

All good news for WA lamb producers

By **LYNETTE CAREW-REID**

WAMMCO chairman of directors Dawson Bradford delivered an upbeat address at the 2013-14 carcass competition presentations at Katanning, saying he had never seen the lamb industry in a more positive position than what it was in today.

Prices at the abattoir had peaked at \$6.50/kilogram for producers and the works had one of its best years ever, largely due to the abundance of livestock available.

He backed his optimism with the announcement that members who delivered lambs in the 2013-14 season would receive a 50c/kg rebate for lamb and 25c/kg for mutton – representing a 25 per cent increase on last year.

The full cash rebate for lambs this year would equate to \$10-\$12 a head and about \$5-\$6 for mutton and would be paid in early August.

Markets that had been developed in China and Korea in the wake of the European recession would be maintained while European markets were expected to come back stronger and United States demand was reawakening.

“The industry is in for a good time for quite a while to come, but that is subject to financial situations around the world,” Mr Bradford said.

China and Australia were the only two countries with a chance of expanding production but he was doubtful a recent highly optimistic report stating world sheepmeat production was set to increase 380,000 tonnes a year for the next 10 years could be achieved.

“That is twice New Zealand’s normal annual supply of lamb just to increase every year and I don’t think that will happen,” he said.

He reiterated that WAMMCO could not afford to be a commodity producer but needed to maintain premium prices and existing quality assurance levels had underpinned this.

He said WAMMCO would carefully consider any greater demand for higher quality assurance levels but he warned producers may be asked to have some type of antibiotic-free status in the next two to three years.

“Some markets may require farmers to implement a reasonably simple assurance system,” he said.

Mr Bradford said it did not

appear to be too onerous because he believed the level of antibiotic use was extremely low or non-existent in the lamb industry.

He expected premiums could be 20-30 cents a kilogram, but if it was an excessive cost burden WAMMCO would not force producers to become certified to fulfil a fad.

In the 16 years to the end of 2015, WAMMCO would have

spent more than \$30 million on the Katanning abattoirs to increase efficiency, reduce production costs, meet hygiene and health standards required by world markets and present the type of product for which customers were willing to pay higher prices.

He urged producers to do whatever was needed to for them to maintain premium prices.



WAMMCO International

WAMMCO International wishes to thank all entrants in the 2013/2014 WAMMCO State Prime Lamb Carcass Competition.

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Congratulations to the top 5 placegetters in each category

OVERALL

- 1st Bunkin Farming Enterprises, Dumbleyung
- 2nd RW & PM Taylor, Lake Grace
- 3rd Quintarra Farms, Esperance
- 4th Bunkin Farming Enterprises, Dumbleyung
- 5th Bunkin Farming Enterprises, Dumbleyung

CONSIGNMENTS LARGER THAN 300 LAMBS

- 1st Quintarra Farms, Esperance
- 2nd GH & CA Barrett, Jerramungup
- 3rd R Nixon & Co, Kalannie
- 4th PD Lynch & Co, Hyden
- 5th RW & PM Taylor, Lake Grace

TRADE WEIGHT

- 1st RJ & HJ Hill, Esperance
- 2nd GH & CA Barrett, Jerramungup
- 3rd RD & LZ Cullam, Jerramungup
- 4th Bunkin Farming Enterprises, Dumbleyung
- 5th GH & CA Barrett, Jerramungup

LAMBS FROM A MERINO DAM

- 1st Capemont Farms, Katanning
- 2nd Capemont Farms, Katanning
- 3rd R Nixon & Co, Kalannie
- 4th Capemont Farms, Katanning
- 5th BW James & Sons, Hyden

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