

Summary

- **Report Title:** Money Making Mums
- **The evaluation was commissioned by:** Meat and Livestock Australia
- **The evaluation was undertaken by:** Roberts Evaluation Pty Ltd
- **Date of the evaluation report :** September 2003
- **Synopsis**

The pilot workshop, *Money Making Mums*, was held on the 4th September 2003 at the Department of Primary Industries Research Institute at Rutherglen, Victoria. There were 20 participants, 6 women and 14 men. The age range of the group was from age 30 to over 50 years of age. The participants were sheep farmers from Victoria.

This workshop is one of many offered by the education arm of Meat and Livestock Australia, the industry organisation that carries out research and development for the beef and sheep meat producers of Australia. We evaluated it in its final phase as a pilot

The workshop presentation was measured against the stated learning objectives, principles of adult learning, participation and action learning. The accommodation of the different learning styles in the presentation was also evaluated.

Evaluation
of
Pilot Workshop
MONEY MAKING MUMS

Rutherglen, September 2003

Conducted for
Meat and Livestock Australia

by

Dr Kate Roberts

Roberts Research and Evaluation Pty Ltd (Now Roberts Evaluation Pty Ltd)

September 2003



CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
SUMMARY.....	4
METHOD OF EVALUATION	7
WORKSHOP EVALUATION	7
OBSERVATIONS.....	7
ACTION LEARNING.....	8
THE WORKSHOP MANUAL	8
<i>Evaluation by external evaluator of the manual.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>What the participants said about the manual.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>What the presenter said about the manual.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>The facilitator's guide.....</i>	<i>9</i>
THE WORKSHOP	10
<i>The end of session discussions with participants.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Comments from the questionnaire on content – participants</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Comments from the questionnaire on process – participants.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Comments from the presenter's evaluation questionnaire.....</i>	<i>13</i>
OUTCOMES	14
VENUE	16
APPENDIX 1 COMMENTS PRESENTER.....	17

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Participants, the presenter, and the technical adviser, contributed suggestions for improvement of this learning package.

Most participants were wool and fat lamb producers from around Rutherglen and gave freely of their time. Other participants were staff from the Research Institute.

A lamb producer from Western Victoria made the effort to bring some of his Coopworth sheep to the workshop so that participants could see the benefits of cross breeding.

Permission to use report for AES website for education members.

I am happy to give permission on behalf of MLA to use these evaluation reports for this purpose.

Please note however that where individual's names are used in these reports, that permission may be required from those individuals to ensure compliance with the Privacy Act.

*Michael Goldberg
Manager - Communication & Research Adoption
Livestock Production Innovation
Meat & Livestock Australia*

23/05/08

SUMMARY

The pilot workshop, *Money Making Mums*, was held on the 4th September 2003 at the Department of Primary Industries Research Institute at Rutherglen. There were 20 participants, 6 women and 14 men. The age range of the group was from age 30 to over 50 years of age.

The workshop presentation was measured against the stated learning objectives, principles of adult learning, participation and action learning. The accommodation of the different learning styles in the presentation was also evaluated.

There was spontaneous, enthusiastic comments made about the usefulness of this course. The value of having a presenter known to the participants cannot be underestimated.

Key findings

Content

The course was well thought out and written and presented at a level that was appropriate for producers whose knowledge about and experience with genetics ranged from little to extensive. Those who had little knowledge or experience took what they needed from the course and were thankful that they had the manual so that they could read over the material again later. Those who had extensive knowledge, contributed to the workshop and helped others understand the practical applications of this technology.

In this workshop, as with many other pilots, there was too much content for the time allowed. However, decisions were made during the day, with the help of the participants, about material to leave out or to deal with superficially. This does not necessarily mean that the course needs to be cut down but that presenters must feel free to negotiate with the participants about what to leave out.

Participants found the discussions about the influence on the flock of the maternal sire revealing and strategically useful for their enterprises. The mock auction and the contract mating role play were cited as being particularly enjoyable and valuable.

Presentation

The workshop was delivered by a lively and competent presenter and who is known to the group. One of participants made the comment that he has taken pride in watching this young person develop into a mature and capable presenter. He was respectful of the knowledge of the participants and invited them to contribute to the course content whenever they felt the need and they did. He made good use of the knowledge of two

sheep breeders from South West Victoria, whom he had invited to take part. Their knowledge added to the credibility of the day. All learning styles were catered for and learning objectives were met.

