

# Beyond the bale

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PROFIT FROM WOOL INNOVATION

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WINNING MERINO  
WOOL COLLECTION  
LAUNCHED  
IN AUSTRALIA BY  
**TEATUM JONES**

LUDWIG BECK

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MERINO LIFETIME  
PRODUCTIVITY PROJECT

# Beyond the bale

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## FRONT COVER

A Merino dress from the International Woolmark Prize-winning collection of British label Teatum Jones. Photography: Liz Ham. Make-up: Sasha Nilsson. Styling: Jolyon Mason. Hair: Sophie Roberts.

Rob Jones and Catherine Teatum of Teatum Jones visited Australia in October to launch their prize-winning collection at David Jones. While in Australia they visited a wool-growing property in Armidale - see page 8.

Shot in Australia with model Astrid Holler, this photo along with several others of the winning collection, featured in Issue 3 of the new WOOL magazine launched by AWI's subsidiary, The Woolmark Company, to promote the inspiring benefits and qualities of Merino wool to a consumer audience - see page 26.



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- Sheep Production
- Woolgrower Services
- Processing Innovation & Education Extension
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# GETTING ON WITH BUSINESS

We are continuing with initiatives to help increase the demand for wool through investments in marketing and R&D – from farm to fashion.



**Stuart McCullough**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Australian Wool Innovation

## WOOL EXCHANGE PORTAL

It was announced at the AWI AGM that the Wool Exchange Portal Working Group (WEP-WG) has provided to AWI its assessment on the viability of an online WEP and recommended that a WEP should be created. The WEP-WG had been asked to provide the Board of AWI with a clear yes or no decision on whether to pursue the establishment of a WEP. The Working Group voted unanimously to support the development of a WEP at its final meeting. The AWI Board thanked the Chairman of the WEP-WG, Mr Will Wilson, for its exploration of the subject and has asked Mr Wilson to return to the AWI Board in April 2017 a costing, timing and business case model for funding approval of a WEP. The WEP-WG in the next phase will be engaging several different parties and industry groups and will require specialist skill sets and expertise in digital exchange platform construction.

## INTERNATIONAL WOOLMARK PRIZE

Next month the global finals of the 2016/17 International Woolmark Prize will be held in Paris. The interest in this award from the fashion communities and media globally continues to be phenomenal. It is helping put wool back on the agendas of fashion designers across the world, and consequently into retail stores for consumers to purchase. The winners of last year's competition were recently in Australia to launch their winning collections at David Jones in Sydney, and while here they each visited a Merino woolgrowing property – the source of the fibre that lies at the heart of their collections – see page 8. The designers discover they have a lot in common with woolgrowers. As designer Catherine Teatum explained: "We use both traditional and modern technology to create a product for a specific market, a season and of course a price. It's great to have us all linked by the one great natural fibre."

## 'BREED MORE MERINO EWES' CAMPAIGN

AWI is proudly supporting the Breed More Merino Ewes campaign launched in September by the Australian Association of Stud Merino Breeders (AASMB) – see page 39. The campaign highlights the profitability of Merinos as the ultimate dual purpose breed. It encourages producers to increase Merino breeding ewe numbers in their enterprise mix so producers can take advantage of the enormous global fibre and food opportunities in future. AWI itself has made the strategic decision to focus heavily on increasing the reproductive efficiency of the Merino with the aim of lifting the average weaning rate in Merino to Merino joining by three percent over three years. Also, our recent announcement to extend the Lifetime Ewe Management course to a further 1,500 woolgrowers over three years builds on what has been the most successful sheep extension program in the proud history of the Australian sheep industry with participants significantly lifting weaning rates across the board.

## CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL

The Campaign for Wool continues to be instrumental in driving a new demand for wool of all microns on an international scale – from luxurious fine Merino wool apparel through to beautiful hardwearing interior products for the home. Wool Weeks have recently been held in key northern hemisphere markets during their autumn/winter retail season. Now in its seventh year, the global initiative raises awareness amongst consumers about the unique, natural, renewable and biodegradable benefits offered by the fibre. The campaign encourages collaboration between an international community of woolgrowers, major fashion designers, retailers, manufacturers and interior designers. See page 4.

## AWI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

AWI held its 2016 AGM on Friday 18 November in Sydney. At the AGM, I gave a detailed presentation of the activities of the company during 2015/16. AWI shareholders who were unable to attend the AGM in person were able to view the AGM proceedings via webcast. As well as being broadcast live, the broadcast is now available to be viewed on demand on the AWI website at [www.wool.com/2016agm](http://www.wool.com/2016agm)

## NEW PODCAST FOR WOOLGROWERS

AWI has launched a new free podcast called The Yarn. It is a fortnightly audio report for Australian woolgrowers designed to be listened to on a smartphone, and complements our other regular communications such as *Beyond the Bale* and monthly e-newsletter. With staff and networks around Australia and offices in various key consumer markets around the world, The Yarn includes AWI staff reports from across the company's broad scope: from the paddocks and shearing sheds on Australian farms to wool processing facilities, design studios and catwalks in key markets around the world. See page 27.

