

finalreport

Sheep Genetics

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Sheep Genetics Development Manager



Abstract

The Sheep Genetics Development Manager project is responsible delivering leadership for the Sheep Genetics business and team. This project successfully delivered the key objective of managing the development and operations of Sheep Genetics. This included managing the day to day activities, staff supervision and extension programs. The growth of the SG team is a key achievement. Managing the SG business and team is at times a challenging role and requires a full time person in this role as soon as possible.

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1 Background

The Animal Genetics and Breeding Unit (AGBU) routinely runs OVIS to provide Sheep Genetics ASBVs for their LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT clients. AGBU also provides full support of OVIS and its EBVs and conducts research and development activities for OVIS, LAMBPLAN and MERINOSELECT. This report comes at the end of a four year period (July 2006 to June 2010). This document details the progress and results that have been achieved for each milestone as set out in the work plan and the research contract.

2 Purpose and description

The Sheep Genetics Development Manager project is responsible for realising the vision of Sheep Genetics leadership for the Australian sheep industry through development and implementation of strategies, tools and services to increase the rate of genetic improvement for commercially relevant traits in the national sheep flock (wool and meat).

The key responsibility is to manage the development and continuous improvement of Sheep Genetics, to achieve goals defined in the business plan (financial, industry adoption and genetic gain) and to lead the Sheep Genetics team, as well as interacting with external service providers, to achieve uptake of Sheep Genetics technology.

The Manager of Sheep Genetics contributes to planning and implementation of relevant projects in wool, lamb and sheep meat production research that enhance the goal of genetic improvement in the Australian sheep industry, including, but not limited to the Sheep CRC, sheep genomics and commercialisation, research and adoption activities.

Daniel Brown is a Principal Scientist at the Animal Genetics and Breeding Unit in Armidale. He has been responsible for the routine estimation of Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBVs) for Sheep Genetics to deliver to ram breeders as well as the ongoing research and development of the genetic evaluation system for the last 18 years. As such Daniel very experienced in the technical aspects of the genetic evaluations and will provide valuable skills in the further development of Sheep Genetics services and the skills development of staff.

This project engages Daniel's services for 60% of a full time equivalent, or three days a week, over a 21 month period.

3 Objectives

Industry Impact and Operations

Manage the development and operations of Sheep Genetics.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Provision of an Executive service to the Sheep Genetics Advisory and Executive Committees maintaining regular and effective communications with Executive and Advisory Committee Chairs and Committee members.
- Develop operational plans for Sheep Genetics consistent with the agreed business plan for Sheep Genetics. This involves an annual review and update of the 5 year business plan.
- Financial management and reporting.
- Oversee the continued development and implementation of a robust technical strategy for Sheep Genetics.

- Oversee the continued development and implementation of a marketing and communications plan for Sheep Genetics to support greater adoption in key markets.
- Recruit and manage staff and external resources as required.
- Participate in ongoing research and development strategies, in liaison with MLA and associated research agencies.

People

- Provide leadership and supervision of staff and contractors working for Sheep Genetics, including all aspects of staff development and performance management.
- Provide training and development opportunities to develop leadership skills in key staff.
- Foster strong relationships within the Sheep Genetics team and a clear sense of mission and commitment to the goals of Sheep Genetics.

Stakeholders

- Provide regular reporting of Sheep Genetics progress to MLA and key industry stakeholders, including the Sheep Genetics Advisory and Executive Committees, and other forums as required.
- Represent MLA at industry events, field days, conferences and other public activities, with respect to the activities of Sheep Genetics and related programs.
- Maintain a strong understanding of producer and stakeholder needs, and the drivers of profit and sustainability in Australian sheep and wool production.
- Maintain effective networks and relationships with commercial and seedstock producers, processors, research partners, commercial partners, consultants and other relevant people.

4 Performance against KPIs.

4.1 Industry Impact and Operations

Provision of an Executive service to the Sheep Genetics Advisory and Executive Committees maintaining regular and effective communications with Executive and Advisory Committee Chairs and Committee members.

This task has been completed successfully with several SG Executive, Advisory and Technical committees being run. We have also managed the process of revolving new members onto both the AC and TC committees.