A lecture style presentation featured rarely during the indoor sessions. Rather, there were many intense questions and insightful discussions during this period. All participants made some contribution to the interaction.

Materials

The workshop notes need some editing for consistency. A better flow of information to exercises would be helpful. It was difficult at times to work out how to do the exercise based on the preceding information. Some of the overheads should be part of the participants notes. The detail of these suggestions appear in the body of this report.

Action learning

Action learning was used in the workshop deliberately or inadvertently. It was clearly evident on occasions where there was activity such as the mock auction. There were clear comments from the presenter and the participants about what worked well and what could be improved next time. There were also reflective questions about the value of the exercise such as making sure people worked as a team.

Accreditation

Most EDGENetwork courses are eligible for accreditation. More can be made of this but presenters will need clear notes and guidelines to be able to inform participants what they need to do to apply for accreditation should they wish to do so. A one page hand out for participants in all the EDGENetwork courses would serve this purpose.

Evaluation by participants

The detail and practical nature of the content meant that there was something for most participants to apply on their properties immediately. Participants extended their networks and the value of having innovative producers, such as those from Western Victoria who brought their Coopworth sheep, endorsed the applicability of gene technology. The content also made apparent what skills producers needed to apply the technology.

Evaluation by the presenter

The presenter felt that there was too much material for the time allowed. But he made his own judgement after discussion with the participants about what would be dealt with superficially and what dealt with in detail.

Recommendations

Participants found the course content useful and applicable. It should now be fully developed with some editorial changes (see body of report for detail).

The mock action and the mating contract role play worked particularly well and should be retained in their current form.

The workshop manual needs some minor editing.

The facilitator's guide needs some indication about what facilitators can or cannot leave out, should they need to.

A standard one page information sheet about accreditation in the manual would be helpful.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Data were collected using:

- Participant observation during the workshop;
- Structured review with participants after the workshop conducted by the facilitator;
- A structured questionnaire after the workshop for participants and the presenter; and
- Unstructured discussions with participants during the workshop.

Data were validated by comparing comments from the presenter with comments from participants and observation notes. They were also validated by comparing written with verbal comments.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

Observations

Participants at this workshop wanted to know much more about genetics. They were ready to learn something about which most of them knew little. The commitment to the content and the high level facilitation skills came through in the presentation. The presenter's local knowledge and the knowledge of each of the participants enterprises added to the acceptance of the information being presented.

Most of the principles of adult learning were largely followed and the presenter's appreciation of the level of knowledge and experience in the group was made clear to the participants. This was made apparent when the presenter stated on more than one occasion "I don't know ask xxx during the break". There was effective two way communication. The point was made by participants here and in other pilots, that while they appreciate being able to talk to each other, the main aim in coming was to gain knowledge from the presentation.

Learning styles of the participants were catered for with the activists and pragmatists probably most satisfied because of the level of interaction and practical activities. The reflectors were left alone to think even though the pace was hectic at times.

Having an "issues" and "expectations" board was useful and is now a standard inclusion with MLA courses.

The workshop ran behind time from the outset with a slightly late start, the large number of participants, their interest in the content and the large amount of material to cover.

Action learning

Action learning may not have been deliberately used but its concept contributed to the improvement of the presentation and activities. With regard to the mock auction, the comment was made by the presenter that it was too easy for the participants to get a positive result. The participants did not see it like that. They had problems trying to get to all the pens in the short time available and to work closely as a team. If they had also had a negative result at the end of that it have been too frustrating. Instead, there was a good balance of discomfort, fun and learning.

The workshop manual

Evaluation by external evaluator of the manual

General comments

Overall, the notes are comprehensive and well written. The content is useful, very informative and relevant. The developers should be acknowledged for their work.

Participants may need better warning to bring calculators.

A better lead into some of the exercises is warranted. For example, exercise 1.1 has no preceding information that talks about genetics v management. Section 1 could do with an introduction.

Specific comments

There needs to be consistency in heading styles (see contents page SECTION 1 and Section 2).

