, and declared on their EC certificate

Details on any other drought related service or assistance are available from the **Drought Information Line** on **136 186** or at [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/drought)

**Who is eligible?** 3. Farm business is located in: EC Declaration Area 1 (Mallee-Northern Wimmera), EC Declaration Area 3 (Central Victoria North), EC Declaration Area 5 (Northern Victoria) or on the Broken Irrigation System.

**Grant Two: All other farm businesses receiving ECRP**

1. Farmers who have received an Exceptional Circumstances Relief Payment (ECRP) between 22 Oct09 and 30 June 2010.

**Eligible farm business improvements:** Farmers may claim the grants for: permanent upgrades to fixed, on-farm infrastructure, or purchase and installation of new on-farm capital improvements. Examples of eligible improvements include: fixed fodder storages and systems (e.g. silos, hay sheds) irrigation system upgrades permanent repairs to fixed infrastructure (e.g., irrigation pumps) improvements in packing sheds or on-farm nurseries for seedlings.

**Further information** Rural Finance has been appointed to administer the Farm Improvement Grant program and to distribute the grants on behalf of DPI.

Contact Rural Finance: Ph: (03) 5448 2600 Fax: (03) 5441 8901 Email: [admin@ruralfinance.com.au](mailto:admin@ruralfinance.com.au)

Website: [www.ruralfinance.com.au](http://www.ruralfinance.com.au) Applications can be downloaded from the website.

**[Next Gen Farmers Grants Now Open](#)** *David Peake, Marketing and Communication*

The Australian Government's Next Gen Farmers grants program is offering financial assistance to the value of \$50,000 (exclusive of GST) to support people 18 to 25 years of age living and working in rural Australia. Consideration will be given to proposals that have the potential to provide tangible outcomes for Australia's farming future. Incorporated organisations involved in agriculture, fisheries and forestry, or from organisations uniting to stage an event for young people should consider applying for a grant. The Next Gen Farmers grants will support activities for young people that aim to:

- build and share knowledge and experience
- increase access to planning tools and resources
- develop leadership and management skills
- develop pathways to increase participation in primary industries
- develop skills to contribute more effectively to government and industry decision-making
- build networks among rural, regional and remote Australians.

The closing date for applications is 13 November 2009. For more information about the program visit the [Next Gen Farmers](#) website (external link), email [nextgenfarmers@daff.gov.au](mailto:nextgenfarmers@daff.gov.au) or contact the Australia's Farming Future hotline 1800 638 746.

**[Stay Informed Behind the Wheel](#)**

Grain growers spending time behind the wheel this harvest can put those hours to even more productive use.

The Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) is about to release a new audio compact disc featuring a compilation of presentations on current industry issues and topics.

Designed specifically for growers in the southern cropping zone, the GRDC Driving Agronomy 2010 CD comprises 15 tracks offering the latest research, development and extension information.

Subjects include salinity in the Murray Darling Basin, water use efficiency, perennial pasture on grain farms, Cereal Cyst Nematode, new pulse varieties for 2010, canopy management in wheat and barley, on-farm grain storage, and safety on farms. Other topics include the new GPS network to aid precision agriculture, what makes a profitable farm, soil health website, nitrous oxide and climate change, a new phosphate test, testing for herbicide resistance, and increased vigour in new wheat varieties.

The audio CD will be included in the November-December edition of GRDC's Ground Cover magazine, and will also be available free (plus postage and handling) through GRDC's Ground Cover Direct - freecall 1800 110044 or email [ground-cover-direct@canprint.com.au](mailto:ground-cover-direct@canprint.com.au).

### [New Grants Available for Organic Food Producers](#)

The Victorian Government has announced a new \$400,000 grants package for the state's organic food industry.

To be eligible, businesses or projects must aim to build the capacity of the organic sector for future growth and increase the awareness of consumers and producers of the organic sector.

Businesses or projects must also aim to encourage exports, develop supply chain or value chain capacity, raise knowledge and awareness of the organic produce, develop leadership and business skills, or demonstrate innovation in products and or processes.

The Organic Grants Program is funded under the Victorian Government's four-year \$205 million Future Farming Strategy, which set out new investment to help the farming sector response to change, drive innovation and capture new market opportunities.

