

MEDIA RELEASE

WoolProducers Australia committed to FMD Preparedness

6 December 2016

The peak representative body for the Australian wool industry, WoolProducers Australia (WPA) has strengthened its commitment to Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) preparedness on behalf of the Australian wool industry.

The WPA Board resolved to co-fund 10 industry positions with the Department of Agriculture for real-time training for FMD in Nepal, which helps trainees to be better equipped to recognise and report FMD symptoms hence assisting Australia in its early warning and response capacity.

Greg Tilbrook, a Wool Manager at Primaries in Bibra Lake has recently returned from one of these courses.

“As someone that handles wool and livestock on a daily basis the opportunity to observe FMD lesions first hand has been an invaluable experience.” Mr Tilbrook said.

“Coming from a production and marketing background enabled me to provide practical input into the scenarios that we encountered, which in the event of an outbreak in Australia will be just as important as the technical advice.”

These courses are designed for producers, stock handlers, private and government vets and animal health policy makers, and are delivered by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

“FMD is something that all producers hear about but this training has enabled me to think about what an outbreak would actually mean in an Australian context.” Mr Tilbrook continued.

“The course opened my eyes to the wider policies surrounding an FMD response in Australia and how they will impact not just on-farm activities but the whole wool supply-chain, including the devastating implications for trade.”

WPA remains committed to FMD preparedness and has sent wool industry representatives, including producers, agents and private vets from all sheep producing states in Australia as part of this funding round.

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WoolProducers Australia contact:

Genevieve Morrow 0420 300 249