P11, the diagram is a little confusing in that it indicates that the a Merino ewe and Merino ram are mated. The question was: is daughter of that union mated to **a** *maternal* ram or **the** *maternal* ram? **The** *maternal* ram is a Merino but **a** *maternal* ram could be anything useful. Once the concept of maternal ram was explained again, and put in context, the diagram became more clear. It is an unfortunate turn of phrase ‘maternal v terminal’. It should have been ‘breeding v terminal’ or some such.

P13 exercise 1.3. The presenter made the comment about steps 1-4 that they are the steps taken to bring about change. Perhaps the steps should have a title describing them as such. Participants would find that useful.

What the participants said about the manual

The participants gave the handout notes, the graphs and the materials an equivalent score of 9.4 out 10.

What they said about the materials:

Need time to communicate ideas.
Okay so far but will have to wait till I read through the lot.
Will read through at home as well.
A bit too much detail (simplify if possible).
More take home stuff would have been great.

They also mentioned that they would have liked the relevant overheads to be in the notes (the presenter and technical adviser will identify which ones).

What the presenter said about the manual.

Overall, the presenter and the technical adviser were both very positive about the materials. There was some discussion about some of the slides and diagrams. Details of some of these comments will go direct to the deliverers as well as attached as an appendix to this report. It will depend on the availability of time the presenter and the technical adviser have to make comment before this report is due.

Specific comments about the materials from the presenter at this stage are:

Left out production and management section - grazing info etc. Opportunities exist for producers to do this in other workshops and we should allow them to focus on genetics and ewes rather than management of pastures.

An exercise 'Looking at lifetime \$ impact on their business from ram selection is enough to cover a large part of the practical application.

The opening slides are basically repeated later on in the w/shop. I will remove double ups later. 55 slides is too many in 5 hours. I realise you do not have to use them all but to do the pilot justice, I tried and gave up at about lunch time when I was about 1 hour behind.

The facilitator's guide

This guide is comprehensive and needs little revision apart from some editing. It provides good instruction for the facilitator and this is borne out by the fact that there was only a short time to prepare for the workshop. The familiarity with the subject by the facilitator was also a contributing factor.

Its format and some content (such as inclusion of level of knowledge recommended for the facilitator, the flier for participants) could be used as a guide for future MLA course facilitator's notes.

Consider adding what participants should bring with them to the workshop to the flier.

The presenter requested some guidance in the facilitator's notes about what could be left out without compromising the integrity of the course. He made his own judgement but would have preferred to help with those decisions.

The workshop

The participants were enthusiastic about the information given to them. What they said at various times in the day is as follows.

The end of session discussions with participants

When asked about the mock auction, they stated that it:

- Was simple.
- Included everyone.
- Made participants work as a team.
- Made participants mix with others.
- Was a great break.
- Should have been a real auction.
- May be should have been after lunch when people are tired.
- Congratulations to [the presenter].

When asked what they would improve about the workshop, they stated:

- Leave as one day but start earlier.
- Provide notes prior to the course.
- Keep the notes as they are and if required, skip sections.
- Cut out some things such as the exercises on p7 and p19 (*no consensus on this*).
- Not enough time to talk to each other (*no consensus on this*).
- Here to learn and not to talk.

The technical adviser suggested that it may be worthwhile looking at prerequisites for the course such as a working knowledge of LAMBPLAN.

Comments from the questionnaire on content – participants

Overwhelmingly, participants found the day: enjoyable, valuable, it prompted questions, it was thought provoking and had new information for them. No one found it boring. They gave the workshop an overall score of 8.9 out of 10.

Their comments were:

What did you enjoy most?	Why?
The dedication, belief, commitment to the sheep industry by some of the younger participants (I am 64).	The industry has a future.
EBV indexes.	Quality means dollars.
Information given - interaction of group.	Stimulated ideas, questions, clarified.
Hearing about the gain that can be made using EBV's for maternal ewes.	More \$ of course.
The interaction between group.	More enjoyable.
EBV's.	Learn to understand them.
Group interaction.	Solved problems/answered questions.
The discussion at the end re buying and selling Is X lambs.	Relates directly to our own operation.
Presentation/content. Different learning styles catered for. Fast paced. Interactive.	
Information on breeding replacement breeders.	Didn't attach as much importance on the subject.
Learning about the role of maternal genetics.	Very relevant.
Interaction with other people.	Shows the importance of communication.
Content - value of maternal sires.	What I came to learn.
Information/interaction/mock sale/role-play.	Learning/seeing things through other people's eyes.
Maternal EBV's.	Makes sense.
Group learning.	Because people find EBVs tough going.
Learning the facts and figures about %'s and the resultant \$ impact.	It is the bottom line.
Talks on genetics.	The importance of the Maternal Sire on is the users who benefit to 83% of same.