Develop operational plans for Sheep Genetics consistent with the agreed business plan for Sheep Genetics. This involves an annual review and update of the 5 year business plan.

Operational plans have been developed and managed with SG staff. Regular teams meetings have been conducted to ensure timely implementation of these plans. Progress against KPI has been monitored and review with all the SG Executive, Advisory and Technical committees

Financial management and reporting.

The Sheep Genetics finances have been managed within budget and reported the executive SG Executive and Advisory committees as required.

Oversee the continued development and implementation of a robust technical strategy for Sheep Genetics.

Management of the technical strategy has been a core focus of daily activities with continual contact between SG, AGBU and other collaborators. Monthly operational meeting between SG and AGBU continue and are critical to the timely response to issues and implementation of changes to routine analyses.

Oversee the continued development and implementation of a marketing and communications plan for Sheep Genetics to support greater adoption in key markets.

Improving the marketing of communications by SG has been a key activity. We have commenced a re-branding process, started re-developing our web site, improved internal CRM systems and started to develop a communication strategy. We are also actively working with the adoption team to develop new resources to foster adoption.

Recruit and manage staff and external resources as required.

Staff supervision and management has been provided. During the project 3 new staff members have been recruited, inducted and trained. This has also included managing leave, performance and professional development.

4.2 People

Provide leadership and supervision of staff and contractors working for Sheep Genetics, including all aspects of staff development and performance management.

As described above staff leadership is a key role and have taken up a large proportion of time during this contract.

Provide training and development opportunities to develop leadership skills in key staff.

All staff have been encourage to conduct PD each year. Staff have attended a range of training events including contracts and finance training, pitch training and media training. Junior staff have also enrolled in genetic subjects.

Foster strong relationships within the Sheep Genetics team and a clear sense of mission and commitment to the goals of Sheep Genetics.

Mentoring staff within the team and with key stakeholders such as AGBU has been a key aim of this project. This has been extremely successful with much stronger ties within the MLA Armidale unit and also with AGBU both professionally and socially.

4.3 Stakeholders

Provide regular reporting of Sheep Genetics progress to MLA and key industry stakeholders, including the Sheep Genetics Advisory and Executive Committees, and other forums as required.

Consultation with stakeholders is a key part of the SG manager's role. This has been an extensive part of this project. Key stakeholder engagement has included breeders, breeder groups, SG Executive, Advisory and Technical committees, AGBU, Sheep CRC, MLA, UNE, NLGC, ALMTech, service providers and

Represent MLA at industry events, field days, conferences and other public activities, with respect to the activities of Sheep Genetics and related programs.

Sheep Genetics organises and attended many events with stakeholders. We have delivered regional forums, breeder workshops, service provider training, scanner accreditation, MateSel training and other field days. We have also participated in sheep industry events such as SheepVention, LambEx, AMSEA, AAABG, WCGALP and ASAP.

Maintain a strong understanding of producer and stakeholder needs, and the drivers of profit and sustainability in Australian sheep and wool production.

Regular communication with commercial producers and ram breeders is a core activity and helps the SG staff maintain a clear understanding of key drivers for producers. Interaction within MLA and with other industry activities also assists with this.

Maintain effective networks and relationships with commercial and seedstock producers, processors, research partners, commercial partners, consultants and other relevant people.

As described above consultation with stakeholders is a key part of the SG manager's role and has been extensive.

4.4 MLA Values

Outcomes that make a difference

All SG staff are focussed on delivery sustained prosperity to the sheep industry.

Accountability through transparency

Transparency is definitely seen as a key value of the SG team and we are always clearly communicate this value to industry and ensuring we are open as we possibly can be.

Customer centricity

The customer always comes first. All SG staff regularly go beyond what is expected to delivery to the needs of our customers.

5 Impact on Meat and Livestock Industry

The use of the Sheep Genetics service and products continues to grow both within ram breeders and commercial ram buyers.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

The project has been successful delivered. The growth of the SG team is a key achievement. Managing the SG business and team is at times a challenging role and requires a full time person in this role as soon as possible.

