

final report

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Prepared by: Sefton & Associates
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Chemical Review/Goat Drench Launch Event Management & Communication Report November 2007

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Executive Summary

A one-day conference/seminar style event was held by MLA on Friday 9 November in Toowoomba to launch the findings of the recent chemical review of parasite control, a new parasite control module for the Going into Goats Guide and a new goat drench for the goat meat industry.

Sefton & Associates worked closely with MLA on the successful running of this *'Going into Goats: Keeping parasites out of profit'* event. The event was a continuation of the Going into Goats Guide launch held in 2006 with the aim of building the profile and positioning of the goat meat industry with relevant stakeholders.

This event was designed to provide producers and industry professionals with best practice management strategies to keep parasites out of profits and thus increase goat producers' economic profitability and viability within the red meat industry.

Over 130 producers attended the Toowoomba event and received the latest chemical and non-chemical management strategies for parasite control. Media coverage was positive with coverage in the rural weekly newspapers and industry media as well as local and regional media around Toowoomba including print, radio and television.

Outlined in this report are the marketing and communication tactics used to generate awareness of the event and the goat industry, along with information on key stakeholder involvement. Outcomes and comments from each action have been noted. The supplier budget and expenditure to date is also included.

Objectives

The objectives of the media and communication strategy were to:

- To generate attendance at the launch event in Toowoomba.
- To position the goat meat industry as increasingly professional, fast-growing and responsible.
- To generate media coverage in relevant state, local and industry media.

Key Messages

The key messages communicated through the media and marketing tactics were:

- Attendance at the MLA “Going into goats: Keeping parasites out of profit” event will be informative and worthwhile. The event will be a valuable industry forum.
- A professional and comprehensive review of parasite control in goats has been completed and this valuable information is now available to producers.
- A new goat specific broad spectrum drench is now available – a first for the industry - which will help boost industry productivity.
- The goat meat industry now has three important tools to help it grow quickly and professionally – the Going into Goats Guide, chemical review results and a specific goat drench.
- Goat meat is Australia’s fastest growing livestock industry.

Target Audience

- Goat producers and goat industry leaders
- Sheep and wool producers
- Beef producers/cropping enterprises
- Participants in the Chemical Review
- Department of Primary Industry staff
- Extension officers

Target Media

- All relevant state farming publications (focus on Queensland and Northern NSW)
- Local Toowoomba media
- Feedback Magazine
- ABC radio
- ABC TV’s Landline
- ABC Radio National
- Relevant Internet sites, blogs etc
- Trade media (goat, sheep, grazing specialist publications)

Event Management

Sefton & Associates co-ordinated key aspects of the event with MLA and relevant stakeholders. Sefton & Associates was responsible for generating awareness of the event and attendance, the media relations campaign and the registration of participants prior to the event as well as on the day.

Sefton & Associates attendees at the event included Robbie Sefton along with two other members of staff to manage the guest registration, coordinate media opportunities and assist in the overall event management on the day.

Sefton & Associates helped to prepare 170 show bags that were made available to participants and included parasite control information and additional pertinent information from relevant stakeholders. These were distributed to participants when they collected their name tags at the registration area.

A raffle was implemented throughout the program to encourage audience participation. Sefton & Associates assisted with informing participants about the raffle and prizes for active participation and helped with the distribution of the tickets. Furthermore, during the question and answer session of each speaker and the panel sessions, Sefton & Associates assisted with the running of the hand held microphones to members of the audience.

Catering and AV

Catering and AV was supplied by the venue as per the quote provided in the email from Peter Schuster (2 September, 2007). Sefton & Associates liaised with the venue and the goat meat caterers to confirm all requirements and manage the smooth set up and running of the event throughout the day. Catering and AV costs are not included in the Sefton & Associates budget.

Outcome:

The AV components of the venue hire became an issue when it was discovered on the day that the AV person was not covering the visual aspect of the presentations. This was not communicated prior to the event and the price was significant enough to indicate that both aspects were to be covered. The sound quality on the day proved to be muffled at times due to the large and open nature of the venue.

The goat meat catering was ample and worked well, with participants thoroughly enjoying the food and beverages provided and the goat meat for lunch.

Comments:

A site inspection that included a full brief with the AV team would ensure earlier notification and consequent rectification of any AV problems at future events.

Generating attendance

Flyer/Invitation

Sefton & Associates worked with MLA and a graphic designer to develop an appropriate invitational flyer for the launch event that highlighted the value of attendance particularly for those already in the goat meat industry (see attachment 1).

A letter inviting the producers to attend was included in the direct mail distribution of this flyer to guests, which was developed with MLA and contained additional information on the goat industry and the event (see attachment 2).

Guest List of VIP Attendees

Sefton & Associates worked in conjunction with project co-ordinator, Peter Schuster to create a VIP guest database for this event. The list was compiled from a variety of sources including;

- MLA
- Attendees at the 2006 launch of the Going into Goats Guide
- QLD Agforce and lobby group industry leaders
- Queensland Department of Primary Industries
- Goat Industry Council of Australia
- Industry partners, Stock & Station Agents (such as Elders, Landmark), Saleyards, local councils etc

A copy of the flyer and a personal invitation to attend was sent to this list via their preferred method - electronic or postal. To ensure that this group of VIP guests were made aware of the event considerable time was taken in following up invitations for this event. Event information was also forwarded to interested parties as requested by the VIP guests.

