



Final report

Making More From Sheep Website and Maintenance Agreement 2020-22

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Abstract

Developed by AWI and MLA, Making More from Sheep (MMFS) is an online package of best practice information and tools for Australian sheep producers.

This project was funded to update and modernise the MMFS package, including the latest research outcomes and tools and focusing on a logo and brand refresh, technical review and update of all MMFS Modules and animal health fact sheets, developing new eLearning courses and future-proofing the MMFS website by moving it to a secure server and streamlining the content, better allowing Australian sheep producers and advisors to easily access it.

AWI and MLA contracted several subject matter experts to review the technical content and also build eLearning courses with the existing MMFS content, as well as developing a new MMFS Module.

This timely update ensures MMFS remains the one-stop-shop for production resources in the Australian sheep industry and is a foundational industry resource.

Executive summary

Background

Developed by AWI and MLA, Making More from Sheep (MMFS) is an online package of best practice information and tools for Australian sheep producers. The aim of MMFS is to lower the cost of production of wool and sheepmeat on-farm by increasing the productivity of sheep and land and increasing the efficiency of use of inputs & resources.

This project coordinated a review and update of existing MMFS content and built new content and a new website with the latest research outcomes and tools for Australian sheep producers.

Objectives

1. **MMFS website review and rebuild** – reviewed all existing content and archived irrelevant information – ACHIEVED.
2. **Existing MMFS content updates** – review all MMFS Modules and update where required to include new research, tools and information – ACHIEVED.
3. **Development of new MMFS content** – commission new Module 9 Boost Business with Breeding and MMFS eLearning package for AWI and MLA eLearning platforms – ACHIEVED.
4. **Website management** – migrate MMFS website onto AWI's servers for maintenance and management on behalf of AWI and MLA – ACHIEVED.

Methodology

- AWI and MLA review all content and identify subject matter experts (SMEs) to provide technical review of content.
- Contract SMEs for technical review of content.
- AWI and MLA review all content for consistency across MMFS Modules and MMFS eLearning.
- Upload MMFS content to new website and MMFS eLearning content to AWI Woolmark Learning Centre and MLA eLearning.

Results/key findings

The AWI and MLA review found that whilst the MMFS package remains a valuable investment for industry, many updates were required to reflect the current research findings and available tools. The opportunity to use the MMFS content to build eLearning courses, suitable for AWI and MLA's eLearning platforms, was optimised, and commissioning a new MMFS Module 9 to provide an overview of the breeding and selection tools available to industry has created a foundational resource industry has required for many years.

Benefits to industry

MMFS is a one-stop-shop for the latest sheep industry research, tools and information on husbandry and management – a package of resources, videos, apps, technologies, podcasts and fact sheets – to support a sustainable and profitable sheep and wool operation, helping to reduce costs and optimise production while minimising risk in an ever-changing environment.

Future research and recommendations

AWI and MLA project staff make the following recommendations to facilitate the ongoing success and recognition of Making More From Sheep (MMFS):

1. AWI and MLA consider branding co-funded extension and adoption outputs as MMFS.
2. AWI and MLA continue to manage and maintain MMFS to ensure MMFS remains the premier foundational resource for the Australian sheep industry.
3. AWI and MLA project managers should include MMFS in their extension and adoption plan and provide content for MMFS inclusion.
4. AWI and MLA agree to commit to keeping the approved and agreed eLearning content on their respective eLearning platforms to ensure consistency in MMFS outputs.
5. Promotion of MMFS should be undertaken as a joint AWI and MLA effort, where possible. When this isn't possible, each party will acknowledge the other party in all communications.

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1. Background

Developed by AWI and MLA, Making More from Sheep (MMFS) is an online package of best practice information and tools for Australian sheep producers. The MMFS website captures the 'must dos' of managing a successful sheep enterprise, generated from years of research and on-farm experience. The MMFS package includes 12 modules relating to different aspects of sheep production, with related tools and signposting to relevant industry resources and workshops. The aim of MMFS is to lower the cost of production of wool and sheepmeat on-farm by increasing the productivity of sheep and land and increasing the efficiency of use of inputs & resources.

