



Victorian
Farmers
Federation

Livestock

the Stock Standard

Newsletter of the Victorian Farmers Federation Livestock Group

August 2018

The Livestock Group welcome 3 new councillors



Peter Star – North East Region

Peter, the principal owner of the family run farm is on 1600 hectares in the Upper Murray Region of North East Victoria, prime Angus Beef Cattle and Superfine Merino enterprise, properties located at Bethanga, Bungil and Cudgewa.

Peter's current extensive roles in the farming industry include Chair of the National Wild Dog Action Plan, Member of the VFF Land Management Committee, Goulburn Murray Water – Lake Hume Community Reference Group, CFA – Talgarno Rural Fire Brigade and Talgarno Landcare Group.

Peter is looking forward to bringing Wild Dog expertise to the group and experience in community engagement.



Angus Zilm – East Gippsland

Angus Zilm is a farm owner and business manager at 'Amella Pastoral', a pasture based livestock business based in Gippsland, Victoria. With a strong focus on animal health & welfare, low stress stock handling and life time traceability, Angus has a passion for quality and leading by example in an industry he is passionate about.

In addition to managing farming operating, Angus works full time as a local Agribusiness Banking Manager with a major bank based out of Sale. With strong networks and first class relationships with clients, Angus is across many current issues affecting Agriculture, in particular the livestock industry.

Angus holds a Bachelor of Business (Farm Management) and has recently completed the 2018 Rural Leadership program at Marcus Oldham College. He is actively involved in the Gippsland VFF branch and has strong connections with sitting UDV members in the Gippsland area.

Current day, Angus is married to Josie Zilm and they have two daughters aged two and four who are also passionate about animals and their welfare.

Angus has a public Instagram page which is aimed at showcasing life on his farm, the happy health cattle he produces and the family who supports him. Angus invites you to follow his page at: @amella_pastoral.



Scott Young – Corangamite

Scott a third generation farmer and his wife, Lisa, run Fernleigh Park along with their two daughters, a 760ha property, consisting of Prime Lamb and Cropping. The Prime lamb enterprise is approximately 2000 1st and 2nd cross ewes, joined to terminal and meat maternal rams. The cropping side of the business includes between 250-300ha of Canola, Oats, Wheat, Barley and Triticale.

Scott is currently a member of Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group, 1st Lieutenant at Mt Wallace CFA and President of a new local farming group "Farming Moorabool". Scott was previously on the Rural Advisory section 86 committee established by the Moorabool Shire, initial focus to lobby/ state government for lower council rates for farmers. He is constantly looking for ways to improve his current farming practice and opportunities for diversification.

VFF Livestock Group Council 2018/2019

Region/Position	Name
President	Leonard Vallance
Vice President	James Kirkpatrick
Additional Councillor	Steve Harrison
Corangamite	Scott Young
East Gippsland	Angus Zilm
North East	Peter Star
Wimmera	Michael Craig
Glenelg	Kate Dorahy
Mallee	Graeme Maher
West Gippsland	Faye Tuchtan
North Central	Ben Duxson
Goulburn Broken	Mark Ritchie

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Election Campaign

Recently at the VFF conference in Ballarat, the election campaign commenced in full swing with leader from the Liberal Party, Matthew Guy, promising 20 fully funded, dedicated Agricultural Liaison Officers and new Weeds and Pest Enforcement Taskforce.

The State election is 18 weeks away and we are kicking off a strong campaign, challenging all candidates on their ability to deliver for agriculture," said Mr David Jochinke, President, Victorian Farmers Federation.

We are looking for science-based and practical regulation, particularly in the area of animal welfare," he said.

"Farmers care for their animals and are themselves strong practitioners of good animal health and welfare, but we must recognise that farm production animals are not the same as zoo, companion or wildlife animals and need to be addressed appropriately.

"Rates are another priority area for our members," he said. "Across Victoria, farmers have experienced astronomical increases in their rates and while they are happy to contribute to the running of their communities, they cannot be rated out of existence," he said.

"Over the next four months, VFF members will be engaging with all candidates to discuss our election platforms and the range of initiatives which we believe will help to build a better State and deliver for agriculture," said Mr Jochinke.



