

# Help hitting the target

## Sheep producers can maximise profit by matching their production system to their target market.

Achieving that match isn't always simple but help is at hand with 'Making More From Sheep'.

**"If you're spending money in any way on finishing, you need to know your break even price."**

Sheep producer and president of the Sheepmeat Council of Australia, Kate Joseph, turns off around 1,500 lambs a year on her specialist prime lamb operation at Tyrendarra in south-west Victoria.

Although Mrs Joseph is an experienced producer, she still finds the modules in *Making More From Sheep – A sheep producer's manual* a valuable support in her enterprise.

She said tools and procedures offered in the manual, such as the cost of production calculator for lamb enterprises, are critical for producers looking at finishing lambs.

"If you're spending money in any way on finishing, you need to know

your break-even price and what you need to get for your finished product," Mrs Joseph said.

A series of easy – yet comprehensive – steps to help sheep producers meet market requirements is contained in Module 3 of the manual, 'Market Focused Lamb and Sheepmeat Production'.

Producers can use the tools in this module to improve profitability, such as the lamb growth predictor to calculate individual growth rates and predict future weights of animals; information on how to use Meat Standards Australia guidelines for lamb and sheepmeat and how to work with quality and stock identification systems.

Mrs Joseph said the clear explanation of different selling systems, also contained in Module 3, was vital information for sheep producers deciding how to target their preferred markets.

"I sell over the hooks," she said.

"I tailor my production system specifically to that method of selling. I spend a lot of time selecting my breeding animals and managing my feed so that my product meets market

specifications, and I want to be paid for that."

*Making More From Sheep – A sheep producer's manual* is made up of 11 modules that cover all aspects of sheep management and production. The manual costs \$65+GST for MLA and AWI members.

*Kate Joseph turns off around 1,500 lambs a year on her specialist prime lamb operation at Tyrendarra.*



## MORE INFORMATION

MLA

Phone: 1800 675 717

Web: [www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au](http://www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au)

# Update to code of practice

## Stakeholders are invited to view the latest draft of the proposed National Code of Practice for Intensive and Sheep and Lamb Feeding Systems and to help develop a self audit tool to complement the code.

The final code is due for release in June 2010 and is the first of its kind for the industry.

It is an initiative of the Sheepmeat Council of Australia, the Australian Lamb Finishing Group, producers and other industry stakeholders, aimed at assisting producers and regulatory bodies with all aspects of intensive lamb and sheep feeding, from daily management through to marketing.

The initial draft – then known as the Code of Practice for Intensive Lamb Finishing – was released in June 2008.

During the consultation phase of the code in 2008, 189 responses were received by industry raising more than 1,500 points.

As a result, key changes were to include containment areas with pasture based systems excluded and a revision of standards and guidelines to ensure all standards can be applied to any feeding system, regardless of size.

New sections were added for biosecurity, induction and releasing sheep from containment areas and additional information about nutrition was added to the animal health section with signs and symptoms of common ailments now in the appendix. Animal welfare requirements have now been integrated throughout the document.

Following this extensive industry consultation, the latest version also includes sections on induction of lambs to intensive finishing and releasing sheep from containment areas.

The next round of consultation will focus on the creation of a self audit tool to enable sheep

producers to compare their practices with industry standards set out in the new code of practice.

Consultation will take place through meetings and workshops with stakeholders, planned to start in February 2010.

Volunteers will also be needed to road test the self audit tool.

The development of the code is being managed by South Australian based industry consultants, Productive Nutrition Pty Ltd, and overseen by MLA.

To see the latest draft and provide feedback on it, or to nominate to test the self audit tool go to [www.productivenutrition.com.au/COPlambfinishing](http://www.productivenutrition.com.au/COPlambfinishing)

## MORE INFORMATION

Productive Nutrition

Email: [hamish@productivenutrition.com.au](mailto:hamish@productivenutrition.com.au)

Web: [www.productivenutrition.com.au/COPlambfinishing](http://www.productivenutrition.com.au/COPlambfinishing)