## POSITIVE PRICES DURING 2016

As 2016 draws to a close, we can reflect on a positive year for woolgrowers. Due to improved demand along with supply factors, the EMI has been well above 1,200 cents for the entire year. While the EMI has been relatively stable – which is a positive in itself – the trend is still upwards with the EMI pushing above 1,300c on several occasions during the second half of the year. This consistently high EMI has been very rewarding to watch during the year and, more importantly, very rewarding financially for many woolgrowers.

**We hope that 2017 continues on this positive note. And with this in mind, I wish you a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.**

# CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL FOR WOOL

## CELEBRATES SEVEN YEARS IN UK

The global Campaign for Wool marked its seventh successful year in the UK with its annual 'Wool Week' held in October.

The Campaign was initiated in 2010 by its patron, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, to raise awareness amongst consumers about the unique, natural, renewable and biodegradable benefits offered by the fibre. The initiative encourages collaboration between an international community of woolgrowers,

major fashion designers, retailers, manufacturers and interior designers.

The Campaign has been instrumental in educating consumers about the versatility of wool, and reconnecting them with its myriad uses – from luxurious fine Merino wool apparel through to beautiful hardwearing interior products for the home.

Here is a snapshot of some of the events and activities that took place during Wool Week in the UK.



Everything in the bedroom in the **Wool BnB** – including the newspaper and Corn Flakes packet – was made entirely from wool. The **Wool BnB** received very positive media coverage.

### WOOL BED & BREAKFAST

To mark this year's Wool Week in the UK, The Campaign for Wool opened the first ever 'Wool BnB', where everything from interiors to fashion was made of wool. The BnB, located in London, welcomed guests to a cosy sitting room and snug entirely decorated with wool products. Bedrooms were fully equipped with luxury wool-filled mattresses, pillows, duvets, cosy blankets and nightwear, bringing to the forefront the benefits of wool in aiding a good night's sleep. The Campaign for Wool brand partners kitted out the

whole house including a 'wool-kin' wardrobe showcasing iconic wool pieces from prestigious brands across luxury, fashion, interiors and craft.

Under one roof, The Campaign for Wool demonstrated how living with wool can be beneficial from head to toe, ceiling to floor and everything in between. Media and consumers were invited to visit the BnB to learn more about wool as a fibre and take part in workshop evenings, interactive talks, film screenings and styling sessions. Overnight stays were available following Wool Week, hosted by the global online homestay network Airbnb.



Gieves & Hawkes



John Smedley



William Hunt



Private White

### ON THE HIGH STREET

More than 50 high street retailers, tailors and brands celebrated Wool Week through their Autumn collections, store displays and online channels. Events and activities took place to promote wool as a natural, renewable and biodegradable fibre at retailers including John Smedley, Barbour, Jack Wills, Vivienne Westwood, Johnstons of Elgin, Walker Slater, Jigsaw, Genevieve Sweeney, Marks & Spencer, Smalls, Bugaboo, The Great British Baby Company, Mabli, and Scarlet Ribbon Merino amongst others.



## RETAIL AT BICESTER VILLAGE

Bicester Village – a luxury village-style shopping area in Oxfordshire, only an hour from London, and home to more than 130 boutiques of world-famous brands – had a complete wool-takeover and pop-up boutique, featuring retailers including Chinti & Parker, Pringle of Scotland, John Smedley, Brora, Markus Lupfer, Crumppet, Johnstons of Elgin and Ross Barr. All other boutiques around Bicester Village brought wool to the forefront during Wool Week with point-of-sale collateral placed in Burberry, Paul Smith and Hackett. Retailer feedback included increased footfall and sales during the week.

Luxury shopping destination **Bicester Village** had a complete wool-takeover, and the launch of a wool pop-up boutique featuring brands including Pringle of Scotland and John Smedley.



**John Smedley's Managing Director Ian Maclean** with musician and cheesemaker **Alex James** display unearthed knitwear that demonstrates wool's biodegradable properties.

## JOHN SMEDLEY AND ALEX JAMES

Knitwear manufacturer and retailer John Smedley launched Wool Week with musician and filmmaker Alex James by presenting to the media a new documentary titled *Slowing Down Fast Fashion*. The documentary – which is supported by The Campaign for Wool, The Woolmark Company and Fashion Revolution – shows how short-term satisfaction for clothes has become a threat to our long-term environmental survival. Recently winning 'Best Fashion Documentary' at London Fashion Film Festival and available for viewing on Amazon Prime, the documentary was also screened as part of Wool Week UK, to highlight the eco-credentials of wool.



## DESIGN CENTRE, CHELSEA HARBOUR: 'BAAATIQUE' HOTEL

Design Centre, Chelsea Harbour, Europe's leading design destination, partnered with The Campaign for Wool to showcase wool from some of the most prestigious names in the interior design industry. The 'Baaatique' Hotel installation was specially commissioned for the event and featured woollen fabrics, rugs, carpets and upholstered furniture. **B**

## STUDENT HAND KNIT COMPETITION

The first Campaign for Wool Hand Knitting Competition aimed at students choosing a design and knit pathway at top UK universities attracted a high standard of work that displayed the design potential of wool. Students were asked to design a series of fashion garments hand-knitted in wool that displayed sculptural form using cabling and 3D knitting techniques in a palette which celebrated the colours of a British Autumn. The participating schools collectively created a radical, conceptual and technically complex body of work that was displayed at the Artworkers Guild Hall in London during Wool Week for judging.



