

The Cicerone Project Inc.

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ABN 15 314 685 367

NEWSLETTER No 15

August 2001

You are invited to our next seminar to be addressed by

COL DORBER

Managing Director, Australian Wool Innovation Pty Ltd

Tuesday 11th September 2001, 11.00 am to 5.00pm

Liaison Centre, Chiswick

He will talk on his

*"Perception of the wool industry
and vision for its future."*

Plus 'Putting Benchmarking in Perspective'

**We will also take you to inspect the Cicerone Farm
so appropriate clothing required!**

Lunch will be available for members

Bookings essential to 6778 3871 to help with catering
Entry \$25 for members, including lunch (includes GST)
\$40 for non-members plus \$10 for lunch (includes GST)

BOOK EARLY as NUMBERS STRICTLY LIMITED

**A short AGM will be included on TUESDAY 11th Sept
If you're interested in nominating for the Board of Cicerone, please contact Caroline on
6778 3871 for details. Forms in newsletters 13 and 14
You must be a financial member.
Nominations have to be in writing and received ASAP**

Contents of Newsletter 15

If you have only received the first and last pages of this newsletter, it is because you are no longer a financial member, please join us to receive the 'lost' pages! The interesting contents that you are missing include:-

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WETHER TRIAL

ENTRIES ARE DUE TO CLOSE ON MONDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER.

We need more entries to make this trial worthwhile. If you have MN1 status or better for OJD and if you are free of footrot, please consider entering a team of 12 wethers. Ring 6778 3871 for more details

Don't let it fold. We need New England data to be recorded.

MAKING MONEY WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

Friday 12th October 2001

Liaison Centre, CSIRO from 9.45 am onwards

Short talks, plenty of time to ask questions and see the technology in action

See how these new technologies can save you time and money by making your farm more efficient

Radio fence, to keep stock on your side of the boundary

OFDA and **Laser Scan**, for wool testing

FecPak, do your faecal egg counts

Centrogen, for GPS maps of your property

Gene Mapping, for genetic selection

Satellite mapping of pasture growth

Wool Harvester, an alternative to the shearing shed

Automatic weigh stations

Electronic eartags

Members \$10, Non members \$30

RSVP to 6778 3871

CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS for the Cicerone AGM on 11th Sept 2001

Introduction

I intend to address three broad topic areas in my Chairman's Address

1. Cicerone's activities over the last 12 months,
2. The current priorities for Cicerone,
3. Ideas and proposals for the future.

The Last Twelve Months

Cicerone's major achievements:-

- Following a survey of New England properties some years ago it was found that the incidence of footrot was much greater than previously thought. This led to massive structural changes and financial difficulty for many producers. Some consternation followed as to the traditional methods of quarantining and eradicating footrot from the infected properties. The Cicerone Footrot Trial has demonstrated the inadequacy of the current laboratory diagnosis for some strains of the footrot bacteria and is leading to a more accurate test utilising DNA which will be of national significance,
- The Cicerone Farm has continued to evolve into a groundbreaking study of the profitability and sustainability of three management systems common to the Northern NSW. Within these three systems Cicerone has conducted 10 additional trials, 3 have been completed, 2 are ongoing and 5 are timed to start later this year. A "flexible interface relational database" has been developed to allow all of the Farm information to be easily stored and accessed. The Database allows for the information to be analysed and presented in a number of different formats.
- During the last 12 months Cicerone has run 8 seminars, workshops and field days. In recognition of the work of Cicerone we have been asked to participate at a number of different industry functions.
- Cicerone regularly publishes newsletters to keep members abreast of our activities.

The Current Priorities For Cicerone

Our Vision for Cicerone is to;

"Be a producer led group, based in the New England, which is dedicated to improving the profitability and long term viability of grazing enterprises through the active participation of members in research and adoption".

Our purpose for having a Vision is to provide an overarching yet clearly understood statement of "objectives". Given that Cicerone is to represent diverse interests among producers and researchers such a statement ensures that all parties have a focus for their activities. This statement provides guidance for the Board in making all its decisions.

The management processes of Cicerone have evolved over the past 12 months. We recognised that in order to succeed we must have a more formal approach to providing a producer focus. To achieve this the Cicerone Board considers its priorities based on the following agenda;

- Any research project asking for the support of Cicerone must be approved by the producer members of the Cicerone Board,
- The Producer members of the Board are to oversee a shortlist of preferred research fields and areas of specific interest to Cicerone,
- The Cicerone Co-ordinator and Board are to actively cultivate and promote the commissioning of the aforementioned project shortlist.