AWI and MLA have invested heavily in MMFS to create a one-stop-shop for high quality, credible sheep business information based on the latest R&D and signposting to industry tools and workshops. This project will ensure ongoing hosting and management of the MMFS website and ensure that the content remain current and a fundamental resource for delivery programs relevant to the sheep industry, e.g., Profitable Grazing Systems, Winning With Weaners, Picking Performer Ewes and BredWell FedWell.

This project coordinated a review and update of content on the MMFS website with latest research outcomes and tools to ensure the content is relevant to allow sheep producers to implement on-farm practice change. AWI now hosts and manages the website, which prior to this had been housed externally to both parties. In addition, a redesign to the user interface (UI) and rebranding of the website will allow visitors to better navigate and find content on the site.

2. Objectives

Website review, content updates and development of new modules:

The MMFS module content, some of which was first published in 2008, will be reviewed and updated along with a redesign and rebranding of the website and other materials. The areas of focus are:

- AWI/MLA will conduct a review of the below 4 MMFS modules, update the content to contain the most current research and tools relevant to the following:
 - Module – Introduction
 - Module 2 – Market Focused Wool Production
 - Module 3 – Market Focused Lamb and Sheepmeat Production
 - Module 9 – Gain from Genetics
- Engage subject matter experts to review and update the content to contain the most current research and tools relevant to the following:
 - Module 1 – Plan for Success
 - Module 4 – Capable and Confident Producers
 - Module 5 – Protect Your Farm's Natural Assets
 - Module 6 – Healthy Soils
 - Module 7 – Grow More Pasture
 - Module 8 – Turn Pasture into Product
 - Module 10 – Wean More Lambs
 - Module 11 – Healthy and Contented Sheep
 - Module 12 – Efficient Pastoral Production

- Identify gaps in content and longer-term opportunities to ensure the website remains a high quality, credible sheep business information source, based on the latest R&D outcomes.
- Scope gaps in current content and across industry, and develop new content where relevant, as agreed by AWI and MLA, which complements the core existing modules of MMFS (e.g. climate and traceability).
- Convert updated MMFS modules to e-learning for AWI and MLA platforms to maximise knowledge derived from MMFS resources, through improved communication and learning, resulting in the core concepts being easier to understand.
- Update MMFS graphics, logo and branding.

Website management:

- Host and provide management of the MMFS website.
- Provide 6 monthly reviews of website content (all URL links) to ensure content is kept up to date.
- Ad hoc repair of broken links on the MMFS website as reported.
- Add relevant sheep industry news and literature resources to the website, in collaboration with MLA and AWI.
- Provide a bi-annual status report, including website usage and statistics.
- Review and clean up backend files in preparation for migration to a new hosting platform.
- Complete the migration of housing MMFS website onto AWI's server.

3. Methodology

3.1 Review and update of Making More From Sheep

1. AWI and MLA review all MMFS content

AWI and MLA copied all information into word documents from the existing MMFS website and reviewed the content, identifying areas that had updated research outcomes and for which new tools and resources had become available. Marked-up versions of the content were prepared to pass along to future reviewers.

2. AWI and MLA identify subject matter experts (SMEs) to provide technical review of content

Based on the content of each Module, AWI and MLA identified possible reviewers for each MMFS Module and made contact to explain the project and gauge their interest in being contracted to perform the review.

3. Contract SMEs for technical review of MMFS Modules, animal health fact sheets and presentations

Contract SMEs to undertake a technical review of specific modules and provide word document with existing content to complete the review in.

SMEs were instructed that this review was not intended to rewrite the content, rather to update to include research outcomes and links to industry publications, tools and workshops that weren't around when MMFS was written or have since been superseded.