The top three **place-getters** in the Wool Hand Knitting Competition.



One of the quirky wool-themed displays in the iconic Isetan department store in Shinjuku, Tokyo.

# JAPAN

## CELEBRATES ALL THINGS WOOL

As part of the **Campaign for Wool**, more than 60 high-end brands have come together in the name of wool, **celebrating Wool Week in Japan**.

Iconic department store Isetan was the main hub of activity, with its Shinjuku store strategically placing quirky wool-themed installations and point-of-sale displays throughout the seven floors of its two buildings. Mitsukoshi Ginza store, one of the oldest and most revered department stores in Japan, also hosted dedicated wool corners and installations, with visitors having a chance to experience life on an Australian farm thanks to virtual reality headsets.

Across these two premium department stores, 7,000 Campaign for Wool swing tickets were applied to wool and wool-rich garments. In addition, campaign point-of-sale material and digital signs promoted the natural, renewable and biodegradable benefits of wool.

British menswear designer duo and 2015/16 International Woolmark Prize finalists Agi & Sam joined the activities, starting with the launch event of their Autumn/Winter 2016 wool-rich collection in Isetan.

Agi & Sam designers Sam Cotton and Agi Mdumulla were also ambassadors for the Campaign for Wool, engaging with the future makers and shakers of fashion. Agi & Sam met graduate students of the prestigious Bunka Fashion College – ranked the second-best fashion school in the world in 2015 – as well as students of ESMOD, the largest foreign fashion school in Japan, to share insights, experiences and inspiration.

During the week, a team of six fashion-savvy

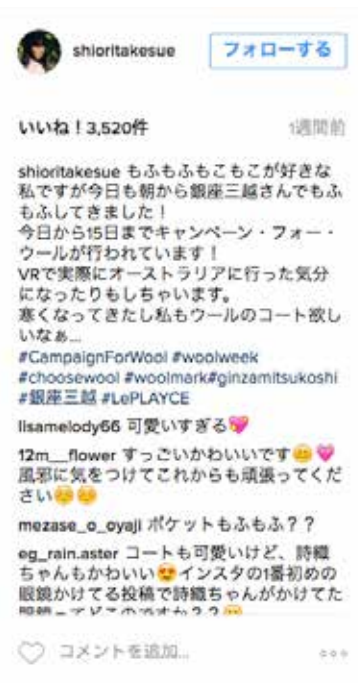
Japanese digital influencers visited some of the partners' stores and a social media competition was run on Instagram to further boost digital engagement.

Japanese fashion website The Fashion Post hosted a dedicated blog on the benefits of wool and showcased its favourite 30 wool products from brands including Issey Miyake, Mihara Yasuhiro, Tomorrowland, H by United Arrows,

Addition Adelaide and The Park•Ing Ginza.

Other brands to join in the Wool Week Japan celebrations included Ermenegildo Zegna, Cerruti, Hackett London, Dormeuil, the Sanyo Shokai Group with its Paul Stuart and Crestbridge brands, the Onward Group with its J-Press brand, Nano Universe, as well as hip Japanese designers Facetasm, N. Hoolywood, Discovered and John Lawrence Sullivan. **B**

**Influential social media personalities** posted photos of themselves visiting the stores supporting Campaign for Wool, such as this one at the **Mitsukoshi Ginza department store** that hosted dedicated wool corners and installations.



# MERINO IN MUNICH

## LUDWIG BECK INSPIRED BY WOOL

As part of the **Campaign for Wool**, customers visiting the popular **Ludwig Beck department store** in the heart of Munich during October were treated to a **'farm to fashion' wool showcase** – from a 'virtual reality' tour of an Australian sheep farm, to viewing a full variety of Merino wool apparel sold at the premium retailer.



Ludwig Beck CEO Christian Greiner and model Franziska Knuppe, wearing an eye-catching Merino wool pullover from the new Ludwig Beck Munich collection, at the launch of the iconic store's launch 'Ludwig Beck Inspired by Wool' initiative.



Real samples of Merino wool from each stage of the **fibre's journey** from the sheep's back to fabric were on display.

Come every October, the German city of Munich is well-known for its beer halls and overflowing steins as the annual Oktoberfest rolls into town. Yet this year, the heart of Munich also had an Australian flavour, as iconic department store Ludwig Beck transported its customers, via virtual reality, to a Merino wool-growing property.

The 'Ludwig Beck Inspired by Wool' initiative was launched as part of the Campaign for Wool to enthuse the store's customers to learn more about the natural benefits of the fibre and the source from which it comes.

For the month of October, customers at the famous Ludwig Beck store on the Marienplatz – the central square in the historic centre of Munich – had the opportunity to use virtual reality headsets to journey to an Australian sheep farm, to visually experience the source of Merino wool. Adding to the rural atmosphere for customers, a 'sound shower' on the ceiling emitted the sounds of sheep.