Ideas and Proposals For the Future

The role of Cicerone is to provide a service to its members that by its very nature extends to the wider livestock producing community. This broad objective is to be pursued by various means. Cicerone activities must continue to place greater emphasis on maintaining and improving the benefits it derives for livestock producers. The priority areas include;

- Completion of the current footrot trial.
- Ensuring the integrity of the results from the Cicerone Farm – Pastures, Grazing management and inputs,
- Animal health – drench efficacy, worm resistance and trace elements,
- The promotion of financial, production and lifestyle benchmarking among producers,
- Wool marketing innovation

Where these priority areas involve additional research, our role will not to develop scientific methodology but to test this methodology against Cicerones objectives and the wishes of our members. In pursuing these objectives Cicerone will be mindful of existing research outcomes to avoid duplication. If a project is to be supported by Cicerone we must, in some form, be able to add value to the research proposal. This may be via extension or field trials for example.

In order to progress these and other objectives it is important that Cicerone create both formal and informal links with other groups and funding organisations that share similar objectives. The purpose of this would be to leverage funding and share information. Contact has been made with a number of such groups but more can and needs to be done by the Board of Cicerone.

Increasing the membership of Cicerone raises a raft of issues that are not unique to Cicerone. Like similar organisations we find it difficult to separate a process that will add value to current members whilst offering incentives for non-members to join. The growth of our member base will be a function of the success and profile that Cicerone is able to achieve in striving towards its Vision.

I would like to thank all of those individuals and groups that have contributed their time and knowledge to Cicerone over the last 12 months. I would particularly like to thank our principle financial supporter, Australian Wool Innovations for recently renewing our funding agreement. I would also like to thank the members for their continued support through the development stages of this Project. Special thanks should also go to the Board of Cicerone, Caroline Gaden our Co-ordinator and Justin Hoad the Cicerone Farm Manager for all of their efforts over the last 12 months.

Hugh Sutherland

Weather sites on the internet

Check out these four	www.100topclimatessites.com/	CSI RO	www.dar.csiro.au/nino
Bureau of Meteorology	www.bom.gov.au/climate/	Climate Ark	www.climateark.org

PROJECT OUTCOMES from Producer Initiated Research and Development The third PIRD Report summarises 20 PIRD trials funded by MLA. Here are some of the main outcomes.

Drench resistance PIRD 97/S03 by Willalooka Prime Lamb group in Keith SA.

DrenchRite drench resistance test provided many benefits to producers.

Better information on drench resistance on individual farms

Test is fast and easy to use.

Important to monitor faecal egg counts before drenching.

Use grazing management to reduce re-infestation.

Second summer drench only needed if results of faecal egg counts warrant it.

Prime lambs from Merino ewes PIRD 97/S04, Lower North Lamb Marketing group, Kapunda SA.

Weight and conditions of maiden ewes at mating is critical to reproductive performance and lamb growth.

It is more profitable to select rams on growth rate alone when prime lamb sires are put to Merino ewes.

Target mating weight of 50 kgs should be set for maiden ewes.

8-10 month old rams can be used at 2% joining provided testicular diameter is about 28 cms.

Mineral Nutrition for finishing lambs PIRD 97/S08 Greenways Lamb Group Greenways SA.

Mineral drench is of little value in district lamb finishing systems.

Producers can save money by ignoring traditional practices.

Feed quality and feed quantity are the main reasons for poor growth.

Blood tests should be done if mineral deficiency is suspected.

Lamb Production PIRD 97/V01 Campaspe and Elmore Field day Prime Lamb Group, Elmore Vic.

Lambs by high performance LAMBPLAN rams produced more meat.

Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) for growth are accurate in selecting rams for commercial lamb production.

Profitability closely linked to lambing percentages obtained.

Lack of fertility highlights need to know more about genetic background of bought in ewes before purchase.

Extra cost of buying high performance rams recovered through faster growth and extra meat.

Landcare

We cut down the gum trees, we pulled up the stumps, We ploughed in the grasses, and leveled the bumps; Any scrub that remained we burnt in a pile, And our work was admired, at least for a while.

From the trunks of the trees we cut many posts, And fenced in the land from the hills to the coast. The paddocks created we harrowed and sowed, And were all quite delighted when new pasture showed.

We fattened the cattle, we raised many lambs, From the sleekest of pigs we smoked beautiful hams. Lucerne and barley, potatoes and peas We grew in the paddocks where once there were trees

Though good for a while, 'twas not very long That things on our farms went drastically wrong.

Erosion was rife and the wind blew away Much of the soil into ocean and bay.

And the earth that was left wasn't nearly as good I t wouldn't grow pastures as well as it should; Fertiliser we used to give it a hand But we still weren't getting the best from our land.

