

The Leading Sheep Project

South 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.

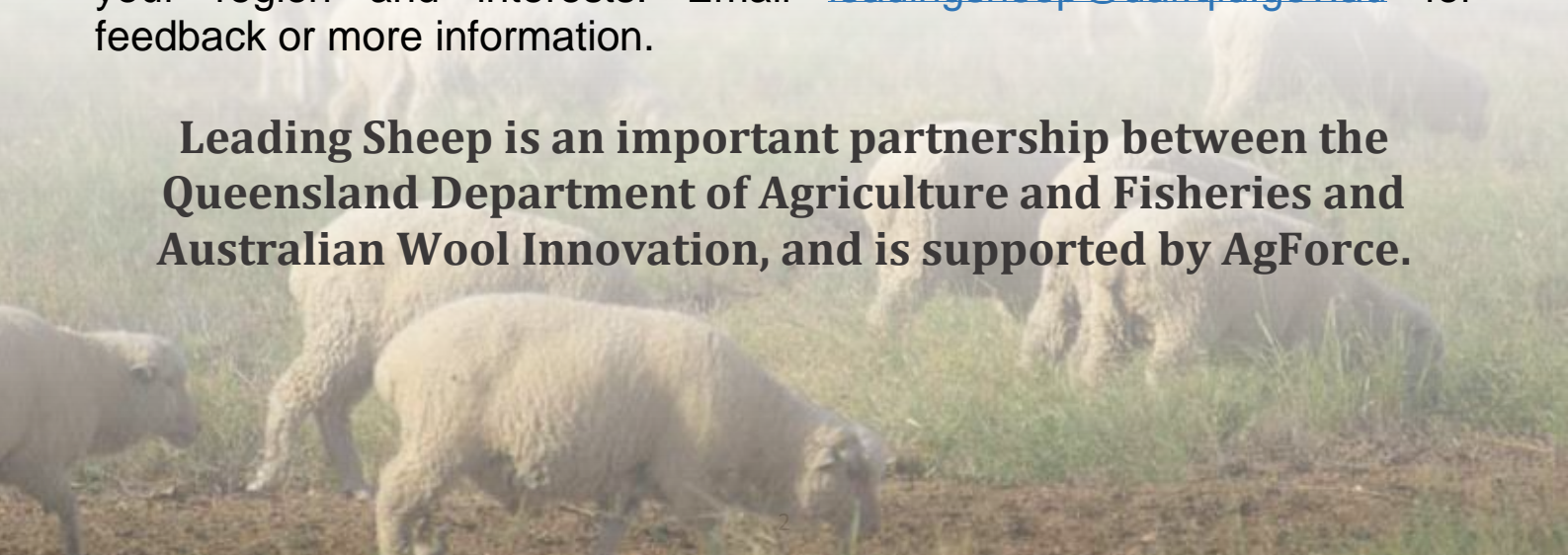
For each region there is a committee of local producers and service providers, who are engaged with local sheep and wool producers. This committee works together to determine and deliver on local priorities. The Leading Sheep Project creates, identifies and promotes opportunities for sheep and wool industry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

Low Worm-risk Paddocks

What are the benefits & how do you prepare?

Weaners and lambing ewes are **the sheep that benefit most from low worm-risk paddocks**. Weaners have an immature immune response to worms and suffer the stress of weaning and high summer Barbers Pole burdens in Queensland. Lambing ewes are highly susceptible to worms as their natural immunity drops at lambing. This is typically worse for maiden ewes and ewes rearing multiple lambs.

Low worm-risk paddocks provide major benefits including sheep facing a lower worm challenge, less reliance on drenches, slowed development of drench resistance and reduced pasture contamination.

Preparing low worm-risk paddocks involves:

- identifying the weaning or lambing paddocks in advance
- preventing contamination with worm eggs for two to six months (two months during summer in western and northern Queensland, six months for a Traprock winter). During this time, you are aiming to have over 90% of the eggs and larvae already on the pasture die.

Paddocks don't have to stay empty!

- Use cattle, cropping or strategic spelling. Stock very heavily before spelling and the bare pasture will hasten the death of worm larvae.
- Use sheep for no more than 21 days after an effective short-acting treatment or a longer period after an effective long-acting treatment. The drenches must work on your property with your Barbers Pole.
- Use your local weather (either very hot and dry or very cold) to your advantage and wormy sheep can even be grazed.

Some facts you will need to know:



Barbers Pole eggs do not hatch if daily maximum temperatures are 18C or below or if no rain is received within five days of egg deposition on pasture. Barbers Pole larvae on pasture naturally die off. At a daily maximum temperature of 35C, 90% of Barbers Pole larvae will die in approximately 45 days or 100 days at 20C. Queensland's cold weather does not kill larvae. Adult worms in the gut will survive for 2 to 6 months—shorter with higher burdens.

South east - use the cold winter months that have a daily maximum under 18C combined with low contamination preparation before and/or after to have low worm-risk lambing paddocks in the spring.

All areas - use the hot summers backed up by low contamination preparation in spring to have low worm-risk weaning paddocks in the autumn. As a rule of thumb, when you start lambing, also start the preparation of the weaner paddock.