Not only promoting the Campaign for Wool, the month-long celebration also saw the launch of the new 'Ludwig Beck Munich collection'. This 10-piece knitwear collection, comprising v-neck, turtleneck and crew neck

pullovers, a short-sleeve shirt and cardigans, is made from superfine Australian Merino wool and available in 12 different colours.

Model Franziska Knuppe, who is an ambassador for the initiative, wore a beautiful Merino wool pullover from the Ludwig Beck Munich collection at the launch event.

"I am pleased to be a part of the Campaign for Wool," said Franziska. "I love the quality of Merino wool; it feels very comfortable next to the skin and it is natural and long-lasting. With this collection Ludwig Beck proves that quality is never out of fashion and the event we had in the welcoming atmosphere at the department store has been very successful."

Real samples of Merino wool from each stage of the fibre's journey from the sheep's back to fabric were on display near the collection, which customers could see and touch, enhancing their understanding and appreciation of the process of making fine Merino wool apparel.

In addition, specially made brochures highlighting the story of wool, care advice and promoting the new knitwear collection were distributed to 15,000 of the store's loyal

customers. AWI staff also delivered a Wool Appreciation Course to 45 Ludwig Beck staff members, ensuring they were well educated about wool to assist in sales of the new collection.

More than 20 store windows were branded Campaign for Wool and decorated with wool, including the store's 17-metre main window in the Marienplatz, past which more than 12,000 pedestrians walk every hour. An oversized image of AWI's celebrity 'ambassador', Fred, also featured, watching over the event and inviting customers into the store.

Also on display was the remarkable tapestry titled 'Metamorphosis', from the École Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne and designed by Seraina Lareida. The carpet artistically shows the transformation of wool, from freshly shorn wool to finished fabric, within one large-scale canvas. Seraina Lareida was provided with wool samples by AWI to undertake the initiative.

Ludwig Beck CEO Christian Greiner commented: "Ludwig Beck upholds traditional values of the highest quality, attention to detail and authenticity. This special collaboration with AWI shows our clients an awareness of fashion and provides insights into the background and history of the fibre. This makes us proud." **B**

Ludwig Beck customers had the opportunity to use **virtual reality headsets** to journey to an Australian sheep farm.





Rob Jones and Catherine Teatum of International Woolmark Prize winning label Teatum Jones with woolgrower Chris Clonan at 'Alfoxton' in Armidale, during their visit to Australia to launch their prize winning collection at David Jones.



Models wearing the Teatum Jones prize winning collection at the finals of the International Woolmark Prize 2015/16 in New York.

# TEATUM JONES BRINGS AWARD-WINNING WOOL COLLECTION TO AUSTRALIA

The wait is over for Australians to get their hands on the collection that won **London-based label Teatum Jones** the **2015/16 International Woolmark Prize** in New York earlier this year.

International Woolmark Prize winning designers Catherine Teatum and Rob Jones recently visited Australia to launch their collection, available now in select David Jones stores and online at [davidjones.com.au](http://davidjones.com.au).

While in Australia, they were keen to journey to visit the source of Merino wool – the fibre which lies at the heart of their collection. So with the assistance of AWI, they visited a Merino wool-growing property, the Clonans' 'Alfoxton' farm in Armidale. The design duo quickly learnt they had a lot more in common with woolgrower Chris Clonan than they originally thought.

"It was amazing to be on a wool producing property to see the passion and dedication woolgrowers have towards the fibre and their animals," explained Catherine Teatum. "As designers, we have a lot in common with woolgrowers as we use both traditional and modern technology to create a product for a specific market, a season and of course a price. It's great to have us all linked by the one great natural fibre."

As one of the original retail partners for the International Woolmark Prize, David Jones is the exclusive stockist in Australia for the Teatum Jones collection. The collection is also available globally through International Woolmark Prize retail partners including Boutique 1 (Dubai), Boon the Shop (Seoul), Harvey Nichols (London), Isetan Mitsukoshi (Tokyo), LECLAIREUR (Paris), Saks Fifth Avenue (New York), Verso (Antwerp) and [mytheresa.com](http://mytheresa.com) (online).

David Jones' philosophy perfectly aligns to that of the International Woolmark Prize: fostering the development of emerging international designers and being constantly on the lookout for the next big name in fashion.

"As designers, we have a lot in common with woolgrowers as we use both traditional and modern technology to create a product for a specific market, a season and of course a price. It's great to have us all linked by the one great natural fibre."

Designer Catherine Teatum

"Offering something new, exciting and incredibly fashion-forward for wool garments, we are delighted to exclusively stock the winning collection in Australia by Teatum Jones," explains David Jones General Manager Womenswear, Damian Burke – who has also sat on an International Woolmark Prize regional judging panel. "The sophistication of the collection will resonate well with David Jones's fashion savvy customer."

