

## National Sheep Network Meeting

April 25, 2024

The NSN representative on the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) from Ontario shared an update from the most recent CFA meeting on April 11 and 12, 2024.

- Idea – engage more young producers, videos on how CFA works across the country
- Strong alliance with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Labour becoming a huge issue – lots of work going on here
- Talked about guidance on gene edited products and animal feeds
- Summer meeting, FPT in Whitehorse July 16-17 with a host event on the 15<sup>th</sup>
  - Carbon offsets big topic – discussion from Environment and Climate Change Canada about how credits could be generated and criteria for offsets
- Many meetings coming up around the world and CFA will represent Canada at these meetings
- Upcoming roundtable at the FPT – seizing opportunities through data in agriculture
- Big issue/opportunity in sheep farming
- All ministers will be part of the roundtable

The board approved the chair of OSF to represent the NSN at the All Agricultural Ministers' meeting in Whitehorse, Yukon as the representative for the NSN on the CFA board of directors.

The NSN board agreed to provide our representative with a snapshot of what is needed in each province by the sheep industry and some information about each province's minister so the Ontario chair can share sheep priorities with them.

The board discussed the progress of a marketing project led by LEOQ called Agneau-Info that will benefit all three provincial members by providing sales and marketing data on sheep and lamb and the supply disposition in Canada for sheep and lamb products. The project is due to be completed by the end of June and the board requested a report at that time from the software developer on the completed technology's capabilities.

The board will discuss the ongoing costs for maintaining the project and the opportunity to collaborate to provide the resource to Canadian producers by subscription.

LEOQ met with their provincial agricultural minister in March to advocate for a greater investment in the growth of the industry.

OSF is planning their fall Convention and has decided on the theme: Unlocking Profit Potential. The format and location of the event is going to change for this year. Moving to a Friday afternoon AGM and Banquet/Saturday Convention at the Cambridge Convention Centre in Cambridge, Ontario. The program will focus on improving overall management and the bottom line.

Ontario is meeting with the Ministry of the Solicitor General about animal welfare inspections at their next board meeting. In education, OSF is updating the Master Shepherd's course for a new cohort starting in September and working on a new website to support producers. The next OSF board meeting will be in the Grey Bruce region and will involve tours and meetings with local producers.

Ontario auction prices dropped as a reset after Easter. Ontario is working on a summer BBQ promotion to learn whether promoting lamb through social media can result in retail sales increases at this time of year when prices are typically lower.

Alberta's biggest focus is hiring an ED – a job that has taken longer than anticipated. Their former ED left at the end of February and the ALP chair has been filling the role on a voluntary basis since then. A candidate has been found and an offer letter was sent this week. The board expects the new ED will start mid-May