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SHEEP ALLIANCE Member Update #9

Call for a collaborative effort to support the season urgency

Following the very mixed fortunes of this week's rain front, The Sheep Alliance is seeking to mount a collaborative members' response to providing strategies to manage the exceptional circumstances many are facing. Unconfirmed reports this week of farms selling pregnant ewes to slaughter has signalled the severity of need. On top of the immediate need, the Alliance is concerned about management problems in late spring and figures that at best, good advice early will reduce the impact.

AWI has already indicated it will resource The Sheep's Back team to provide some response but our sense is the need is immediate and significant and we will need to augment that heavily. We therefore wish to explore with members a proposal to commence within 10 days, a series of daily workshops through-out the impacted regions to cover off on:

- Strategies to feed pregnant and lactating ewes
- Feed budgeting
- Early weaning strategies
- Emerging animal health issues

The response will require:

- Assistance from all members to identify the regions most at need and to plot the workshop series;
- A delivery team (we are anticipating there should be multiple workshops on at a time);
- Funds to pay for deliverers' time and the associated logistics.

We anticipate that various members including some Grower Groups will already be planning a response series and therefore what we seek to do collaboratively is augment any existing efforts.

Can members please respond with:

- Any scheduled dates/workshops you are already planning as part of a response to the season;
- Identify back to the Sheep Alliance any particular towns/hot spots that would benefit from a seasonal response workshop;
- Members with technical skills suitable for workshop delivery and available to present on the topics above should register their interest;

Meanwhile, the Sheep Alliance will drive a collective effort to seek funds to support the above response activity and will provide an over-all coordination function. Please provide responses back to the Executive officer in the first instance.

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