

Veterinarian offers production advice to Young farmers looking to rebuild stock numbers.

While Australia's sheep industry may be facing its smallest sheep flock on record, strong lamb prices are making this an ideal time for farmers to begin rebuilding depleted stocks. Designed to improve the knowledge and understanding of how producers can increase lambing rates and share insights into the latest reproductive science, Virbac Australia recently held a pre-joining information day in Young, NSW headlined by Dr John Webb Ware, Senior Livestock Consultant at the University of Melbourne. Attendees had the chance to learn about important nutritional and management considerations to help them achieve an increased lambing rate and were also informed about Virbac's fecundity vaccine which has been identified as a key component to boost lamb numbers. As Dr Webb Ware explains, "Ovastim is a practical and economical method to help increase lamb production. The vaccine directly influences a ewe's fecundity, increasing the number of eggs available for fertilisation by immunising the animal against the hormone androstenedione, which alters ovarian function. That, in turn, leads to an increase in the number of twin births, which is an important factor in boosting lamb numbers." With high stock prices, reproductive efficiency is an important determinant of the profitability of most sheep enterprises – and Dr Webb Ware goes on to explain how Ovastim can increase lambing rates primarily through an increase in the number of twin births. "With good management practices, more lambs on the ground will result in improved sales, to further benefit a producer's bottom line." With 14 local sheep producers attending Wednesday's event, sheep producer Marty Corcoran from Boorowa described the event as a great opportunity to learn more about nutritional and management considerations to improve lambing rates. "The Ovastim information morning was highly insightful in how farmers can manage the reproductive performance of their sheep flock. Nutritional management prior to joining and the cost efficiency of maintaining ewe condition through the dry were two key messages from the morning. I use Ovastim and have successfully increased our lambing percentages by 20-30% in our 1st X-ewes flock which has seen us push industry benchmarks," Marty said. For Virbac Australia Area Sales Manager, Emily Fowler, the event was a unique opportunity for attendees to ask questions specific to their production systems, and learn from a leader in the field. "This was a truly unique chance to learn the latest in reproductive and fertility science, and we're thrilled to hear the positive responses from attendees." For Dr Webb Ware, the benefits are undeniable. "If well managed, Ovastim can have a tremendously positive impact on high yielding lamb production systems for the rapid breeding of replacement stock." To find out more about Ovastim, visit au.virbac.com Ends Media Enquiries: Kate Munsie - C7EVEN COMMUNICATIONS (02) 6766 4513 / 0421 935 843 kate.munsie@c7even.com.au Photo caption: Local sheep producer, Marty Corcoran with Virbac Australia representative Dr George Cox Local sheep producer, Marty Corcoran with Virbac Australia representative Emily Fowler

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