

The Leading Sheep Project

**North & Central West Region
practical information booklet
for new and existing sheep
and wool producers.**



**Leading Sheep maximising
productivity in good and hard times.**



About Leading Sheep

We know that many producers are thinking about running sheep on their property, this booklet is to increase the awareness of the Leading Sheep Project and the work that we do.

Leading Sheep assists Queensland's sheep and wool producers to maximise productivity in good and hard times. To do this, Leading Sheep maintains a high level of engagement with producers in three regions across Queensland - south, south west and north/central west.

For each region there is a committee of local producers and service providers, who are engaged with local sheep and wool producers. This committee works together to determine and deliver on local priorities. The Leading Sheep Project creates, identifies and promotes opportunities for sheep and wool industry members to shape the direction of a thriving industry.

Leading Sheep encourages all producers, and particularly those aged between 18 and 39 years, to take part in the program. Our priority objectives include:

- drought planning and management
- pest animal management
- ewe and lamb survival
- business performance and
- beneficial technologies.

To subscribe to the Leading Sheep newsletter, visit leadingsheep.com.au and click subscribe. You can nominate to receive information relevant to your region and interests. Email leadingsheep@daf.qld.gov.au for feedback or more information.

Leading Sheep is an important partnership between the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and Australian Wool Innovation, and is supported by AgForce.



Managing Wild Dogs

In much of Queensland, if you have sheep on your property, you've got wild dogs. This then means that you most likely have fencing to help manage the impact of wild dogs.

Fencing, be it netting, hingejoint or electric has become the go-to tool to help manage wild dogs across Australia. While it is very effective, fencing alone will not solve the wild dog problem - other tools also need to be used.

A combination of fencing, baiting, trapping, shooting and working with neighbors is needed to minimise the impact that wild dogs and other pests have on your sheep's health and level of productivity.



One of the limiting factors in relation to building a fence is cost. It is expensive. Is it too expensive? Be sure to do your research and calculations for your individual situation. Don't forget to take into account the cost of removing the wild dogs that you fence in, purchasing additional stock and maintaining your fence.

While it is very effective, fencing alone will not solve the wild dog problem - other tools also need to be used.

Visit leadingsheep.com.au for information on fencing and wild dog management. Click on the Resources tab for webinars, podcasts, eBooks, Around the Camp eNewsletter articles, factsheets and producer case studies that can assist you in your decision making.

Local News

Grasshoppers, Humpy Back and Fall Armyworm

With the winter change officially here, there is hope for relief from grasshoppers and humpy back. Grasshoppers have caused significant damage across much of western Queensland, causing substantial loss of valuable feed. Whilst spot spraying is an available option, it is costly and has associated issues with grazing management. It is best to let nature run its course.



The prevalence of humpy back may be reduced in the coming cooler months. Unfortunately, what we know about humpy back is minimal and it is therefore difficult to prevent and treat affected sheep. The Leading Sheep Project is working alongside other key industry bodies to collect data to help identify a pattern in humpy back occurrence, which may guide us towards finding answers on the disease. We thank all the producers who have completed the online survey regarding humpy back on their property. Your data and observations will assist us to collate information and could assist funding opportunities into the future. If you would like to complete the short survey, please contact us.

Exotic pest fall armyworm was first detected in Bamaga, Queensland in February 2020. It has since been detected at numerous sites in Queensland and is a very real issue in with numerous detections across the North. Fall armyworm can move and reproduce rapidly and significantly impair plant growth and yield.

To find out more on detecting and preventing fall armyworm, visit business.qld.gov.au/ and search 'fall armyworm'.

Be on the lookout and report sightings to DAF on 13 25 23.

Weaner Management

Managing your weaners efficiently can significantly improve the profitability of your enterprise. Here are some key tips to manage your weaners effectively:

- Weaning should occur when your weaning weights are approximately 45% of their standard reference weight (SRW). This will assist their productivity as mature sheep and will optimise conception rates as maidens. More information on SRW will be available in the next FlockTalk edition.
- Provide access to high quality feed and clean water. It may be cost-effective to supplementary feed to reduce mortality rates, especially if weaning onto poor quality pasture.
- Monitor growth rates of weaners over the coming months. Weaned lambs below 45% of their SRW are most at risk of mortality. Targeted feeding through re-drafting and supplying the quality feed to replacement ewes and animals in lower weight and condition will aid their production and reduce long-term supplementary feed costs.



For information on AWI's weaner management workshop go to wool.com and search for Winning With Weaners.

Tune in to our webinars and podcasts



Leading Sheep's latest H Series' of webinars aims at giving new and aspiring producers a step up in the sheep and wool industry. To watch previous episodes and register for upcoming webinars go to leadingsheep.com.au and search for H –Series.

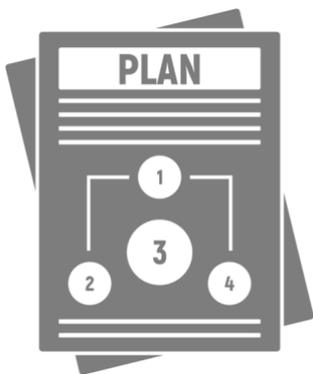
Keep up-to-date with the latest trends, research and practices in the sheep and wool industry with Around the Camp, our new podcast. Visit leadingsheep.com.au and search for 'podcast'.

Learning from the Drought

Effective planning for drought conditions involves a number of aspects: managing your available water and feed, calculating your financial position, and predicting seasonal conditions. Decision making is a pivotal aspect of preparing for and managing drought. It involves timely and decisive decisions, early adaptation and regular review of planned decisions.

'Decision making is a pivotal aspect of preparing for and managing drought'

There are a number of online sources available which assist in making decisions for various scenarios. Making decisions early will assist recovery of your pasture and soils when the rain comes, and help the long-term grazing capability of your land.



Following a patchy wet-season and significant issues including grasshoppers following the rain, we encourage all producers to review their current drought plan.

Visit wool.com and search for drought resources to access material to help you manage and plan for drought.

Need to enhance your Excel skills?

TAFE offers a suite of excel training, starting with **beginners**, where you can become familiar with excel, **intermediate** level to enhance your current skillset, and **advanced** level to become highly skilled. These courses will provide you with the skills you need to manage your business and data from your livestock. These courses are self-paced and fees start at \$50. Find out more at tafeqld.edu.au/courses.



Upcoming opportunities in 2020 - 2021

Ramping up Repro (RUR) is coming to the North & Central West in **2020**. This practical workshop is focused on improving ram performance and working longevity, improving producer skill in key components of ram performance and impacts on breeding performance.



Participants are guided through pre-joining ram inspections and given practical skills to implement on their own property, just in time for joining! Stay tuned for a confirmed date later in 2020.

For more information go to www.wool.com and search for 'RUR'.

After the cancellation of this year's **Leading Sheep Forum** in Longreach, we will be back bigger and better in March **2021**.

Your Local Contacts



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LEADING THE WAY to maximising productivity in good and hard times.

Leading Sheep helps Queensland's sheep and wool producers to become more profitable through hosting events and providing information on new technologies, knowledge and skills.

Leading Sheep is a proactive network of Queensland sheep and wool businesses at the forefront of practical and relevant information and technology to equip progressive and thriving producers for the future.

To receive information and updates relevant to your area straight to your inbox, go to leadingsheep.com.au and click the subscribe button.

Contact Us



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