The invitation to the VIP guest list was distributed w/c 15 October (see attachment 3 for the full list).

Direct mail to goat producers

Sefton and Associates organised direct communication, via a national mail out of the invitational flyer and letter, to MLA's 740 nationally registered goat producers. This list was developed in conjunction with MLA. This ensured that members were notified of the event and kept up to date with the MLA and the Going into Goats guide developments. The letter also contained information for those producers who could not attend the event but wished to order further information from MLA.

The direct mail was distributed to registered producers w/c 15 October.

Partner Involvement

Sefton & Associates facilitated partners' involvement with the event so that they were able to use it as a relationship building and marketing exercise for their existing clients as well as to attract new clients. This was achieved by Sefton & Associates contacting the various partners and sending flyers and event information to them for distribution to their members and other interested parties. Additionally, Sefton & Associates encouraged partners to both attend the event and to encourage their own members to attend.

Electronic and hard copies of the flyer were distributed to partners w/c 15 October.

Outcomes:

Due to the event being 'free' and seen to benefit producers and industry professionals, stakeholders were very willing to distribute information to their members to encourage attendance. However, the VIP guest list received a moderate response due to the often significant distances involved with attending the event. It was noted that some Goat Industry Groups had conflicting availability due to their AGM's being held at the same time.

Over 130 producers from NSW and QLD attended the event. This result is concurrent with the expected attendance levels for an industry event of this nature. Additionally, there was 30 MLA representatives, speakers and industry professionals also present on the day.

Comments:

It was noted that there was significant interest in holding a similar event in other areas throughout Australia so as to minimise the travel time.

Media Relations

Advertising

To reinforce the direct mail and invitation campaign Sefton & Associate sourced appropriate advertising placement for key local and state publications. The advertisements were developed with MLA and a graphic designer to ensure they appropriately highlighted the key themes of the event and included a call to action for the producers to register.

Local and state advertising was initiated w/c 15 October and concluded with the final classified advertisement running 2 November.

See attachment 4 for an advertising schedule.
See attachment 5 for an example of the advertisements.

Editorial and Media Coverage

See attachment 6 for the completed Media Outcomes Report.
See attachment 7 for examples of distributed Media Releases.

Pre-promotion Media Release

Sefton & Associates developed a comprehensive and targeted media list for the launch event. All relevant media were sent an invitational flyer and pre-promotion media release with the aim of generating extended media coverage of the event, as well as to encourage the media to report on the new MLA Parasite control report, Virbac drench launch and the new Going into Goats guide module.

The pre-promotion media release was distributed w/c 15 October.

Media Alert Media Release

Working with MLA, Sefton & Associates identified the most newsworthy aspects of the launch to be the hook for media materials specific to the event. A media notification and interview opportunity was prepared and distributed just prior to the event to encourage media to attend and to indicate appropriate sources of interviews on the day of the launch.

Sefton & Associates was responsible for managing the needs of all media that attended the event, coordinating interviews and briefing spokespeople.

The media alert was distributed on Friday 2 November.

Post Event Media Release

To continue the media coverage of the event Sefton & Associates organised a post event media release. This included sourcing effective spokespeople who were briefed in advance for interviews to add to the media opportunities. This involved setting up interviews and coordinating photo opportunities in response to specific and general media requests. Sefton & Associates distributed the post-event media release and contacted media to “sell-in” the story to those who had not yet used the information.

Sefton & Associates conducted vox pops with over 20 participants on the day to generate news worthy quotes and feedback from the event for inclusion in the post event media releases.

Outcomes:

This process worked very well in generating media coverage before and after the event. The quality and quantity of the media coverage received was very positive with all aspects of the media, print, radio and television being covered. The attentive coverage from the larger publications in QLD; Queensland Country Life and Rural Weekly certainly exceeded expectations.

Comments:

Sefton & Associates recommends that this media approach with three tailored media “hits” is an effective strategy to generate continuous coverage of the event over the entire event period.

Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation

As outlined throughout this report, the success of the launch can be measured in a number of ways including;

- Number of attendees
- Media coverage
- Response from attendees

Formal work-in-progress teleconferences were conducted throughout the duration of the project with agendas issued at least twenty-four hours in advance of meetings and telemeetings and a 'start and finish time' determined prior to commencing the meeting. Action items detailing outcomes of meetings were issued within forty-eight hours of each meeting.

Budget

A detailed budget outlining the allocation of professional fees and costs for the program is attached. (see attachment 8)

Conclusion

The MLA's '*Going into Goats: Keeping parasites out of profit*' event was a successful event for both MLA as a whole and the goat industry as well. The amount of media coverage and the feedback from the event participants was extremely positive and encouraging.

Sefton & Associates believe that this event could continue as it provides positive brand awareness for MLA and the goat industry. These types of industry awareness events provide producers and industry professionals with the production and management ideas and tools to achieve a more profitable and sustainable goat enterprise as well as provide positive opportunities to communication with producers and proactive promotion and media coverage.