

Tuesday, 2 August 2011

Spalding Workshop Aimed at Reducing Flystrike

The Sheep CRC and SRS® Group will be holding a Flystrike Prevention Workshop at Baderloo, Spalding next Tuesday 9 August starting at 9am as part of the Making More from Sheep program.

Each year, treatment costs and lost production associated with flystrike of sheep costs the industry an estimated \$280 million. The workshop, which will be hosted by Phil and Ann Hammat at the shearing shed at "Wrattonbully", will provide practical information to reduce the risk of flystrike through management and breeding approaches.

Showing what is possible through a targeted breeding program, Andrew Michael of Leahcim Poll Merino Stud, Snowtown, SA, says that 25 of his clients, all commercial wool producers, have converted their flocks to being unmulesed and more resistant to breech strike within 3 to 5 years.

"None of 130,000 Merino lambs on these commercial properties were mulesed in 2008 and this number continues to grow," said Mr Michael.

"We calculate that stopping mulesing has added \$9.90 per lamb to the value of each lamb at 9 months of age. The calculations are conservative estimates based mainly on the improved body weight gains and labour savings."

Leahcim's ewes produced an average fleece weight of 5.4 kilograms at 19.5 microns fibre diameter and a length of 80 to 85 millimetres when shorn in only 7.5 months wool.

The Flystrike Prevention Workshop will feature subject specialists from the Sheep CRC and SARDI talking about new management and breeding techniques that are helping producers like the Hammats and Michaels reduce the susceptibility of flocks to flystrike, thereby reducing costs and improving animal welfare. It will also allow sheep producers to walk away with their own flystrike prevention program.

For more information on the workshop and to register please call Natasha Morley (MMfS State Coordinator) on 08 8842 1103