

## **BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Newsflash – 26/2/2010**

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

Visit the BWBL website a new video clip has been added to promote the BWBL FEWETURE FARMING conference - look under events then conferences then 2010 conference.

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### [Phone Seminar - Interpreting Soil Tests - Wednesday March 17](#)

**ON day Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at 1.00pm** BWBL will host a phone seminar about interpreting soil tests, with Jim Shovelton, agronomist with Mike Stephens & Associates with a 10 minute around the state brief report on flock health updates and alerts at the end of the session.

The high cost of fertiliser and pasture establishment necessitates being choosy about the right products to apply to meet soil and plant needs. The next BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB phone conference will run through how to interpret a soil test to identify limitations for plant growth to help make the most cost effective decisions on topdressing pastures. It will cover how to identify whether the main nutrients of phosphorus, potassium and sulphur are limiting, whether responses will be limited by soil problems like acidity, salinity or soil structure. How do you use measures of phosphorus buffering index, organic carbon and cation exchange capacity?

*Flock Health updates and alerts from around the state - 3 reputable veterinary and animal health officers will give a brief report.*

**To participate in the phone seminar register by calling 5355 0531**

### [Understanding Soils and Fertilisers](#)

Ballarat region's lamb and wool producers have the opportunity to become more strategic in their fertiliser decisions. The Understanding Soils and Fertilisers Information Day will cover soil testing, fertiliser options and look at soil carbon.

As fertiliser prices rise, it is important for farmers to make strategic fertiliser decisions. Fertiliser application should be part of a long-term farm business strategy as it directly impacts on farm profitability.

This information day is about helping farmers and advisers better understand soil fertility and the options available to them so they can make informed management decisions to improve profitability and environmental outcomes.

The Ballarat BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB group understands the importance of the topic and is supporting the information day. Guest speakers on the day will cover:

How to read a soil test and understanding your soil - Fiona Baker from DPI Ellinbank

How to cost and compare fertilisers - Fiona Baker from DPI Ellinbank

Alternative fertilisers and how they compare - Lisa Warn from the MacKinnon Project

Soil carbon, what is it and why do we need - Cath Botta, private consultant

The free information day is open to all interested sheep and lamb producers.

**WHEN:** 8.30am to 11.30am, Tuesday, March 2, 2010

**WHERE:** Burrumbeet Hall, Ballarat

**To register for the day contact Sam Clayfield, DPI Ballarat on 5336 6868 or Neil James, DPI Ballarat on 5336 6620.**

### [Market Outlook](#)

Commodity market forecasts and the outlook for lamb, beef and grain will be on the menu during a forum at Derrinallum on Wednesday March 3.

Organised by the Western Plains BWBL group the event will feature guest speaker Rob Herrmann from AG Concepts Ballarat.

Mr Herrmann, who has more than 20 years experience in agriculture, is positive about the short-term prospects for sheep but stressed the need to manage a farm business well.

**WHEN:** Wednesday March 3 at 6.00pm

**WHERE:** Derrinallum Hotel

**To register for this dinner contact Kate McCue on 5561 9902**

### [Making Decisions for the Future](#)

A free AgFutures forum in Kerang is being held to arm farm families with the information they need to embrace change and make better informed decisions during this challenging time in agriculture.

Drought, climate change, increased competition for natural resources, population change and global economic conditions are all providing real challenges for our farming communities. In providing farming families with the most up-to-date and reliable information about changes affecting agriculture, DPI is providing farmers with a platform from which they can make better long-term farm business decisions. Guest speakers:

- Tim Shanahan of the North Central Catchment Management Authority will be presenting on the New Dryland Project and how changes to irrigation will affect the Kerang area.
- DPI Senior Agribusiness Development Officer Brian Kearns will be speaking on new and emerging agricultural markets both globally and locally.

