

## The Livestock Health and Biosecurity Victoria Program



Specialist speakers Gary Armstrong, Kimberley Henman, Jo Quigley and Catherine James

### **An introduction to the new program and what it hopes to achieve by Glen Sutherland Mallee CMA's Regional Landcare Facilitator .**

One of the benefits of working as a Regional Landcare Facilitator is the opportunity to work with a range of groups and agencies supporting dryland agriculture. One such group is the Victorian Farmers Federation's Livestock Health and Biosecurity Victoria team who have been very active in delivering information about the Livestock Production

Assurance (LPA) program to sheep producers all round the state. The information sessions are to advise about changes to the program and what it means to meat producers. The LPA program is the Australian livestock industry's on-farm Food Safety Accreditation program. The LPA is critical to ongoing successful export market access for Australian red meat.

I was able to catch up with the team running these sessions at their Nullawil event and learnt just why the information days

were run and what is being talked about at the events.

There was an impressive line-up of speakers for the day including representatives from Agriculture Victoria, Meat and Livestock Australia and Livestock Health and Biosecurity Victoria.

Meat and Livestock Australia's Jo Quigley was first to address the 25 plus farmer audience and deftly summarised the LPA program and its importance to red meat production and overseas market access for Australian producers. Jo explained that the LPA is the Australian red meat livestock industry's on-farm assurance program covering food safety. The program meets our market's expectations and requirements by providing evidence of livestock history, right through the value chain. Jo outlined the current five elements of the LPA accreditation, these being:

- Property risk assessments;
- Safe and responsible animal treatments (medicine);

- Fodder crop and grain treatments (livestock feeds);
- Preparation of livestock for dispatch; and
- Livestock transactions and movements.

Jo highlighted how the current system is changing with two additional elements being added to the LPA from 1st of October, 2017. Agriculture Victoria's Gary Armstrong spoke next talking about the rollout of the electronic National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) for sheep and goats (electronic ear tags) and how this new system will also directly support the LPA program. Gary was followed by the speakers on the main topic for the day: Livestock Health and Biosecurity Victoria's Catherine James and Kimberley Henman presenting on how to meet the new requirements around biosecurity and animal welfare on farm. The farm biosecurity element will include the need for producers to develop a farm biosecurity plan, which has the following purposes:

- minimise the risk of introducing and spreading infectious diseases;
- Manage and record the introduction and movement of livestock;
- Plan for the reasonable and practical control and record of people, equipment and vehicles entering the

property; and

- Control and regularly monitor livestock health on farm.

The other new LPA element is the requirement for producers to meet prescribed animal welfare standards. The requirement includes producers needing to:

- Have access to a copy of the Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines (S&Gs);
- Be familiar with its contents;
- Complete the LPA Learning, Animal Welfare module or other equivalent training; and
- Train and oversee others handling livestock on the property in a manner that is consistent with the S&Gs.

The presentations were well received by the audience and prompted positive discussion and questions about the changes. Farmers recognised that they already met a lot of the requirements which were talked about and recognised that the job ahead was really about putting their current practices down on paper.

Catherine went into some detail about the resources available to assist producers to meet the requirements of the LPA, including accessing a range of online tools and information including online videos, frequently asked questions,

LPA Fact Sheets, record keeping templates and online learning modules available through the LPA Learning web site. Relevant links about the LPA changes include the following:

#### **Further information**

For more information regarding the Livestock Health and Biosecurity Victoria Program, contact the Mallee CMA on 03 50514377. Or access information via the following we links.

[www.mla.com.au/lpachanges](http://www.mla.com.au/lpachanges)


[www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au](http://www.animalwelfarestandards.net.au)

[www.mla.com.au/LPALearning](http://www.mla.com.au/LPALearning)

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