SMEs were also asked to keep an eye out for any gaps or opportunities to expand a section or include something new, as part of this project included content development and we would consider any suggestions.

Due to AWI and MLA staffing changes, AWI and MLA identified the need to contract an SME for eLearning development and content revision to be optimised for eLearning as planning for this progressed.

SMEs contracted in this project are show below in Table 1.

Table 1 Subject matter experts used to review Making More From Sheep content

2024 MMFS Module Name	2024 Reviewer	2024 Reviewer Organisation	Original MMFS Module Name	
1	Plan for Success	Carlyn Sherriff	Pinion Advisory	Unchanged
2	Market Focused Wool Production	Stephen Hill and Andrew Dennis	Australian Wool Innovation	Unchanged
3	Market Focused Lamb and Sheepmeat Production	Laura Garland	Meat & Livestock Australia	Unchanged
4	Capable and Confident People	Carlyn Sherriff	Pinion Advisory	Capable and Confident Producers
5	Protect Your Farm's Natural Assets	Lisa Miller	Southern Farming Systems	Unchanged
6	Healthy Soils	Lisa Miller	Southern Farming Systems	Unchanged
7	Grow More Pasture	Lisa Miller	Southern Farming Systems	Unchanged
8	Turn Pasture into Product	Nathan Scott	Achieve AG Consultancy	Unchanged
9	Boost Business with Breeding	Angela and Peter Schuster, Delphine Puxty	Schuster Consulting Group	Gain from Genetics
10	Wean More Lambs	Nathan Scott	Achieve AG Consultancy	Unchanged
11	Health and Contented Sheep	Tim Gole	For Flocks Sake	Unchanged
12	Efficient Pastoral Production	Megan Rogers	SheepSMART Consulting	Unchanged
1–12	eLearning Modules	Catriona Nicholls	Hot Tin Roof Communications	N/A

4. Redesign MMFS branding

AWI graphic design prepared several options for the updated MMFS logo and branding based on the brief provided by AWI and MLA. AWI and MLA project staff reviewed the options and recommended one to AWI and MLA as the most representative of the aims of MMFS, which was subsequently approved.

Once this direction was set, AWI graphic design prepared brand guidelines which have reviewed by AWI and MLA project staff and approved by AWI and MLA.

5. AWI and MLA review all content (MMFS Modules and MMFS eLearning) for consistency

AWI and MLA staff reviewed all content following its review by the SME to ensure consistency in writing style, tone and language use, appropriate emphasis on productivity and welfare outcomes and to clarify any questions raised by the SME or questions arising from inserted content or suggested changes.

AWI and MLA staff spent significant time adding information, links and resources to the 'signposts' sections included in every chapter of each Module, checking each link worked, accessing new materials, writing overviews for every inclusion and mapping all of these in a spread sheet for the whole of MMFS.

Once content was approved by AWI and MLA, it was handed over to the eLearning SME for the content to be adjusted to suit the very different delivery medium. This eLearning content was then reviewed by AWI and MLA following its review by the SME to ensure consistency in writing style, tone and language use, and to clarify any questions raised by the SME or questions arising from suggested changes.

AWI and MLA staff spent many hours editing and reviewing the MMFS content to align it with current industry standards.

6. AWI and MLA build new website

AWI and MLA reviewed the analytics of the existing MMFS website to understand which of the areas were being used most consistently and were of most value to Australian sheep producers to prioritise investment and effort. AWI and MLA staff prepared a brief focusing on ease of use and improved access to information for producers, stripping away any unnecessary content and confounding information.

AWI now hosts the MMFS website, and the AWI digital team has been responsible for building the website based on the brief prepared by AWI and MLA project staff.

7. AWI upload MMFS content to new website

AWI and MLA project staff provided the content for upload by AWI digital.