**WHEN:** 6pm to 9pm, Thursday, March 4, 2010

**WHERE:** Kerang Hotel, Kerang

**To register your attendance please contact Sheri Streilein on (03) 5450 9564.** Registrations close on Monday, March 1. For further information on the program, visit the AgFutures website at [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agfutures](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/agfutures) or call the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

### [Sheep Health and Lice Day](#)

Join Animal Health Consultant Richard Keys at a sheep health and lice day. Lice control options, eradication and resistance will be highlights of the day. The following topics will be discussed:

- Diazinon and chemical handling update
- Animal health company representatives will attend
- Weed identification and livestock toxicities
- Please bring weeds for identification purposes in a sealed bag
- Nutrition on pre lambing and weaning
- Electronic MLIS identification technology update

**WHEN:** Wednesday March 10

**WHERE:** Redesdale Hall

**COST:** Free - a BBQ lunch will be provided

**RSVP:** by March 5 to Stacey Anderson on 5430 4714

### [Cattle and Sheep Feedlot Industries in Victoria](#)

Are you interested in the cattle and sheep feedlot industries? Do you want to feedlot or already run a feedlot operation? Do you provide information about feedlotting to others?

A valuable informative session on the industries is to be held on

**WHEN:** Wednesday March 10 from 10.00am to 2.30pm

**WHERE:** DPI - Bendigo Office, Cnr Midland Hwy & Taylor Street, Epsom

There is no cost for attending - Lunch provided - **To Register** RSVP phone or email by Friday 5th March to **Greg Ferrier, DPI Rutherglen, ph 0438 738 634** or [greg.ferrier@dpi.vic.gov.au](mailto:greg.ferrier@dpi.vic.gov.au) OR **Darren Keating, VFF Livestock, ph 03 9207 5545** or [dkeating@vff.org.au](mailto:dkeating@vff.org.au)

This workshop is being provided through the support of the VFF and DPI's Farm Services Victoria.

### [SCA e-newsletter](#)

The Sheepmeat Council of Australia (SCA) is the nation's peak body representing and promoting the national and international interests of lamb and sheepmeat producers in Australia.

Issued every few months, Sheepmeat Council of Australia's e-newsletter provides a 'snap shot' update on the key issues affecting sheepmeat producers that the Council is working through at the national level.

Check SCA website for the first issue for the year!

You can choose to subscribe to receive SCA's FREE e-newsletter via SCA's website, [www.sheepmeatcouncil.com.au](http://www.sheepmeatcouncil.com.au)

Sheepmeat Council encourages you to get involved and have your say on the issues affecting you as a sheepmeat producer. Join your state farming organisation and have a say at the national level through SCA.

### [Smart Meters - Advanced Metering Infrastructure](#)

Smart meters are being rolled out to all Victorian households and small businesses over the next four years to help people better manage their energy use and cut carbon emissions. The new smart meters - also known as advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) - will provide two-way communication between your electricity meter and your power company, making more immediate information about your electricity use available to you both. It's a key step towards future smart electricity grids, which we need so that more renewable energy can be fed into the grid.

The meters will allow customers to access accurate electricity reads every 30 minutes, which helps to monitor and reduce electricity usage - and save money on power bills. It will be easier to connect and disconnect power when you move house, and power companies will be able to identify outages and restore power more quickly. It will also mean the end of estimated bills or staying in for meter readings.

Electricity distribution companies - who own the poles and wires which deliver electricity to your homes and businesses - started installing meters in September 2009 and will finish by the end of 2013.

### [Suffering an Office Meltdown](#)

**WHEN:** Thursday March 18 from 8.30am to 4.00pm

**WHERE:** Nectar Ambrosia, Barkly St, Ararat

A fun day of useful tips and information on every aspect of running an efficient farm office. Presenter Jeanette Buegge covers the following aspects:

- Office design - where's the desk, I know it's here somewhere!
- Essential office equipment - the stapler swiped from the kids is not good enough!
- Sorting the mail - or how to reduce the "piles syndrome"
- Filing systems - Do you use the slow combustion stove to file?
- Farm meetings - what, you expect us to communicate
- Physical farm records - what goes where and when
- Staff - yes, they need to be paid and have super taken out

Jeanette is involved in the physical and managerial aspects of the farm (11,000 acres wheat and sheep). She works as a contractor for Co-operative Bulk Handling, facilitating Quality Assurance.

**Register with Nickie Berrisford on 5226 4075 or 0428 622 655**

The cost of this course \$330 is fully refunded through FarmReady. FarmReady application must be completed and sent to FarmReady at least 5 days before the start of the course.

Blessed are they who can laugh at themselves for they shall never cease to be amused.

Have a good weekend, Annette  
BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Administrator