



The Great Livestock Industry Day Out

Where scientists ask farmers the 'hard questions'

Hosted by the Australian Association of Animal Sciences (AAAS) as part of their biannual conference, together with the WA Livestock Research Council and MLA

Monday, February 1, 2021 at The Esplanade, Fremantle, WA

Commencing 7am to 3.30pm



Session 1 Asking the hard questions

- 7.00am Registration
- 7.30am Welcome and introductions
- 7.45am Keynote address - **Professor Graeme Martin**: We need to be ready for great change in our markets and our livestock operating environment, posing problems that science will need to solve. How will this happen? How can science help ensure profitability and product value in the face of a rapidly changing world?
- 8.15am **Making the transition to non-mulesed flocks**
- Dr Bronwyn Clarke** interviews Brookton farmer **Ashley Hobbs** and asks the hard questions about the reality of transitioning to non-mulesing. She is joined by a series of technical experts including **Narelle Sales, Johan Greeff and Jen Smith**, to help consider the realities of resistance to preventative chemical treatments; genetic trade-offs and the emotional roller-coaster that goes with the non-mulesing decision. We deliberately leave plenty of time for audience Q&A to take advantage of the experience we have at hand.
- 9.30am Morning Tea

Session 2 When data from new technology really drives decisions

- 10.00am **Challenging your own sheep reproduction paradigm**
- Dr Caroline Jacobson** interviews farmer and WALRC Chair **Tim Watts** to unpick the lamb survival story on Tim's farm at Pingelly, through thorough data analysis. Caroline explores the surprises and the on-farm changes at the fingertips when data delivers the full story. They also play with some scenarios, such as what the data tells us would change if Tim moved his system to terminal sires.



- 10.50am **What do we do with the reality of DEXA?** With the DEXA system scheduled for installation at WAMMCO on February 15, this has the potential to accelerate selection for Lean Meat Yield – and maybe as a consequence play havoc with Eating Quality. According to **Prof Graham Gardner** it all comes back to what breeders will do with sire selection and performance recording; and how commercial producers use that information. Graham is joined by WAMMCO’s **Rob Davidson** and producers **Rivers Hyde and Tom Bull**, together with sheep reproduction scientist **Dr Andrew Thompson** to establish what needs to happen on farm to take full advantage of this new technology.
- 11.40am **How big is the optimal beef cow? And have EBVs driven a confusing set of behaviours in this quest? Introduced by Prof David Pethick**
- Cow size has been increasing – some say by 100-150kg since the 1970’s. This is associated with the drive for increased growth which is of course is very important for feed efficiency both at pasture and in the feedlot. How does a breed and the Industry handle this issue?
- Prof Wayne Pitchford**, who ran the Beef CRC Maternal productivity program is joined by Nannup producer and lot feeder **Matt Camarri** – and draws on the technical expertise of AGBU’s **Brad Walmsley** to determine if size really does matter.
- 12.30 LUNCH**
- SESSION 3 The hard questions about regenerative ag**
- 1.30pm **Welcome back from lunch** – announcements and virtual interactions.
- 1.40pm **Does Regen Ag increase profitability and improve sustainability? And does the science that advocates it stack up?**
- UWA agronomist **Dr Megan Ryan** calls on the expertise of NZ soil scientist **Doug Edmeades**, CSIRO’S Professor **John Kirkeguard** and DPIRD’s **Sarah Collins** to unpick if chemical fertilisers are destroying our soil health and if so called ‘conventional’ farming practises will deliver the necessary levels of soil carbon?
- In this segment we allocate ample time for audience Q&A and encourage producers to call on the science to help navigate their future farming decisions.
- 3.00pm **What are the research gaps to progress from today’s discussion?** MLA’s **David Beatty** reflects on what’s been discussed and how this might inform our next wave of levy investment.
- 3.15pm **Close and Afternoon Tea**