What did you enjoy least?	Why?
Some of the workshop sessions eg p 7 and p 19.	In a tight programme they are very time consuming to set up, run and report back on information already covered.
Filling out questionnaire re breeding on page 11.	Very basic.
Information overload. EBVs are not easy to get a handle on.	Mentally tiring.
Exercise 2.2.	We had already just covered, talking about it.
Discussion between two groups purchasing rams.	
Bit too technical in some areas.	Took eyes off the ball.
Some people not up to scratch, asking questions that 99% knew.	A tight schedule to get through.
Not enough question time allowed in program.	Because of the depth of information it was not possible.
Filling out questionnaires.	
Some highly technical genetic information.	Not needed.
All a bit quick.	Some of the technical information needs time to grasp.
Some of the workshops.	Not necessary.
Page 11 explanation of cross breeds.	Thought everyone should have a handle on this.
Enjoyed all of the day.	

What excited you?	Why?
The prospect of being able to form an alliance with a lot of first cross ewe producers.	It will be profitable for both parties.
Quality means dollars, also mixing with pro-active lamb producers.	Guess I like challenges.
Show potential of profit drivers.	See what you should prioritise.
Never get excited unless clicked by speed camera.	
EBV information.	Help with my enterprise.
Using EBV's to produce what I want.	
Change in people's attitudes.	They got heaps from it.
The alliance auction also the way John Helmsmen described how he mates ewes for various trials.	Broadens out view on lamb production.
Energy, passion and commitment by group.	Day was well organised and facilitated.
Not that easy to excite. However the figures in EBV etc were okay.	Can be applied and improve my operation.
The potential for improvement.	As above.
Seeing the potential for improvement.	Being able to keep up with the technological developments.
Potential - improvement.	More money.
Future.	Improvement though contract mating.
Extra value in high index maternal sires.	Over life of sire was huge.
Potential of measured ewe performance.	More profit.
With the correct knowledge, so much is possible.	You are in control of the influencing management decisions.
The alliance discussion near end of the day was a practical way of this replacing problem of breeding ewes.	No real concerns.

What concerned you?	Why?
The difficulty of achieving number four.	The suspicious and conservative nature of the merino industry.
Lack of replacement ewes available with good maternal lines.	Lack of opportunity.
Never get concerned unless just told that fines have doubled.	
Tried to cover too much subjects in one day.	
Bit technical.	Too much content, too long.
Too much information.	Not familiar with some concepts that were assumed as known.
Ability of myself to negotiate with supplier.	
Not enough time for all topics.	
People's understanding of pasture growth curves effect on cost of production.	High cost enterprises in room.
Maybe time was a bit pushed and less time could be put in to some things.	

Comments from the questionnaire on process – participants

The introduction to the workshop was interesting and clear to most participants. The comments were:

- Very topical challenge for the prime lamb industry.
- Put you in the frame of mind for the day.
- Needs to be more snappy and provocative.
- What I expected.
- Very relevant to my business.

The activities were well paced for most participants. Their comments were:

- Cut out some workshop sessions.
- Moved quickly.
- Needed at least one hour more.
- Too much for one day.
- Try to keep the pace for interest sake as well as time allocation.
- Because of an attempt to fit two days into one.
- A lot of information to absorb in one day.
- Nature of pilot.

They all felt the presenter was enthusiastic and knowledgeable:

- Keep on track.
- Well presented, confident, well researched.
- Well done.
- The presenter kept the day flowing.
- Well done, [presenter]. Controlled and kept us moving.
- Top notch could not have been better.
- Excellent.
- Made good use of other's expertise.
- Ask within the group (guests) for relevant comments.
- Obviously.
- Professionalism personified.
- Yes and had good support.

All participants thought that relevant practical examples were used. They all felt comfortable about contributing.