8. AWI and MLA upload MMFS eLearning content to AWI Woolmark Learning Centre and MLA eLearning

AWI and MLA each own an eLearning platform ([AWI Woolmark Learning Centre](#) and [MLA eLearning](#)), so it was agreed by AWI and MLA project staff that the project would review and provide final, approved content, and each would be responsible for uploading it to their eLearning platform. Ensuring that no matter where the interest in MMFS comes from, participants are receiving consistent and validated information from AWI and MLA.

9. AWI and MLA review all content in situ

AWI and MLA reviewed all content on MMFS website, AWI Woolmark Learning Centre and MLA eLearning to ensure upload has been completed in full and content is displaying properly.

In summary, due to the amount of reviewing and updates necessary to all components of MMFS, the steps in the methodology took longer to implement than originally anticipated. For technical robustness it's recommended that future reviews use SMEs, but it is suggested that the time between each review not be left so long in future, and a specialist editor/writer be contracted to ensure the technical reviews are seamlessly implemented.

AWI and MLA project staff agree the order of the methodology is correct, but in hindsight would include provision in Step 3 to have a face-to-face meeting with each SME to discuss their additions and suggestions to each Module and work with them to implement this whilst they're there to explain their input, as could likely speed up review process this way. AWI and MLA staff suggest sending the document for review and having the SME flag potential information and signposts, then convening to workshop the changes together (as well as the writer, if an external resource is contract for this).

4. Results

4.1 MMFS content & website updates

This MMFS project has delivered the objectives it set out to achieve, though the timeline has been extended due to their being more opportunity than first identified for inclusion of industry resources and research outcomes and the review process allowing for greater consistency to be achieved.

Key results and outcomes of this project include:

- Moving the existing MMFS website to AWI's server for safekeeping.
- Updating the MMFS logo and branding guidelines to quickly visually indicate to producers that the content is being kept up to date and relevant.
- Reviewed nine Modules (1, 4–8, 10–12) with subject matter experts (SMEs) and uploaded to www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au.
- Contracted one module to be rewritten (9, based on AWI and MLA content brief) and uploaded to www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au.
- Reviewed two modules (2 and 3) internally and uploaded to www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au.
- Contracted SME to prepare MMFS content for eLearning for upload to AWI Woolmark Learning Centre and MLA eLearning.
- Updated MMFS animal health fact sheets and presentations and MMFS lamb autopsy guide to new branding.

AWI and MLA project staff reviewed MMFS Module 9 Gain from Genetics and had it scheduled for internal review with an AWI and MLA working group. The AWI and MLA working group met and worked to review and update the content over a series of meetings, but it became evident to the AWI and MLA project staff that Module 9, in its current state, would no longer provide the depth of content required for decision-making in today's industry.

AWI and MLA project staff met with the AWI and MLA working group to explain their concerns and suggested the MMFS package would benefit from a new Module 9 which was written to be more encompassing of the myriad of breeding and selection tools and techniques in the sheep industry, and better explain to producers how they can use the subjective and objective breeding and selection tools in combination to their greatest effect.

AWI and MLA agreed to contract an SME who has recently worked on extension and adoption programs for both organisations in this topic area to write a new Module 9 based on the AWI and MLA working group's content framework. The new module is known as MMFS Module 9 Boost Business with Breeding.

AWI and MLA identified the development of eLearning courses based on the MMFS content would be a useful addition to the available industry extension programs. Both AWI and MLA have eLearning platforms so knew once the content was prepared, it would be easy to upload onto the platforms and made available to any participant to access.

AWI and MLA agreed from the start that the eLearning content should be the exact same on both the AWI and MLA eLearning platforms so that no matter where someone accessed the information, it would be consistent and delivered under the agreed MMFS brand guidelines.

AWI and MLA anticipate the eLearning courses will be extensively utilised by secondary and tertiary Australian agriculture students, with many producers also choosing to access information online.

This project included updating and ongoing usage of existing MMFS intellectual property (IP) as well as developing new IP, all of which is listed in Table 2.