The Hon. Matthew Guy at VFF Conference.

A copy of the VFF election platform can be downloaded at vff.org.au

The VFF election campaign theme "Delivering for agriculture – growing communities" aims to deliver much needed support for farmers and their communities, recognising the contribution they make to the State's economy and wellbeing.

Congratulations to the recipients of the inaugural Des Crowe Award and The Big Boots award.

The Des Crowe Award - The first VFF Livestock President was renowned for getting in and getting something done when it needed doing – over and above the call of duty.

Recipient: Adam Jenkins - for his selfless actions during the South West Bushfires.

The Big Boots Award – this award recognises the efforts of VFF Livestock members that stand up and 'walk the walk' in their region.

Recipient: Fiona Conroy – for her effort in raising the awareness of biosecurity risks to the greater commercial livestock sector associated with the Geelong Saleyards closure.



From Left to right: VFF Livestock Group President, Leonard Vallance with Big Boots award recipient Fiona Conroy and Des Crowe award recipient Adam Jenkins.



Thank you to our sponsors



As you see it....

As the VFF restructures its self into a body that can be responsive to the pressures of modern agriculture it would be wise to examine where the VFF lost its way.

For years there was a drive to be the CORPORATE body, well VFF is a farmer's lobby group representing farmers on short and long-term issues that impact on farm and social viability of the rural sector. Slowly but surely the VFF is moving back into that role, rather than feeding the corporate needs of a company structure.

This same philosophy has been transferred to our national peak councils with some now opting for no direct state farmer organisational membership at all and electing to go with a so-called skills-based board design.

What could possibly be wrong with this idea. Conveniently a skills matrix appears

with a long list of qualifications that may well be appropriate for a commercial company or structure of a global company but not all that useful to a farm lobby group representing the agricultural sector and its unique set of issues which is magnified when we the farmers are only 2% of the general population.

The original design of the democratic farm lobby group was to allow farmers to have a voice and to allow the promotion of agriculture in Australia, farm amalgamation has reduced the number of commercial farmers and at the same time seen the rise of the hobby farmer into being a direct competitor for farm land around our major population centres.

This created a financial viability issue for the farm lobby family at a state and national level, but at over the same period we the farmers developed a very complex and effective method of collecting levies from production with no provision to replace the diminishing income from membership to the lobby structure.

Today there needs to be a review of levy use at all levels of farmer representation. The VFF livestock continues to be innovative with its Stock Sense group (formerly LHBV) providing a useful service to Victorian livestock producers, it is time for the farmers of Australia to acknowledge the landscape has changed and adapt.

Are you an AWI Levy payer or Shareholder?



An AWI shareholder is a levy payer who holds a share in AWI. Becoming an AWI shareholder is free.

AWI shareholders are able to shape the decision making process of the company via their access to information from the company, and right to vote at Annual General Meetings. AWI shareholders are entitled to one vote for every \$100 of wool levy paid in the three financial years before any vote. A share in AWI is not tradeable and is of no capital value.

How to become an AWI shareholder

To be eligible to become an AWI shareholder, applicants must have paid at least \$100 in wool levies in the past three years. Paying wool levies does not automatically make the levy payer a shareholder of AWI. To become a shareholder, a levy payer must apply.

To become an AWI Shareholder visit the link below and click on shareholder application form. **Enquires 1800 113 373 (free call).**

<https://www.wool.com/about-awi/shareholder-information/becoming-a-shareholder/>

Congratulations to James Campkin-Smith from Pound Creek, on becoming the Victorian CCA NAB Agribusiness Rising Champion, the state finalist will attend a gala dinner on 15th August where the National winner will be announced.



Agriculture Energy Investment Plan

You can now apply for an on-farm energy assessment

Agriculture Victoria is rolling out the first action in the Victorian Government's \$30 million Agriculture Energy Investment Plan: free on-farm energy assessments.

More information visit: <http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/farm-management/agriculture-energy-investment-plan>

Assessments are now open

The on-farm assessments are available to eligible primary producers until March 2020 or until available funding is exhausted (whichever comes first). Apply early so you don't miss out.

Interested in a Farm Safety Walk at your property?

