

Value adding to eID

“Using electronic ID to detect and solve problems offers the next frontier in livestock management.”

Back story:

Brothers Chris and Justin Lindorff are sheep producers with day jobs. Chris is an ecologist and Justin an electronics engineer – as they say, Chris likes understanding the nature of problems, Justin finds ways to solve them. Both saw opportunities in the mandatory roll-out of eID in Victoria – first and foremost, the management of supplementary or feedlot feeding of sheep and cattle. Justin and his wife Katie were early adopters of sheep eID as newcomers to farming (they started with a run down block in 2001), using it to help refine the management of their self replacing Wilshire Horn ewe flock.

How does it work?

The Feeder Reader is fitted to a feeding unit for grain or pellets to identify which animals visit and how often they eat via their eID ear tags. The benefit comes from being able to identify both the shy feeders and the domineering over-feeders.

“It’s estimated five to 20% of animals (on feeders) can be shy feeders. Initially they will fall behind the rest of the mob and ultimately you will end up with an animal in poor health,” Justin said.

“By identifying what sort of animals you are dealing with you can then manage them accordingly – say by putting them in with another mob or giving them access to extra feed.”

Other potential benefits of the Feeder Reader are early identification of health issues (when an animal doesn’t visit the feeder that day) and improved labour efficiency via remote monitoring.

On the fast-track:

The Lindorffs had the concept for the Feeder Reader but were challenged by the delivery to market.

“Producers are very good at solving their own problems – we don’t always need people in the cities coming out and seeing there is a dollar to be made. The Producer Innovation Fast-Track program is allowing us to access a wealth of expertise to develop our own solution,” Justin said.



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“Plus we knew this program was about supporting producers to find solutions to challenges and we saw that as a perfect fit for our project,” Chris added.

The reader unit and associated software are currently in development and market validation and producer interviews are underway.

“Producers have told us the information from the Feeder Reader has to be easy to access and simple to understand,” Katie said.

Long term, the Lindorffs hope their business will evolve to find other technologies which boost productivity via livestock eID.

About Producer Innovation Fast-Track

Producer Innovation Fast-Track is an initiative developed by MLA Donor Company (MDC) to enable producers to be actively involved in driving the innovation agenda. This program identifies the industry trailblazers and provides the support and expertise required to build their innovation capability.

An evolving pilot program, Producer Innovation Fast-Track is designed to accelerate the development and adoption of innovation and capability that have the potential to significantly improve farm and value chain performance. It provides the expertise, co-funding and support to producers who are innovators, early adopters, AgTech entrepreneurs or future value chain leaders.

Further information

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