Numnuts is a new product for sheep producers to provide pain relief when lamb marking with rings.
One of the farms at which Numnuts commercial trials have been undertaken is ‘Aloeburn’ at Boree Creek in the Riverina of NSW. The property is owned by fourth-generation woolgrower Andrew Green, with his wife Jodie, who usually run 5,000 Merino ewes, including 500 Poll Merino stud ewes.

Andrew said they certainly noticed the pain relief effects on the lambs after using Numnuts.

‘On the whole the lambs were not lying around in the yards, they were concentrating on getting back to their mothers to get a drink again as quickly as possible,’ he said.

“The walk back to the paddock was easy as the lambs were completely mobile and walking with their mothers, they were not lying on the ground agitated from discomfort.”

Jodie said the device was easy to use and its development had benefited from practical on-farm trials.

“The improvements made to the device from the first trial work in July to the next version which we used in the September trial were very good. The plunger device which administers the NumOcaine was softer and ergonomically a much better design,” she said.

Jodie said administering to the testicles is particularly easy while a good technique to work with the variation of tails can be quickly worked out by each user.

“Like undertaking any new procedure, it was necessary to do a few lambs before the correct necessary technique for the tail was worked out, but that came quickly from familiarity.

“Some tails are thin with little muscle around the bone and some are much thicker with a great deal of muscle around the bone. A good technique is quickly determined to ensure that the NumOcaine is injected to the muscle rather than hitting the bone.”

Andrew said implementing pain relief to lambs when applying rings for castrating and tail docking is not only better for the lambs, but it could open up opportunities for both wool and meat in markets where animal husbandry practices are keenly monitored.

’As well as those sheep producers who have ceased mulesing, likely producers to use the product are those who have a high concern for optimum animal welfare and who wish to be able to demonstrate this level of diligence to consumers of their products, both meat and wool,’ he said.

“It will also be useful to growers who are seeking to obtain and maintain accreditation under the various standards now available to wool producers for new marketing opportunities for their wool.”

Robin Smith of Numnuts thanked Andrew and Jodie Green for their support in hosting the test engineers, and also the owners of the other test sites TA Field Estates Pty Ltd (‘Wyvern’ and ‘Congi’, NSW), Michael Craig (Tuleonat, Vic) and Tim Leeming (Paradoo, Vic), along with other early pioneer users in Australia including John Chappell (Arkhaven’, NSW).

MORE INFORMATION
For more information and to register your interest, visit www.numnuts.co.uk

Jodie Green using Numnuts for marking at ‘Aloeburn’.