

FarmIQ Programme Quarterly Progress report, April to June 2013

The Farm^{IQ} programme continues to make very solid progress towards building an integrated, demand-led value chain for red meat. The quarter to June 2013 completes the third year of operation. All six Farm^{IQ} projects continue to deliver on-time and within budget.

A draft beef quality model was developed from the beef consumer taste panel results, and this will provide the basis for a new grading system. Initial market prototyping of premium cuts backed by consumer testing is showing encouraging signs. A new team with capability in consumer marketing, international market development and new product development capability has been formed, to create value in the market and maximise returns.

Much of the base infrastructure for carcass tracking and measuring in processing plants is completed as at June 2013. A particular challenge was getting traceability and lamb X-ray systems operating to a consistently reliable level.

At this point, several technologies for measuring meat quality in-plant have been tested, and it is clear that these will not provide a basis for developing new tools. However, even this is useful information, and some work will continue.

Methods for improving meat quality have been investigated, and as a result it has been decided further work will be done on temperature control through the chilling and freezing processes.

In May 2013 the new high-density SNP chip, a powerful new sheep genotyping tool, was completed and testing began. It has proved to be robust and achieved high levels of accuracy. This will be used to predict animals' productivity and meat quality.

Product release 2 of the Farm^{IQ} Farm Management System, with significant new functionality, was ready for launch at the end of the quarter. Input was received from veterinary specialists into animal health reporting aspects of the FMS. Work to integrate processor information with the on-farm components began.

Farmer sign-on requests through this quarter continued to demonstrate farmer support.

END