

Drought and climate adaptation program

GrazingFutures Project Case Study

Evening weaner webinars reach more producers

Late in 2019 GrazingFutures south, together with Désirée Jackson Livestock Management, delivered an informative early weaning webinar. The need for more resources around early weaning throughout south west Queensland surfaced during a GrazingFutures collaborators meeting. It was discussed that the continuing drought conditions were now resulting in many producers considering early weaning, however, producers also expressed concerns about the lack of information to confidently make a decision.

This webinar was developed to address these concerns and included information about:

- Using early weaning to manage breeder body condition score
- Understanding calf rumen development and how it affects nutritional requirements
- Appropriate weaner feeding regimes and quality of feed required



Weaner yard management was also discussed with a key message being the importance of segregating weaners by weight to reduce bullying and accurately target each group's specific energy and protein needs.

In order to reach a larger producer audience GrazingFutures south provided registrants with the option of either a daytime or evening webinar session. There was significant interest from within GrazingFutures, Leading Sheep and FutureBeef as to whether providing two screening times (12:30-1:30pm and 7:30-8:30pm) would influence both the number of registrations and the type of attendee.

The webinar proved to be very topical with 369 registrations from Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Collectively 187 attendees tuned in to receive the information, 93 during the daytime session and 94 during the evening. A higher percentage of producers watched in the evening with 85% of those attending electing that they were producers compared to only 59% during the day. Average attentiveness was also considerably higher in the evening as were the amount of questions being asked. Many attendees commented on their satisfaction of being able to select from two screening options and mentioned that majority of the time they miss daytime webinars due to work commitments.

'Having a night-time session was an excellent way to allow a larger group of people to attend'

– Feedback from a Charleville producer

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The average satisfaction and value rating for the webinar was 8.5/10 and 8/10 respectively, with 81% of attendees electing that they had learnt a new skill or gained new knowledge. Many also showed strong interest in hearing from a producer presenter, one who is currently practicing early weaning and who can comment on their experience and share any key learnings or failures. As a result of this feedback, GrazingFutures south is planning on running a follow-on early weaning webinar within the next few months with an appropriate producer presenter from the south west region. There is also potential to run this webinar collaboratively with FutureBeef to increase producer participation across Queensland.

The early weaning webinar recording is available on the FutureBeef website and has had in excess of 300 additional views since 20 December 2019 - <https://futurebeef.com.au/knowledge-centre/making-sense-of-early-weaning/>

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