

NZ Sheep Industry Transformation (NZSTX) Programme Summary Report – Q4 2013-14

This paper is an executive summary of the formal quarterly report made by The New Zealand Merino Company (NZM) to the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) regarding the New Zealand Sheep Industry Transformation (NZSTX) project for the quarter ending 30 June 2014.

This quarter MPI approved the NZSTX Annual Plan for 2014-15. The 2014-15 Annual Plan represents the fifth and final year of NZSTX and heralds the beginning of the transition phase for each of the project work streams. This is an exciting phase for both NZM and MPI, and we look forward to successfully integrating the project outcomes in a post-PGP environment.

Fibre –

- Work during this quarter has focused on:
 - progressing the Life Cycle Analysis impact study, which (as advised in the Q3 report) is expected to be completed in Q1 of 2014-15;
 - further developing the two validation projects (skin trial and harlequin trial) that will continue into year five; and
 - launching 'Wool School', which is about sharing the stories of New Zealand Merino fibre with a wider audience through both physical and digital channels.

Meat –

- The full year target for overall sales has been met, with international sales exceeding expected volumes.
- As advised in the Q3 report, we have not met our procurement targets; however, this has not impacted adversely on the sales targets for the programme (see above).
- The Alpine Origin Merino (AOM) programme is in good health heading into the 2014-15 year and we expect a successful transition from the prototyping and development phase to a commercially viable proposition by the end of the PGP programme.

Production Science –

- Forage: Lincoln University have completed their monitoring of the trial sites for the 2013-14 year (their report is attached as Appendix 4).
- Trait acceleration: The focus for the genetics work stream has been on completing the artificial insemination programmes for the central progeny test and nucleus flock.
- Animal health: Slow but steady progress is being made with foot rot sampling. The first set of samples has been genotyped and will be analysed early next quarter. The results of this initial analysis will form the basis of a 'stop/go' evaluation for the project next quarter.
- Adoption: Communication and extension activities continue, with preparations being made for a greater emphasis on adoption and extension in year five.