Sheep Value Chain Roundtable

Andrew Gordanier, Industry Co-Chair

Background

- launched in 2011 (Predation RT started in 2009)
- Industry-government collaboration tool to increase the competitiveness of Canadian sheep industry
  - brings together key industry and government members to discuss market challenges and opportunities facing the industry as well as develop and implement action plans designed to improve the industry's competitive position
- 1 of 13 Value Chain Roundtables
  - All Chairs Forum to discuss cross-VCRT issues
    - E.g. regulations and labour

Membership

- Meat-producers (largest representation)
  - Members from CSF, OSMA, ALB, and FPAMQ
- Sheep breeders
- Wool growers
- Canadian Livestock Genetics Association
- Processors (federal and provincial)
- Researchers (meat quality and veterinary)
- Additional observers

Membership list on website:
www.agr.gc.ca/eng/industry-markets-and-trade/value-chain-roundtables/sheep/?id=1385758986961 (or google Sheep VCRT)

Strategic Plan

- Strategic Planning Session held November 2015
  - 3-year strategy (2016-2018)

- 6 main issue themes
  with objectives set under each:
  - Health Strategies
  - Profitability
  - Meat and Carcass
  - Research
  - Market Access
  - Social Licence

- Working Group (WG) established to address each theme
  - Each developed Terms of Reference based on objectives set by full VCRT
    - Specific activities and timelines identified
  - Terms of Reference will be shared with full VCRT at November 2016
    - Early deliverables to share as well

Health Strategies Working Group

Chair: Jennifer Mac Tavish, Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency

WG enables increased access to drugs and vaccines not currently officially recognized in Canada. It also addresses issues related to antibiotic use and resistance, emergency management, and emerging diseases

Objectives

- To resolve issues related to veterinary pharmaceuticals and pesticides regulated by Health Canada and veterinary biologics regulated by Canadian Food Inspection Agency, including impact on competitiveness caused by lack of access compared to competitors
- To encourage Pest Management Centre (PMC) to expand its mandate to include Minor Use and Minor Species (MUMS) under next policy framework
- To contribute the sheep industry's perspective towards relevant initiatives addressing Antimicrobial Use/Antimicrobial Resistance (e.g. pan-Canadian Framework led by Public Health Agency of Canada with industry collaboration)
  - The contribution will include highlighting the sheep industry's limited access to alternative approaches compared to other countries (e.g. there are many vaccines approved for use in other countries that are not available here—making the situation of restricting antibiotic use even more serious
- To develop an approach to emergency management for the sheep industry, including emerging diseases

Market Access Working Group

Chair: Dwayne Beaton, SunGold Specialty Meats

WG provides the Canadian sheep industry's perspective on international and interprovincial trade issues in meat, live animals, by-products, genetics, and wool

Objectives

- To provide Canadian sheep industry's perspective on international trade issues in meat, live animals, by-products, genetics, and wool
- To provide sheep industry's perspective on interprovincial trade issues
  - Identify regulatory option between federal and provincial inspection to facilitate trade between provinces

Meat and Carcass Quality Working Group

Chair: Bill McCutcheon, Ontario Lamb Marketing

WG encourages the improvement of Canadian lamb carcass and meat quality, as well as sharing information along the value chain and examining the impact of herd management on meat and carcass quality

Objectives

- To address both meat quality and carcass quality issues
- To dialogue with retailers to build relationships and promote product
- To improve meat quality and carcass quality through livestock management and genetics (coordinate with Profitability WG)
- To better understand elements of meat flavour, colour, tenderness, and freshness
- To provide carcass grading/classification training across Canada

Profitability Working Group

Chair: Robyn Moore, Alberta Lamb Producers

WG works towards increasing the profitability of the sheep industry in Canada by addressing issues related to training and development, management tools, genetic improvement, forward pricing models, lending and credit elements, and other financial/profitability constraints

Objectives

- To develop an approach that addresses training and development needs of the industry—along the value chain
- To facilitate greater access to management tools
- To address genetic improvement needs
- To identify and address any other financial/profitability constraints
- To explore forward pricing models as a means to manage risk
- To take into account lending and credit elements when undertaking WG activities where applicable

Research Working Group

Chair: Jennifer Mac Tavish, Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency

WG develops an approach for the sector to become organized nationally with a goal to support the expansion and sustainability of the sheep industry in Canada

Objectives

- To set national priorities and develop a national research strategy that leverages limited funds
  - Communicate priorities to research community with goal of influencing future research
- To continue producing the annual AAFC research catalogue
- To link with Agricultural Institute of Canada research initiative (involves setting priorities, centralizing funding, and creating a research database/catalogue across all of agriculture)
- To develop an approach for aspects of knowledge and technology transfer (KTT), including role of provincial organizations (e.g. distributing reports) and role Roundtable can feasibly play
  - consider collaboration with New Zealand and UK extension
  - including farm level demonstrations
- To develop an international research collaboration approach

Social Licence Working Group

Chair: Corlena Patterson, Canadian Sheep Federation

WG works towards differentiating Canadian products based on social licence by developing relationships with retailers, addressing consumer issues, and contributing towards agricultural awareness and ag-in-the-classroom initiatives

Objectives

- To develop relationships with retailers with a focus on sustainability (environmental, economic and social) to build social licence.
  - e.g. issues related to animal welfare, climate change, and water usage
- To gauge the impact of intensifying sheep production on public perceptions
- To increase agricultural awareness and engagement with ag-in-the-classroom
- To differentiate our Canadian products based on social licence