Using a mix of 17.5 micron and 19.5 micron Australian Merino wool, Teatum Jones partnered with a specialist guipure lace mill in France, convincing them to use wool for the first time in a particular way to create innovative and vibrant geometric Merino laces. The designers then developed a stretch

wool, upon which they bonded the Merino lace, creating a luxurious lace fabric that performs as a structured tailoring cloth. **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.davidjones.com.au](http://www.davidjones.com.au)

## INTERNATIONAL WOOLMARK PRIZE

The International Woolmark Prize celebrates outstanding fashion talents from across the globe who showcase the beauty and versatility of Merino wool. The prize crosses borders and cultures to spotlight young fashion stars from hotspots in more than 60 countries before a who's who of the international fashion industry.

Ultimately the International Woolmark Prize aims to increase the global demand for Australian Merino wool, by promoting the versatility of the fibre and aligning young talent with commercial opportunities and ongoing mentorship from industry heavyweights.

New demand is generated not only from the loyalty to wool from the designers, but also from consumers who are experiencing the immediate presence of Woolmark-branded apparel in the world's best boutiques and online retailers.



# SUKETDHIR

## AWARD-WINNING WOOL COLLECTION

Indian fashion designer **Suket Dhir**, who won the **2015/16 International Woolmark Prize** for menswear, has launched his lightweight, trans-seasonal Merino wool collection at **David Jones** in time for summer.

“If the product is great then everybody who is involved in the whole process will win.” So says 2015/16 International Woolmark Prize menswear winner **Suket Dhir**, after meeting with Australian woolgrowers at their property in Victoria.

The Indian fashion designer was in Australia as part of his winning journey, which has taken him to key global markets to launch his Merino wool collection in the world's leading retailers, including **David Jones'** Sydney city store.

Having spent more than a year perfecting his collection – from his initial submission for the regional final held mid-2015 through to launching his capsule collection in the world's leading stores – the designer said seeing the origin of the fibre he worked with was a beautiful experience.

“It's fantastic to see just how particular woolgrowers are with the quality of what they produce because it is exactly what we do as designers,” he explains. “My work philosophy is that product is the king and I think **Noel** and **Lyndsay Henderson** at 'Avington' farm definitely have the same philosophy of producing the very best product that they can.

Whilst in Sydney, the designer spent time with the retail staff of **David Jones**, explaining to them his collection and the journey he went on to produce it, including teaching traditional hand weavers – who historically have worked with cotton and silk – to weave with Australian Merino wool. The resulting collection defies the confines of traditional seasons, with the lightweight Merino wool fabric showcasing the trans-seasonal benefits of the fibre at its best.

“It's fantastic to see just how particular woolgrowers are with the quality of what they produce because it is exactly what we do as designers.”

Designer **Suket Dhir**

**David Jones'** General Manager of Menswear **Deborah Foreman** said the iconic department store was delighted to have menswear label **SUKETDHIR** as part of its International Designer Collections, which is also available to buy online.

“Designer **Suket Dhir** has demonstrated great skill and unique craftsmanship with



**David Jones'** General Manager of Menswear **Deborah Foreman** discusses the retail industry with **Suket Dhir** in Sydney.

his capsule collection, which was recognised by the esteemed judges at the International Woolmark Prize,” she said. “We are pleased to showcase his innovative designs exclusively in Australia at **David Jones**.”

Hailing from New Delhi, **Suket Dhir** cleverly fuses classic western tailoring with elements of the designer's national dress, such as oversized proportions and lightweight fabrics. Using the traditional technique of hand-tied and dyed yarn (**Ikat**) and hand woven fabrics, seamless moulding and heat setting reinforces the garments, while the age-old technique of **Kasuti**, a traditional hand embroidery, creates geometric, grid-like patterns in an update on the classic quilting stitch.

“Blending the oriental, imperial and the traditional, the collection is a mix of structured and fluid drape that presents a transcultural style,” says **Dhir**. “When we persuaded the weavers of **Telangana**, who specialise in **Ikat**, to work with wool for the first time, the results were magical. We are now committed to exploring the introduction of Merino wool to the other hand-weaving techniques of India and we look forward to creating some truly spectacular results.”

The **SUKETDHIR** collection will also be available globally through other International Woolmark Prize retail partners including **Boon the Shop** (Korea), **Isetan Mitsukoshi** (Tokyo), **LECLAIREUR** (Paris) and **Saks Fifth Avenue** (New York). **B**



'Avington' woolgrower **Noel Henderson** (left) and wool classer **Frank Bates** (right) show **Svetlana and Suket Dhir** freshly shorn fleece.

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.davidjones.com.au](http://www.davidjones.com.au)

# SUIT UP



Designer Dion Lee.

## DION LEE'S PRECISE TAILORING WITH WOOL

Offering a modern wardrobe for the professional woman, the latest line of **International Woolmark Prize alumni Dion Lee** takes traditional tailoring of Merino wool to the next level.

At 30 years of age, Dion Lee has established himself as the most critically lauded, and awarded, fashion innovator to emerge from Australia in recent times. Recently relocating to New York, the Australian fashion designer has released a 10-piece Merino wool tailoring line, SUIT, offering a modern wardrobe for the professional woman.