Comments about the **length** of the workshop were evenly distributed among those who thought it was 'just right' and those who thought it was 'too short'. Three felt it was too long. Those who commented stated:

- It was a pilot and needs some streamlining.
- It was a long day but it had to be to cover the material. It was too short as I felt it moved very quickly.
- Just needed that little bit more, but 2 days would be too long. Would not learn anymore if made two days - one day keeps the discussion going and does not let it bog down in crap discussion.
- Should have an evening meal and debrief, a few beers.
- An earlier start might have been better.
- Just travelled a long way.
- Should all be covered in one day but should be under way on time at 8.30 am.

Comments from the presenter's evaluation questionnaire.

Some comments have already been reported and will not be repeated here.

How effective was the training/familiarisation provided for you to deliver this workshop?

Effective, however, role play - needs more guidance in notes. Because of amount of info however there was heaps of time required.

Was the recommended delivery structure (as per the facilitation outline) of the activities effective?

In part. There is currently simply too much. Too many overheads.

What worked well? Why?

Role play - got them thinking - needs less detail after all contract mating will be all about relationships and price needs to focus on this.

What did not work well

Mock auction - the follow up info makes the purchases too easy, need some more tricks.

Number of overheads, and ewe selection theory - too dry.

What modifications would you (or did you) make to improve the delivery of the workshop?

Left out production and management section - grazing info etc. Opportunities exist for producers to do this in other workshops we should allow them to focus on genetics and ewes rather than management of pastures.

Were there any unnecessary activities?

The % of maternal genes in slaughter animals exercise.

Was the length of the activities appropriate?

Some of the simple activities are too long - however more time with the role play is required.

Do you have other general comments or suggestions about the activities?

Not very meaty, they lack guts, with exception of role play.

Did you enjoy delivering the workshop?

Very much enjoyed. But was bloody hard work - there needs to be less background in the workshop ie less LAMBPLAN detail and more on principle. Would have been very hard without [sheep breeders from Western Victoria] who answered.

Outcomes

This workshop was designed to enable participants to achieve the following main learning outcome:

To be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the contribution of maternal genes to a breeding program, to identify the changes and actions required to develop individual strategies for business improvement, after taking into account the business objectives, the business environment and future market requirements.

The associated learning outcomes required to achieve this are:

1. *Understand how to use LAMBPLAN and Merino Genetic services figures to improve maternal performance.*
2. *Evaluate their existing production system in terms of maternal performance.*
3. *Set realistic production targets and breeding goals for maternal performance, based on economically important traits.*
4. *Understand how nutrition and management interact with genetics.*
5. *Evaluate economic return on investment from improved maternal genetics.*
6. *Compare and evaluate different systems for sourcing ewes (self replacing vs bought in vs contract breeding).*

All participants found that what they learnt through the workshop has been of benefit for the **future performance** of their businesses and they can apply what they have learnt to their own farm situation.

- Definitely - the challenge is how much.
- Yes, when I buy one again.
- Closer liaison with my existing 1st x ewe supplier.
- This is the next step we need to take.
- Already do all of it at home.

This workshop revealed the need for **further training** in:

- If it is to be it is up to me.
- Same topics in more depth.
- Target what you want to produce.
- People, meeting skills, presentation.
- Well presented especially with the guests invited.
- A half day meeting within a month to share experiences and answer questions.
- LAMBPLAN for lean meat yield.
- Today just reconfirmed the need for constant lifelong learning.
- Anything that will increase profits and secure a market for product.
- Prime Time Follow up with incentives to use better maternal genetics.
- EBV value.
- How to keep twins and triplets alive, aside from using shelter belts of trees etc on a cold rainy, windy nights. What do other farmers that have 150%, 160% lambing do?

Other comments

- Excellent!
- Thanks for the day.
- Social dinner after.
- A great day.

- Good value and very entertaining.
- Thank you for the opportunity to be involved. Keep up the good work.
- Could do a lot to increasing \$ per ha for a lot of farmers.
- Dinner speaker with a debrief and several beers.
- A very worthwhile workshop.

Venue

The venue was the Department of Primary Industries Research Institute at Rutherglen. The conference room for the indoor activities was appropriate and comfortable. Proximity to sheds and yards meant that no time was wasted travelling to sites where the outdoor, practical activities were held.