Does it work? Yes, but remember, near enough is not good enough with Barbers Pole. When you start, use worm egg counting to monitor worm



numbers to make sure everything is working as planned. If you have multiple lambing and weaning paddocks, perhaps try one paddock first. It is much easier and rewarding than repeated drenching.

Visit wormboss.com.au and look for your Regional Worm Control Program to learn more.

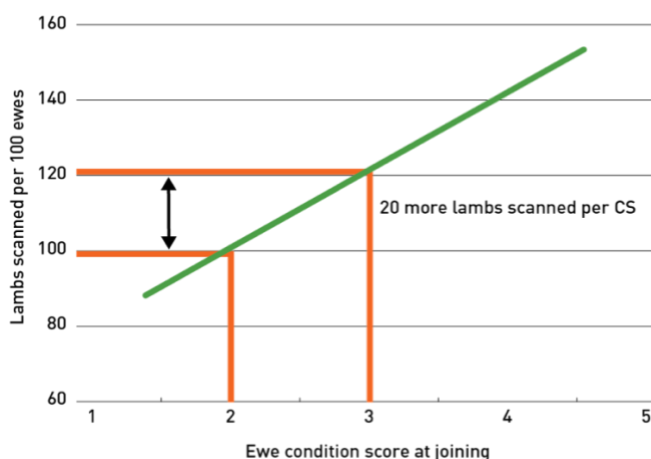
ParaBoss is independent, free and has the latest on worms, blowfly and lice in sheep: paraboss.com.au. Subscribe at the top of the home page and check out videos, webinars, short audios and podcasts in the multimedia section

Do Dorpers carry sheep body lice? Yes. Do sheep lice breed on Dorper sheep? Yes, at least some individuals. Is this a potential challenge for lice control on your Merinos? Yes

Ewes in better Condition Score (CS) at joining have more lambs. Response is linear between CS 1.5 and 4.5. Average response is 20 extra lambs conceived per 100 ewes joined per CS. A CS is equivalent to a body weight change of 8 to 10 kg.

CS targets for lambing – aim for CS of 3 in single bearing Merinos at lambing or above 3.2 in twin bearers.

Graph - Ewe condition score at joining drives conception rate. Source: Lifetime Wool"



Learning from the Drought

Leading Sheep recently asked a number of Queensland sheep and wool producers what they learnt from the drought.

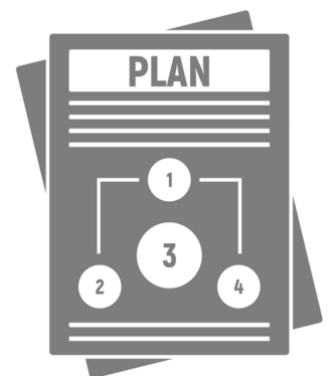
- Look after yourself, your family and your friends.
- Plan with fixed dates to make decisions.
- Be flexible.
- Keep your stock in good enough condition that you still have options. Stock need to be strong enough to walk in the mud for a week if that is how the drought breaks.
- Keep an eye on your stock and destock progressively and early.

The South Region Consultative Committee members added the following advice.

“Keep an eye on your stock and destock progressively and early.”

Looking after yourself and your family:

- Getting off the farm and joining in community activities that have gone by the wayside in the drought– tennis, clubs etc.
- Taking the family out for dinner to celebrate what you did together to get through the drought.
- Go on a holiday.
- Reduce stress.



Business:

- Whilst it is still fresh in your mind, do your personal Drought Management Plan with triggers, firm dates and actions.
- Do not be in a hurry to restock – let your country recover first.
- Before restocking do your gross margins, cash flows etc
- Ensure your rams are ready and your ewes in good condition to get the best possible lambing this year. Ensure effective predator control is undertaken well before lambing starts.
- Establish improved pastures and slow the cross-country water flow.
- Business and Drought Management planning was consistently mentioned but allied with retaining flexibility to seize opportunities if they developed.

Visit leadingsheep.com.au and search for 'drought resources' to access a wide variety of materials to help you manage and plan for drought.

Your Local Contacts

The **Leading Sheep South Region Consultative Committee** consists of producers who guide the activities for The Leading Sheep Project in this region. The boundaries of the Leading Sheep regions are fluid but South Region covers all Queensland sheep lands east of St George and Mitchell.



Members are: Leith McColl, Debbie Cowley, Don Perkins, Tamara White, Peter Campbell and Bruce Toms. Members are a conduit between sheep and wool producers and Leading Sheep to ensure that our activities are relevant and regionally focused.

For further information or feedback contact the **Regional Coordinator** Noel O' Dempsey on 07 4653 1441 or via email at odempsey@gmail.com or your nearest committee member.

Your South Region Leading Sheep Extension Officer facilitates and runs regionally focused events in communication with your regional consultative committee **Extension Officer**: Hannah Vicary on 0436 849 799 or via email at: Hannah.Vicary@daf.qld.gov.au.

Upcoming Activities

Due to COVID-19, most planned activities have been put on hold, including our trip to the Dubbo sheep abattoir to find out how best your sheep and lambs can be prepared for sale.

Our new H Series of webinars covers a range of topics and aims to give new and aspiring producers a step up into 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.



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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