AWI continues its relationship with the designer, supporting the development of this latest line by providing supply chain and sourcing assistance for production channels.

Crafted from 100 per cent Australian Merino wool, the womenswear capsule collection comprises the architectural qualities for

which Dion Lee's brand is well known. Dion Lee conceived the collection in response to customer demand for a modern take on classic tailoring, with SUIT nodding to the traditions of menswear tailoring with hand finishes.

The twice-yearly range manufactured in Italy is available now through Dion Lee stores and online, David Jones and net-a-porter.com and includes a sleeveless Merino wool tuxedo coat, fine ribbed turtleneck sweater and a peak-lapelled blazer that features a unique double-layered front – a twist on a classic garment.

"The collection was formed on the principles of functional design, craftsmanship and luxury fabrications," he explains. "In this

way, we're catering to someone that's looking for something sharp and tailored and modern but that can also exist in a professional setting."

"AWI is proud to continue its association with Dion Lee, who is without doubt one of Australia's most talented designers. Dion's innovation in Merino wool through both treatment and design is truly inspirational; he is well deserving of his international success."

AWI CEO Stuart McCullough



The collaboration is part of a longstanding relationship between AWI and Dion Lee, which reached new heights in 2013 with the designer's participation as the Australian finalist in the International Woolmark Prize. Since then, Lee has continued to use wool in his seasonal collections in innovative ways.

"AWI is proud to continue its association with Dion Lee, who is without doubt one of Australia's most talented designers," says AWI CEO Stuart McCullough. "Dion's innovation in Merino wool through both treatment and design is truly inspirational; he is well deserving of his international success. The collection uses all of Merino wool's natural benefits to its advantage, disregarding restrictions imposed by the four seasons and resulting in trans-seasonal, timeless pieces."

Wool, says Lee, is a natural choice for his ongoing collections, particularly the new SUIT line. "Working with the International Woolmark Prize brought more attention to the presence of wool, but for me it has always had a strong place," he says. "The highest level of suiting is always Merino wool, whether in a twill or a crepe or otherwise, and a lot of my references come from menswear, and wanting to translate that level of classicism into women's collections, so wool was the obvious choice." **B**

AWI supported Dion Lee's latest line, SUIT, constructed out of Australian Merino wool and putting Lee's polished vision for womenswear to tailoring.

MORE INFORMATION  
[www.dionlee.com](http://www.dionlee.com)

# JASON WU'S WAY WITH WOOL FOR SPRING

Following his recent trip to a wool-growing property in Australia, leading American fashion designer **Jason Wu** presented lightweight Merino wool in his new collection at **New York Fashion Week Spring/Summer 2017**.

On the back of his recent trip to Australia (see the September 2016 edition of *Beyond the Bale*), New York-based fashion designer Jason Wu packaged his new-found inspiration into a neat collection, showcased at New York Fashion Week in September.

Wu's Spring/Summer collection of wool pieces not only demonstrated his innate ability to dress a woman, but more importantly highlighted the trans-seasonal properties of Merino wool in luxury fashion.

Wu's collection marks a close relationship with AWI, which started earlier in the year when he presented his unique take on wool for his Autumn/Winter 2016 collection. The relationship continued when Wu was invited to Australia to judge the regional round of the prestigious International Woolmark Prize and also visit a wool-

growing property near Goulburn NSW, going back to the source of Merino wool.

"Wool," he says, "is a staple in my work. I think a lot of us think of wool for a fall/winter collection, but lightweight, featherweight wools are becoming very important with global climate changes and I'm very excited to explore this further."

In his new collection, the designer did just that, presenting a series of expertly tailored pieces – including a form-fitting coat dress, a ruffle-finished bandeau dress and asymmetrical skirts – in easy-to-wear Merino wool. Special finishes, such as metallic taffeta pleats and banding, added a sense of summery femininity to the pieces, as is Wu's unique skill. **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.jasonwustudio.com](http://www.jasonwustudio.com)



Jason Wu's Spring/Summer 2017 collection shown at **New York Fashion Week** featured innovative uses of lightweight Merino wool.

## OLDEST MERINO STUD SHOWCASES NEWEST MERINO FASHION

The oldest operating **Merino Stud in South Australia, Anlaby**, opened its extensive gardens and historic buildings to the public in October, showcasing the very latest in Merino wool fashion.



Garments from this year's **International Woolmark Prize** were on show for the public at this year's **Anlaby open garden weekend in South Australia**.

South Australia's oldest Merino Stud, **Anlaby**, opened its doors to the public for a weekend in early October, allowing visitors to not only experience the grandeur and glamour of times gone by, but also get up close to a selection of innovative, forward-thinking Merino wool fashion, created by the world's best emerging design talents.

Showcasing a range of highlights from AWI's extensive fashion collection, the exhibition included approximately 30 looks from the world's most important up-and-coming designers, including the 2015/2016 International Woolmark Prize womenswear winner, London-based label Teatum Jones. The exhibition also included a selection of this year's regional finalists from the regions of Asia, British Isles, Europe and India, along with this year's current Australia and New Zealand global finalists Ex Infinitas and macgraw (both from Australia).