You'll need a minimum of 8 local farmers to get started. For more information, to book a walk or to attend a session please contact Richard Versteegen, VFF Farm Safety Extension Officer on 0499772472 or Nickie Beresford, Partners in Ag, on 0428622655.

FREE Counselling For Farmers!

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- financial stress
- suicide
- youth and family
- sleep difficulties

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PHONE: 1300 865 234

WEB CHAT: virtualpsychologist.com.au



Proudly supported by

Stock Sense

Funded by the Cattle, Sheep & Goat Compensation Funds and proudly delivered by VFF Livestock.

Stock health - seasonal outlook

Seasonal conditions in Victoria have been patchy with many areas experiencing drier than normal conditions. A lot of areas have now received some useful falls, but the welcoming rain brings potential problems for livestock.

Hypocalcaemia in ewes

Ewes are particularly susceptible to hypocalcaemia following extended periods of grain feeding. Calcium reserves in the bones of sheep can be depleted if feeding grain, unless the dietary calcium to phosphate ratio is corrected. This can be done by adding one and a half per cent of finely ground limestone and one per cent salt.

Ewes are also often highly prone to going down with hypocalcaemia when left off feed for even a short period after drought feeding, as well as in the last few weeks before lambing as the foetal bones calcify.

Make sure you keep a close eye on sheep if they are yarded or off feed for any other reason. Have good quality hay available and keep a few bags of Calcium 4-in-1 on hand to treat any sheep that go down.

Sheep with hypocalcaemia usually respond well to treatment with 4-in-1 if you get them early. If sheep aren't treated early and have had extended time off feed, then pregnancy toxemia can overlay hypocalcaemia, making treatment more frustrating.

The other time hypocalcaemia is seen is when sheep are released from a containment lot onto a paddock of short rapidly growing grass. To reduce the risk in this situation, release sheep with a gut full of hay and have good quality hay available in the paddock. Eating fibrous material increases saliva production, which lowers the blood pH, allowing sheep to mobilise calcium reserves in the bones. This helps maintain the calcium blood levels.

Worms

Drier than normal conditions generally sees reduced worm counts, but short pastures and stock in poorer conditions can see some properties with high counts. This time of year also sees an increasing worm burden so the important thing is to monitor. Remember - you can only manage what you can measure.

Yersinia

Yersiniosis or weaner colitis, is a condition we see mainly in merino weaners over the colder months of winter. It causes a scour that is unresponsive to drenching. If you suspect you may have a problem with Yersinia contact your local sheep vet to confirm and work out the best treatment for affected mobs.

For more information visit:

www.stocksense.org.au or contact on stocksense@vff.org.au or 1300 020 163.

Quad bike safety rebate program closing September 2018

Quad bike rollovers are a leading cause of farm deaths in Australia and can be one of the most dangerous pieces of equipment on farms.

A rebate is being administered by the Victorian Farmers Federation.

Eligible farmers can apply for a rebate of:

Eligible farmers can apply for a rebate of:

- Up to \$1200 (GST exempt) for the purchase of an alternate vehicle such as a side-by-side vehicle (SSV) or a small utility vehicle (SUV). The alternate vehicle must be designed for use in agriculture and at point of sale have rollover protection and a fitted seatbelt. Sport vehicles and small commercial vehicles, such as utes, are excluded.

OR

- Up to \$600 (GST exempt) for the purchase of up to two operator protection devices (OPD's), or up to \$1200 (GST exempt) for two devices. The OPD must have been designed and manufactured in accordance

with approved engineering standards and independently tested to be eligible for the rebate.

There are currently two OPD devices that meet the rebate criteria and are eligible for the rebate - the Quadbar™ and the ATV Lifeguard.

Rebates have been available since October 2016 but close in September 2018.

The rebate is available to farmers who:

- Live and operate a business in Victoria
- Have no more than 19 full-time employees
- Own a quad bike for work purposes
- Have farming as their main source of income.

Farmers who are owner-operators with no employees are eligible to apply.



You can apply online, by email or post.

Online: www.bequadsafe.com.au

Email: bequadsafe@vff.org.au

Phone: VFF on 1300 882 833 for an application form

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