Table 2 MMFS intellectual property (IP)

Company Name	Description
AWI Background IP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tool 1.8: AWI cost of production calculator for wool enterprises - Tool 5.2: Stock Water Requirements - Lambing Planner - WoolCheque website and information
MLA Background IP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tool 1.7: MLA cost of production calculator for sheep, beef and goat enterprises - Tool 1.12: The SGS one-page planning process - Tool 3.5: MSA production guidelines for lamb and sheepmeat - Tool 3.6: Factors affecting carcase quality and value - Tool 8.2: MLA feed demand calculator
Joint AWI and MLA IP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Making More From Sheep Cost of Production Calculator for wool and lamb - Making More From Sheep manual, lamb autopsy guide, animal health resources, CD, eLearning packages and website www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au

5. Conclusion

Making More From Sheep is a one-stop-shop for the latest sheep industry research, tools and information on husbandry and management – a package of resources, videos, apps, technologies, podcasts and fact sheets – for Australian sheep producers, developed by Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) and Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA).

During this project, AWI and MLA staff identified that MMFS continues to be an important and well-regarded resource for the Australian sheep industry and will continue to be so if kept up-to-date. AWI and MLA staff note that there is a gap in existing resources for a sustainability and traceability module which could be developed if funding becomes available. Staff also recommend that all co-owned AWI and MLA materials are assessed for their suitability to be rolled out under the MMFS brand to continue its relevance and promotion in and to industry.

5.1 Key findings

- The MMFS resources are an important bank of knowledge for the Australian sheep industry and will likely remain so if they are kept up to date.
- Research outcomes, tools and information should be regularly added to the MMFS content to keep it fresh and relevant.
- MMFS is part of AWI and MLA's continuing commitment to delivering on-farm knowledge and technology to help producers increase the long-term sustainability and profitability of sheep and wool production, paving the way for a successful industry for the next generation.

5.2 Benefits to industry

- MMFS remains the one-stop-shop for resources in the sheep industry. Promotion of its updated content by AWI and MLA is paramount to ensure its longevity and reach in industry.
- The MMFS package is a foundational industry resource and needs to be kept current to continue to deliver return on investment for AWI and MLA levy payers.

6. Future research and recommendations

AWI and MLA project staff make the following recommendations to facilitate the ongoing success and recognition of Making More From Sheep as Australia's premier resource for sheep industry production knowledge:

1. AWI and MLA should always consider the opportunity to brand co-funded extension and adoption production outputs as Making More From Sheep to:
 - a. Encourage consistency and reduce duplication.
 - b. Ensure MMFS is kept up to date and research and extension outcomes and outputs are held in a central repository.
 - c. Keep breathing new life into MMFS to leverage the investment by AWI and MLA over many years and maintain its industry relevance and brand.
2. AWI and MLA look at the opportunity to develop a sustainability and traceability module which combines information for all sheep producers.
3. AWI and MLA continue to manage and maintain MMFS together to ensure MMFS remains the premier foundational resource for the Australian sheep industry.
4. AWI and MLA review and approval process for additions and changes to be made to MMFS website and eLearning content. Regular catch up (suggest every six months) to discuss what is in the pipeline, who is responsible, when it's expected, etc.
5. AWI and MLA project managers should take responsibility for providing content for consideration for MMFS updating or revision in as near to a 'ready to upload' state as possible.
6. AWI and MLA project managers with research and extension and adoption outcomes regarding sheep production should write MMFS into their extension plan and ensure content is developed.
7. AWI and MLA agree to commit to keeping the approved and agreed eLearning content on their respective eLearning platforms to ensure consistency in MMFS outputs. If either organisation wants to deviate from this agreed procedure, they will organise a meeting with the other to discuss and decide before proceeding.
8. Promotion of MMFS should be undertaken as a joint effort, where possible. When this isn't possible, each party will always acknowledge the other party in all communications and promotion.
9. AWI and MLA to review comms plan to ensure MMFS promotions are consistent and ongoing to retain MMFS' position as the Australian sheep industry's premier resource.