Smallstock Traceability Pilot

Project Code	Prepared by	Date Submitted
2022-1128	Dr Michelle Henry	25/05/2023

Project Description

Gundagai Meat Processors (GMP) were one of the plants to gain funding through AMPC to introduce small stock traceability back to an individual animal level. This project was due to AMIC receiving funding from the Australian Government, through the Traceability Grants Program.

Project Content

Currently in across most states of Australia (excluding Victoria), traceability of sheep movements is undertaken on a mob-based level. The introduction of individual electronic sheep tagging presents the opportunity to ensure traceability of sheep during their lifetime is improved, and in the case of a disease outbreak, the ability to trace an animal's movements will be a quicker process. Additionally, there are flow on benefits for producers who use EID tags on their property when collecting and using data on farm.

Project Outcome

Overall, several issues occurred throughout this project, including hardware failure issues, software linking issues, and read rate issues. Having a staff member responsible for this project was integral to working through these issues and continues to be integral when following up issues and moving to the next stage of the project. Even though the panel reader system had not been completely validated at the time of publishing this report, Gundagai Meat Processors are confident that the system will be completed and validated in the coming months.

Benefit for Industry

This project has enabled industry to understand the issues that do occur when trying to integrate new technology into processing plants. This technology has taken over 12 months to reach the stage of EID numbers entering the software system used, however, has not been fully validated and is not fully functioning within Gundagai Meat Processors systems. Industry should be advised of the following three major learnings.

1. Embedding traceability technology into processing plants could take 12-18 months to achieve.
2. A staff member within the plant should be assigned to the project to ensure that issues are taken care of in a timely manner when they arise.
3. A process will need to be introduced into each plant to ensure validation can occur when low rates of EID tags are currently moving through plants outside of Victoria.