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Unlock your ewe potential

To many it's a mystery, yet the secret is out: the reproductive potential of ewes can be unlocked with some understanding of her needs and a little hands-on attention.

Sheep producers across the country are signing up to small, local, focused 'Lifetime Ewe Management' training workshops to better manage the ewe reproduction cycle and increase their production.

The next participant intake is in October – December 2009 with groups expected to be running in WA, SA, Vic, Tas and NSW. With access to the FarmReady program, the net cost to producers of the course is \$400.

To date, more than 320 specialist woolgrowers and mixed farmers in 70 groups in Victoria and WA have been through the program. And the figures tell the story: participants have improved the number of lambs weaned per hectare by between 15 and 30%.

The Sheep CRC, in partnership with Rural Industries Skills Training (RIST) and more than 30 sheep industry specialists from across the country are running the course.

RIST Program leader, Darren Gordon says these production gains have been achieved in a number of ways.

"We're seeing that producers are realising their ewe flock's potential by increasing ewe stocking rate, improving weaning rates, and reducing ewe mortality.

"They also tell us that 100% of them recommend the program to other producers.

"There is little more satisfying to a sheep producer than seeing an excellent lamb drop, year in year out. We aim to give producers the latest skills to achieve this."

The Lifetime Ewe Management course involves groups of 5 producers led by industry specialists; it focuses specifically on the nutrition and health issues associated with the ewe and develops skills in condition scoring, pasture assessment and feed budgeting.

Six meetings are held over a 12-month weaning to weaning cycle, and each producer follows a monitor mob of their own ewes to study the effect ewe nutrition has on their enterprise.

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Lifetime Ewe Management

a program for sheep producers