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SHEEP ALLIANCE Member Update # 5

The Alliance board next meets on Tuesday December 6 in Darkan. If members have any items they would like specifically addressed by the directors at this meeting, please let us know.

1. The Plan for future Investment in RD&E

The Alliance directors have now developed what we are calling a “preliminary first draft” plan designed to optimise the return on sheep RD&E activities in WA. Underpinning our thinking is the desktop analysis of all current sheep RD&E activities in WA, which we can summarise as (at a minimum):

- 75 projects; being conducted by 15 different entities; and
- Conservatively, \$30m in committed funds to those project in the years 2016-2019 (*and that doesn't include projects currently being developed and lodged for funding*).

The proposition we have arrived at, is that this level of investment represents an opportunity to significantly increase collaboration, coordination and communication between projects and to the industry. Our hypothesis we want to test with you, is “if we were better at coordinating, collaborating, communicating and landing these investments, would we deliver more impact where it is needed and increase adoption of key messages at the coal face?” Would this then help us drive the much-needed productivity gains that would in turn make our businesses more robust and capable of optimising profit when markets are strong? And, would a greater collaborative effort deliver the transformational R&D that our state Government through Royalties for Regions, is seeking.

We are now ready to start testing our thinking on you and seeking your feedback in order to formalise our proposal to State and Federal funders. The reality of the calendar is harvest, Christmas and holidays are imminent and so our intent is to call a meeting on Friday February 10 to discuss this with you and ensure we have all of your input considered. However, the directors would be more than pleased to come and present the thinking to individual members if you have a time that suits between now and then.

2. Sheep Industry Open Day

The Alliance is working with DAFWA to prepare what will be a showcase of sheep RD&E at the Katanning Research Facility at the end of March 2017. The intention is that the event will showcase not only DAFWA funded research, but be an opportunity to put on show the full suite of activities being undertaken by Grower Groups, private service providers and the major research institutions. It is vital that our industry realises just how much effort is being undertaken to drive productivity gains of this sector. The missing link is the strategy to coordinate it all into a single message. The Sheep Alliance will be unwavering in its efforts to bring the RD&E community together for the benefit of all our stakeholders.

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