Appendix 1 Comments Presenter

Money Making Mums Pilot – post report

Section 1 Profitability of prime lamb enterprise

Overall this section worked well. Using the profit map highlights where we as farmers can have an influence. There is a tendency for producers to get focused on areas that are not genetic. However this is a good opportunity to get all of these ‘out of the way’ at the start of the workshop.

Exercise 1.1 probably didn’t take 30 mins.

The exercise fairly superficial, however it did instigate some good conversation regarding FCE and stocking rate and genetics. It also highlighted some of the other areas that producers need to focus on such as nutrition, fertiliser etc. The bulk of the groups came up with the same profit drivers. There wasn’t any real value in running this exercise in groups – it worked just as well as a facilitated discussion.

Exercise 1.2

An excellent discussion however the diagram on page 11 of the workshop notes is difficult for producers to follow through. It needs to be two separate pedigrees to make it easier to follow. **It worked better as a discussion than it did in the groups.**

I’m not sure if it achieved its purpose of getting the producers to think about all of the influences in their own production system. It may work better if they have to highlight what their system is then work through that. This would also be of added value if we then asked the producers to highlight which animals they knew genetic information about other than what breed or what breeder that they came from.

Exercise 1.3

Participants had some difficulty with this exercise coming up with the benchmarks. This isn’t really a problem though as it encourages them to think about where they may find benchmarks, ie best performing flock/paddock in their own farms, neighbours etc. It works well as the take home message and take home sheet. Its also probably the only activity, apart from the role play, that has any real meat in it. It needs the appropriate amount of time allocated and is probably a good place to break for a cuppa afterwards as it gives participants an opportunity to talk further about benchmarks etc.

This could be a good opportunity to do the ram visual exercise. It leads into the next segment well and links the visual criteria with the theory of lambplan etc.

Section 2 Livestock Selection Theory: Impact of Superior Maternal Genetics

Exercise 2.1

This almost needs to be either earlier in the day or after lunch as the 'wake' up exercise. The groups of ewes that are given in the Facilitator Notes don't really work as the added information is 'too good'. In the bulk of the participants were happy with the ewes that they bought. When I have run this exercise in the past I've used it to show that they don't really know what they are getting. I keep it realistic but you can make the ewes a lot 'worse' than what they are set up as and still keep it realistic. There was no real value in having the sheep there as there wasn't a great deal of time to look at them. Also you could run this exercise in 20 mins from start to finish easily. Keep the actual auction short as its where participants began to get bored and as they could see the point of it there was little point in taking your time.

This section has too much theory and not enough interaction in it. It's a combination of trying to squeeze too much into the morning segment. The group loved the activities of \$ difference of rams but couldn't get into the understanding lambplan EBV's to the same degree.

This activity is fun and does achieve its purpose – however it takes time which is a precious commodity in this workshop – speed it up and keep it snappy. Use it as a break before lunch or an energiser after lunch to work off some food and it will help the day run more smoothly.

Exercise 2.2

It took a bit of facilitation to get the participants to think about the factors that are measured. The bulk of the participants simply said that the picture tells us nothing and needs some more info. I've seen this done before and tend to get the same response. Perhaps we need something where we ask the participants what are the important physical traits to consider when purchasing a ram. Then link this through to the measurement of EBV's. I don't think the photo activity really meets the purpose – however its not a big deal as the message that you need EBV's is well and truly in their heads by this stage. **Perhaps this exercise is the one of least value in the whole day.**

Exercise 2.3

This exercise could be earlier in the day or just after lunch also as a wake up. The group got more value out of talking to a very respected seedstock producer than they did from looking at the rams and guessing EBV's etc. That activity has been done to death at lambplan workshops over the years. Need to think about the audience – if they haven't seen it before – or haven't done the Effective Breeding workshop then yes you may get some value from it. If however the group has done EBP then there will be little value in doing this and it may be better off to focus on the breed of sheep – this will be

particularly useful if the breed of sheep is different to what is normally used by the group ie Coopworth in north east Victoria.

As the workshop is written at present there a great slab of theory straight after lunch. Either of these exercises could be used to start off after lunch and energise the participants as stated previously.

This period after lunch would also be where I had greatest trouble maintaining the focus of the participants. The content isn't difficult its more the timing.