"Anlaby' is a rare glimpse of the yesteryear," explains co-owner Andrew Morphett. "Yet we also need to look to the future, finding new, innovative ways to excite and invigorate Australia's wool industry."

"Woolgrowers may not always think about high-end fashion; international runways are a world away from the shearing sheds. Yet global fashion plays such an important role in Australia's wool industry, as it is the designers and labels who can truly show off the magic of Merino wool. The International Woolmark Prize allows young designers the chance to champion the world's best fibre, and for 'Anlaby' to showcase these designs it's a rare chance for us to connect the world of fashion with wool's humble origins." **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.anlaby.com.au](http://www.anlaby.com.au)

# AUSTRALIAN MERINO WOOL

## THE FIBRE FOR SUMMER

With an increasing range of commercially available lightweight wool suiting, **Australian Merino wool** continues to prove its position as a **fibre for all seasons**.



The Woolmark-certified 'Dawson' suit from **SI by Studio Italia**, made from Australian Merino wool suit.

**W**hether for a black-tie event, the Spring Racing Carnival or a business meeting, modern Merino wool can bring versatile comfort to any occasion.

Merino fibres can absorb large quantities of moisture vapour then move it away to evaporate into the air, so Merino clothing is extremely breathable and less prone to clamminess. And in contrast to synthetics, Merino wool is an active fibre that reacts to changes in body temperature, so it helps you keep cool when the weather is hot, as well as help you stay warm when the weather turns cooler.

To help educate a new generation of consumers this summer about these and other benefits of wearing Merino wool, AWI has created a 20-page notebook for its key suit suppliers in Australia explaining why wool is the ultimate fibre for warmer months. As well as highlighting the benefits of wearing wool, this point-of-sale collateral is also full of helpful tips such as how to clean a wool suit and how to look good while travelling.



The **20-page notebook** explaining why wool is the ultimate fibre for warmer months.

## STOCKISTS OF MERINO WOOL SUITS

The range of brands now stocking lightweight Merino wool apparel in Australia extends across the price spectrum with a wool suit for any budget. Stockists of lightweight Merino wool suits include:

- Farage [www.farage.com.au](http://www.farage.com.au)
- M.J. Bale [www.mj bale.com](http://www.mj bale.com)
- Peter Jackson [www.peterjacksons.com](http://www.peterjacksons.com)
- P. Johnson Tailors [www.pjt.com](http://www.pjt.com)
- SI by Studio Italia [www.berkeleyapparel.com.au](http://www.berkeleyapparel.com.au)
- Suit Shop [www.suitshop.com.au](http://www.suitshop.com.au)
- The Bespoke Corner [www.thebespokecorner.com](http://www.thebespokecorner.com)
- Zimma Tailors [www.zimmatailors.com](http://www.zimmatailors.com)
- Crane Brothers [www.crane-brothers.com](http://www.crane-brothers.com) **B**

# MISSONI AND MERINO WOOL

**Missoni** is the brand responsible for creating the best knits in Italian fashion, and the iconic company continues its 60-year relationship with the **Woolmark brand** to this day.

**I**f there's one thing Missoni founders Ottavio and Rosita Missoni should unarguably be credited for, it's introducing us to the versatile character of a fabric typically associated with the autumn/winter season. No matter the occasion, and regardless of the season, Missoni has stayed loyal to wool for more than 60 years, having worked directly with the Woolmark brand since the 1960s.

And the brand's latest collection is no different, with a stunning advertising campaign featuring leading model Frederikke Sofie. The knitted garments, reflected by the waters of the Segrino and Alserio lakes in Italy, seem to become real in a romantic and almost imaginary image.

The Woolmark Company's iconic logo, synonymous of quality of wool products, joins Missoni's fashion images which were used in an advertising campaign and printed

in high-profile publications across the world.

