

National Sheep Network

January 26, 2023

LEOQ started the year with good prices in Quebec that are based on the Ontario auction price. The price was adjusted down for the second quarter due to prices not being as high as originally forecast. Quebec bases pricing on delivery to the Ontario market and was expecting better pricing in January. Producers held lambs into January hoping for stronger prices.

LEOQ has a new board, a new executive and a new Executive Director. The board is also preparing to hire a new ED before the summer due to their current manager only being on temporary contract. The LEOQ board is meeting for governance training and strategy discussions in February.

OSF also has new producers on the board with two new producers under 30. At a recent meeting, the board discussed processor with both labour and capacity shortages. The OSF board also discussed the challenges faced by new producers and has set two short term strategic priorities – to improve support for new entrants and better communicate research results to support the entire value chain.

ALP is working with producers facing animal health product shortages including the vaccine Clostridiol and dewormers. ALP will be preparing a letter for the NSN board to support their request to CFIA for better access to animal health products for small ruminants.

Additionally, ALP is preparing for the transition of ownership of the NALCO plant to new buyers and will learn more after the official announcement.

The NSN board reviewed and approved the financial reporting graphic found here (insert link). Costs are higher than 2020/21 due to the introduction of a new membership in Animal Health Canada – a new organization created to collaborate across the country to address animal welfare issues, emerging diseases, animal health surveillance and antimicrobial use and resistance.

The board also addressed the budget for 2022/23 and the need for increased administrative support. Staff will prepare a proposal for new costs including administration and additional travel costs for upcoming in-person CFA meetings.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture annual meeting is taking place March 6 & 7 in Ottawa and the Executive Director of ALP will attend, representing NSN. Additionally, the NSN board nominated Pierre Lessard to represent the organization on the CFA board of directors for 2023.

The NSN board discussed the future of traceability programming for sheep in Canada. There is a concern that AgroLedger will be the traceability program going forward without any consultation with Quebec, Alberta or Ontario producers. The NSN board agreed to write a letter to CFIA on our concerns about the future of sheep traceability and the implementation of AgroLedger without consultation with the three largest sheep producing provinces.

Finally, NSN has flagged the need for review of the sheep Code of Practice ahead of expected national consultations as we are hitting the 10 year mark from the last review in 2013. LEOQ suggested CEPOQ could also be involved in these discussions.