Generations have gone since our farms were begun And many we've handed from father to son; Well over a century of wear and abuse And some of our land is now of little use.

But all is not lost, we're trying to redeem The soil blown away or eroded by stream. We're replanting trees and trying to repair Our degenerate land with cooperative care.

From *Australian poems that would stun a sheep*
By Philip R Rush.

TAX INVOICE

The Cicerone Project Inc.

ABN 15 314 685 367

reminds you that

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

are now due

One year membership is \$88 (includes \$8 GST)

Hear the results of all our trials

Have your say in research.

Please join us by returning the form on page 11 with your cheque

WALCHA in 1873, from the diary of Ludwig Schrader of Holstein (now Yerrawun)

Monday th 1st of September and the first day of the week and of spring has been truly a fine one. A cold wind was blowing during the early part of the morning from the east; a slight frost was visible also. As I write at 8 pm we have a lovely warm spring night. I trust the weather may only continue so far hence and I trust I shall have my spring crops sown. I am becoming anxious as time and season goes quickly past and lands not yet fit to receive grain. I have been very busy carting manure to the orchard today. I wish to lay it down with grass and hope if well prepared to cut some hay from it. I drew 2½ loads into it with 3 loads of stone out of it.

Wednesday th 3

I rose early and determined if possible to sow oats. Weather was very threatening but held fine to 5 o'clock pm. I finished sowing 4 bags of oats at 4 o'clock and about half of the land intended for this crop on the flat. I worked two pairs of horses, Mag and Dolly to dinner time. Dolly who has worked a couple of hard days at carting manure &c. had quite enough. After dinner I worked Samson and Kate, both started very fresh but broke to the collar they soon became jaded, the work being awfully heavy.

The land in many places being boggy and every where wet. What can one do? The season is fast going away, seed oats or oats intended to be sown for seed I cannot well wait longer, the rust being as destructive upon it as the wheat.

Thursday th 4

Weather awfully unsettled; raining at intervals heavily, then occasionally the sun would shine forth with much heat. A cold wind blowing from the west last night was terribly boisterous, a perfect blowing accompanied with thunder and very heavy rain. The weather today and yesterday is rougher and as cold as any we have ever experienced during the winter. I very much regret having sown the oats yesterday, the land is awfully swamped.

Friday th 4 A winter's day, snowing heavily. At 9pm weather freezing the wind very high from the west

Saturday th 6

Snow laying on the ground, wind blowing severely cold from the west, freezing all day in the shade, snow did not thaw from the ground in open spots before 12 o'clock.

The Cicerone Project Inc.

Trading as **New England Cicerone Project**

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Email cicerone@northnet.com.au

Web page <http://northnet.com.au/~cicerone>

**Nomination for election to
the Board of the Cicerone Project Inc.**

There are SIX PRODUCER representative positions on the Board and **three producer positions are open to election at the 2001 AGM**. There is also one vacancy for an EXTENSION representative. Nominees, proposers and seconders must all be current financial members of The Cicerone Project Inc. Nominations are to be sent to PO Box 1593, ARMIDALE 2350 or faxed to 02 6778 3872 **Closing date is 3 Sept 2001.**

NOMINATIONS

Name of Nominee 1.....

Address Phone

Signature of Nominee

Proposed bySeconded by.....

Name of Nominee 2.....

Address Phone

Signature of Nominee

Proposed bySeconded by.....

Return forms to The Cicerone Project Inc., PO Box 1593, ARMIDALE 2350

✂.....

MEMBERSHIP FORM Yes I want to continue to support the work being done by **The Cicerone Project** Enclosed is cheque to the value of \$88 (includes \$8 GST) as my subscription

NAME.....

Address.....

.....

Postcode Phone Fax

Email.....

The Cicerone Project gratefully acknowledges the funding support given to them by the former AWRAP, now Australian Wool Innovation

Newsletter Editor: Caroline Gaden, Executive Officer of The Cicerone Project Inc.
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The Cicerone Project Inc.

PO Box 1593, ARMIDALE 2350

WEBSITES

Wool Innovations is located at www.wool.com

Year of the Outback is in 2002 and will showcase over 1000 events and activities.

Check out www.outback2002.com

NOW SOME SITES FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO SHOP!!!!

David Jones is at www.davidjones.com.au

Harris Scarfe is at www.harrisscarfe.com.au

Harvey Norman is at www.harveynorman.com.au

Innovations is at www.innovations.com.au

Myerdirect is at www.myerdirect.com.au

Electronic **auctions** of just about anything can be found at www.ebay.com