**For more information on how to apply for grants visit [www.business.vic.gov.au](http://www.business.vic.gov.au)**

### [EverGraze Workshop](#)

The Warrenbayne EverGraze workshop is happening on the 12th of November from 4:30pm to 8pm with BBQ tea. This workshop will cover native grass and other pasture species ID with Peter Mitchell, look at the response to landclass fencing, rotational grazing and strategic management of natives on the supporting site at the Pruden's property and looking at the cost/benefit of pasture establishment with Alison Desmond. Check out the EverGraze website for details of this event and others (including Benambra on the 10th of November) happening in the North East <http://www.evergraze.com.au/events.htm>

### [Community Water Forum - "What's Happening with Water?"](#)

WHEN: Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at 12.45pm for a 1.00pm start finishing at 5.00pm

WHERE: At the Seymour Club, Cnr Elizabeth and Tallarook St, Seymour

The objectives are to develop a shared understanding of:

- Relevant water policy, processes for policy formulation, key factors influencing water policy and likely changes, particularly relating to dryland agricultural areas.
- The current water resource in the GB catchment, the state of scientific knowledge and likely changes to ground and surface water in the face of prolonged drought and climate change.
- Key agencies in the Goulburn Broken catchment that manage the water resource. And
- To identify community concerns and issues on water resources in the catchment and the processes for community input on water management.

**RSVP essential to Chris Burnett on 5736 0100**

### [Be Rewarded for Going Solar](#) *Katharina Benzler, Energy Sector Development*

The new premium feed-in tariff for solar power, introduced on 1 November 2009, enables Victorians to install roof top solar panels and receive a premium rate for unused electricity they feed back into the state electricity grid. Households, community organisations and small businesses with energy consumption less than 100 megawatt hours a year and with solar photovoltaic (PV) systems up to five kilowatts in size, are eligible to receive a credit of at least 60 cents per kilowatt hour for excess electricity they feed back into the state electricity grid. This premium rate is over three times higher than the standard retail rate customers pay

for electricity. The premium feed-in tariff encourages Victorians to reduce their individual carbon footprint, by making solar panels more economical for the average household and rewarding Victorians who return unused power to the state electricity grid. The premium feed-in tariff for solar power will be available in Victoria for the next 15 years, for a total capacity of 100 megawatts of solar power across Victoria. **For more information on Victoria's feed-in tariffs and to see whether you too can be rewarded visit [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/feedintariff](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/feedintariff)**

### **DPI Queenscliff Open Day** *Julie Murphy*

Have you ever wondered what happens in the grass roofed building in Queenscliff? On Sunday 8 November 2009, the DPI Queenscliff Centre will open its doors to the public between 11am and 3pm. The Open Day is a great opportunity to speak with leading researchers and learn more about how the Centre's research activities contribute to the enhancement and protection of our fisheries resources and the environment. The day will include demonstrations, displays of boats and scientific equipment, building tours, and free activities at the Marine Discovery Centre. Come along for a free day of entertainment and education for the whole family.

### **Managing Glyphosate Resistance**

Glyphosate resistance will develop most rapidly where there is intensive use of glyphosate, with no other effective herbicides or weed management strategies employed.

Continued use of glyphosate will increase the frequency of glyphosate resistance in weed populations.

Glyphosate resistant populations can be adequately managed through a combination of seed set control, competition and alternative herbicides.

To minimise the risk of glyphosate resistance developing:

- Use alternative weed control practices to glyphosate wherever practical, including on non-cropped areas such as chemical fallows and fence lines.
- Maintain crop competition wherever possible
- When 'double knock' spraying apply high rates of Spray.Seed within five days of the glyphosate spray.

Use robust rates of paraquat-based products in the 'double knock' to minimise the risk of paraquat resistance evolving.

Double knock will not adequately control glyphosate-resistant annual ryegrass populations if the plants are too large, paraquat rates are too low or the time between herbicide applications is greater than five days.

**For more information contact Chris Preston on 08 8303 7262**

### **Practical Wisdom Notes**

Sheep CRC Practical Wisdom is a series of technical notes to assist sheep producers to make sound decisions about technology and practices and then to have the know-how to implement their decisions.

These notes are created around the technology and practices that the Sheep CRC has investigated, thus they are not intended to cover all aspects of sheep management. However, you can expect more new notes at this site as they convert their research results into useful information. [Click here to go to Practical Wisdom](#)

### **Notes - Nutrition Series**

Have a good weekend, Annette  
BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Administrator