Figure 8 in the participant notes adds little value – the percentage figures that are given add little value also and confuse the matter. They either need to be referred to in the participant notes or further explained – at this stage there is no reference to them in the body of the notes.

There is also a lot of information in the notes here that isn't directly referred too. It makes it difficult for the participants to follow the facilitated discussion through the notes if they want to. It could be placed as an appendix to the notes and referred to by the facilitator but then wouldn't get in the road of the workshop as you worked your way through.

Exercise 2.4

This exercise would work better if it was set up to run in conjunction with the software program. The participants could record the results in their notes – or you could provide a print out of the different sires or trial runs. The affect of altering lambing percentage etc could also be looked at within the base flock.

One participant made the point that they could already be operating at these higher levels. This is true but the point is that they don't know – I thought it was interesting that this point came out here and not at another time during the day – was it denial that they were missing out on all the extra \$ - I wonder.

40mins probably isn't really enough time to do this exercise justice. There exits a great opportunity to play with the software to see which EBV's affect long term profitability the greatest. Testing those profit drivers that were identified earlier is also a worthwhile activity to do at this time. There were a number of requests for the software to be made available to the producers. We need to make sure that it works before we do that.

Another worthwhile activity was to show the difference in value of rams that were sold at the Coopworth auction in 2002. An Index point cost about \$40 above and beyond the base price of \$500. For a ram that had a Coopworth \$ index of 104 vs 100 that ram would have cost about \$660 vs \$500. Over that rams lifetime he would have returned \$4 extra per ewe joined. If joined to 50 ewes per year that's \$200 extra in the first year and if joined for 4 years that \$800 extra over his lifetime. $800/160 = 500\%$ return on extra

capital invested. This is just adding some further information to what is included in the notes on pg 46.

Again there are large section of participant notes here with no reference to them. Its difficult to bring them all into the workshop – perhaps we need to look at what its about and prune the notes a little or use appendices more.

Section 3 – Management Implications and Breeding systems

Exercise 3.1

There are other places that the participants can get this information. In total this session in only 1 hour and includes three separate topics – only cursory focused on any one area. I left out exercise 3.1 from the workshop. I don't see why it wouldn't work – I just don't feel that it is the most important message from the day and as there are other places to get the information I don't feel that the workshop suffered at all by not having it there.

Hybrid vigour was covered at the request of the participants. I spent about 5 minutes on it which I feel was enough. Those participants that asked for it to be covered felt that their questions had been answered.

The different breeding systems segment is also fairly light weight. Participants didn't get a great deal from this I believe though. Its unlikely that participants would change a breeding system as a result of undertaking this workshop – as is one of the aims of this session. One of the participants asked for some \$ break downs of the costs and returns of different systems. As it's written at the moment this isn't covered in any great detail.

I feel with the exception of the hybrid vigour the rest of this section could be removed from the workshop. Leave the participants info in the notes and move it to an appendix and just run a hybrid vigour section very quickly during the morning or after the ewe auction.

Section 4 – Applying the theory and Key take home messages

This section takes at least 1¼ hours. It took the participants a long time to get past the need to determine the EBV's and to think about the other factors that need to be considered. I feel half of the problem was that they were trying to make a decision about every EBV instead of focusing on those that are important to them. Being able to identify those EBV's that are of importance is a critical point to selecting rams. I felt by having a whole list of EBV's there it misdirected the participants to thinking that they are all important. The individual groups spent at least 45 mins doing the background to the conversation. When they did have to get into the discussion things went extremely smoothly. I chipped in a few things to 'make it harder' as both farmers were being way to kind to each other. The debrief that followed would have been one of the most important discussions of the day. It was pointed out that even though they came to an agreement on how to set price etc. that it doesn't happen in the real world. The challenge

was given to the participants that the conversation simply doesn't occur as everyone is looking to someone else to solve the ewe shortage. One of the key actions by the participants was to go home and talk to their ewe breeders about what they are doing and the rams they are purchasing. Couldn't have had a better outcome really.

There is no need to have live rams for this exercise. In reality they wouldn't have rams as this would all happen over the phone or 'at the pub' or over a cupper as the farmers pointed out.

No producer wanted to use the maternal calculator for this exercise however if it worked better they may have been more interested.