

WORLD FEDERATION OF MERINO BREEDERS

Argentina
Australia

France
Hungary

Lesotho
New Zealand

Russia
South Africa

Spain
Uruguay
USA

President:

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17th December 2009.

Seasons Greetings to all,

As we go into the last few days of 2009 there is a feeling of optimism around after seeing reports that a marked improvement in wool prices is forecast. There is also strong demand worldwide for sheepmeat so the future is likely to see the Merino in a great position to supply lamb and mutton. One of the big challenges for Merino breeding countries is to increase sheep numbers to meet this demand. It is pleasing to report from my recent travels overseas and in Australia that a more positive attitude is becoming evident towards increasing sheep flocks and ensuring the future of our wonderful Merino industry.

2009 has been a busy but successful year, with visits to France, South Africa and Lesotho in May, New Zealand, Uruguay and Argentina in November. Whilst in Uruguay there was an opportunity to meet with the Merino and Sheepbreeders' Presidents from Brazil who have shown an interest in joining the Federation. Recently we welcomed the Kingdom of Lesotho and Russia as new members, and in the last few days a letter has been received from the Association of Sheep Breeders in Romania advising they wish to become a member in 2010. A visit to Romania is scheduled in the tour that has been planned after the conference so some delegates will experience first hand the hospitality of our Romanian hosts. We continue to liaise with the Province of Xinjiang in China with high hopes of their membership becoming a reality before commencement of the conference.

Some changes in the official delegates of member countries have occurred, with Sr Alejandro Duhart standing down as President from the Argentine Association after 18 years and before that, 2 years as Secretary – 20 year's service. He remains a member of the Board and we thank him sincerely for his dedication to the industry and commitment as a contributor to the newsletter *Merino World*. The new President is Sr Pablo Serres. Dr. Laszlo Fesus from Hungary, who was instrumental in organising the 6th World Merino Conference, has also retired but will be in France to introduce the new President in Hungary, Professor Peter Horn. Whilst on the subject of retirement, my second and final term as WFMB President ends on 4th May and I encourage member countries to consider submitting a nomination for the Presidency 2010-2014.

All member countries by now will have received the program for the conference as well as information on the pre and post conference tours. The full brochure and information can be downloaded from www.merinoscope2010.fr and excitement is building as the time draws near. An interesting and thought-provoking program has been put together to stimulate those attending and the chance to re-engage with members from around the world should not be missed.

With the conference now only 4 months away, *Merino World* will be produced and circulated around the end of January/early February. Please submit to WFMB Public Relations Officer, Carol-Ann Malouf, by 19 January any articles, reports and photos of your local events during the year so that these may be included.

Wishing sincere greetings to all. May you and your families enjoy good health and good luck in 2010.
Hoping to see you in France –

Kind regards,



Glen Keamy
President

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