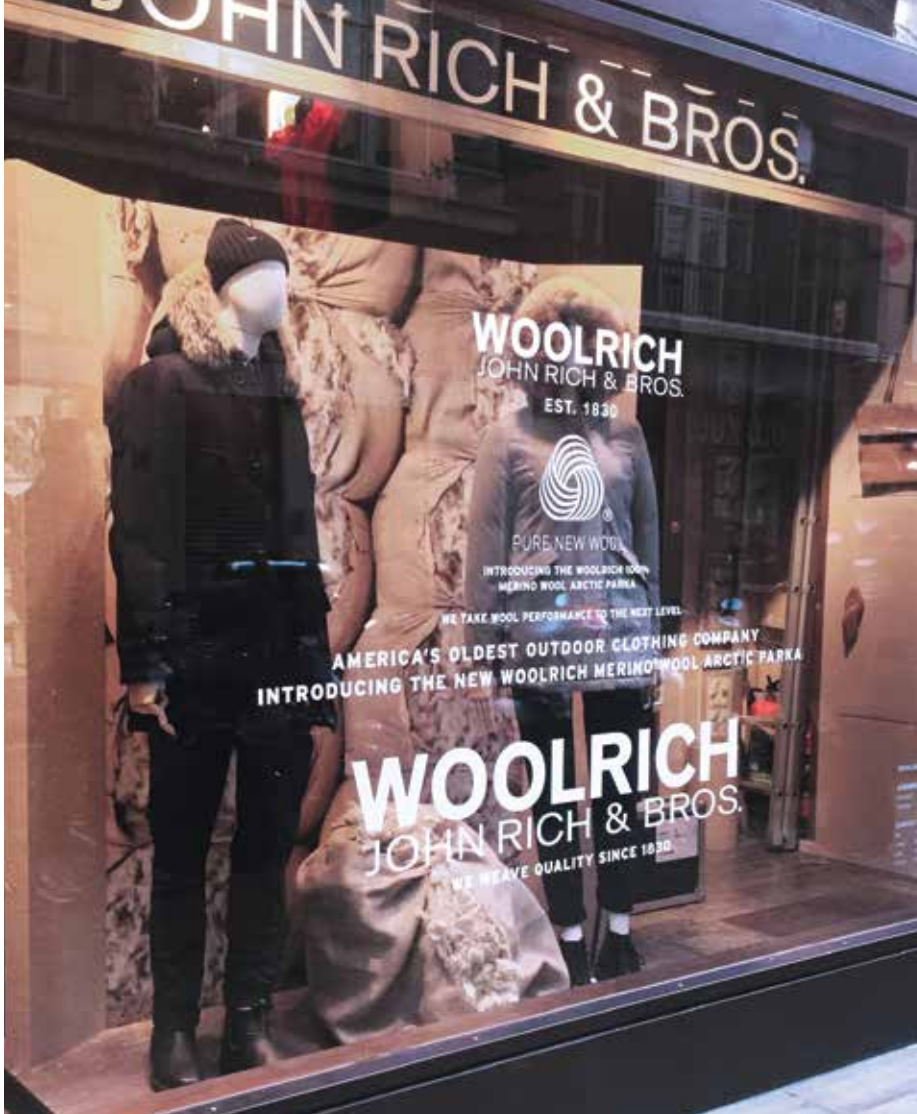
"I think of Woolmark as a high quality supplier that delivers us the best goods, and it's able to guarantee us a certain quality," says Luca Missoni, the son of Ottavio and Rosita. "Knitwear is central to our brand and Woolmark has for a long time identified wool types and their origins, and so it has helped us to consistently deliver quality."

Today, Missoni uses a broad range of wool types, differentiating its various product lines. "You need wools with different characteristics," explains Luca. "It might be boiled wool, or felted wool, or a lightweight wool, but no matter what the purpose, Merino wool has amazing functionality... you can do so many things with it." **B**



**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.missoni.com](http://www.missoni.com)

Image from a **Missoni** advertising campaign showcasing 100% Merino wool knitwear.



A storefront of Woolrich John Rich & Bros showcasing the **Woolrich Merino Wool Arctic Parka**, for women and men.



"A natural fibre, Merino wool is able to guarantee high performances in dynamic situations and suitable for every need."

Wool has been in the DNA of the iconic American brand for more than a century. It all began in 1830 with a woollen mill in Pennsylvania and this mill has now become the oldest manufacturing company still in business in the USA. The company originally created wool products for the outdoors and for American farm work, having recognised the technical and thermal performance attributes that are natural to wool.

Woolrich products are still essentially rooted in the clothing needs of American pioneers: from the early lumberjacks and farmers through to the workers who took part in the construction of the great Alaskan Pipeline.

However, the Woolrich John Rich & Bros brand today has also grown across Europe and Japan, with the company now combining the brand's historical identity with a contemporary interpretation of iconic Americana, incorporating worldwide design influences and a sophisticated take on outdoor and utilitarian style.

This tradition and future of wool is also being highlighted in a series of well-publicised events celebrating the arrival of the new Woolrich Merino Wool Arctic Parka. 'The Woolrich Mill: tradition and future of wool' photo exhibition will be exhibited in global flagship stores, detailing the journey to the oldest woollen mills in the United States through to the presentation of the new Arctic Parka. B

# WOOLRICH AND WOOLMARK PROMOTING WOOL

To help promote the use of innovative Merino fabrics, and thereby increase demand for the fibre, AWI has helped support the marketing of outerwear by **Woolrich John Rich & Bros** that uses Loro Piana's 100 per cent Merino wool **Storm System® fabric**.

**W**hile Australia basks in its summer temperatures, AWI has stepped up its collaborative marketing activity during the important autumn and winter months of key northern hemisphere markets.

An example of this is AWI's marketing support for US company Woolrich John Rich & Bros which has launched its new Merino Wool Arctic Parka, made with Loro Piana's 100 per cent Merino wool innovative Storm System® fabric.

Storm System® consists of a double barrier: the water-repellent Rain System®, and the exclusive hydrophilic membrane that is resistant to water, windproof and allows the skin to breathe.

With support from AWI, Woolrich John Rich & Bros has undertaken an advertising campaign in high-profile magazines, a digital campaign and dedicated store windows to promote this product across global cities including New York, London, Berlin, Amsterdam and Milan.

"The partnership with The Woolmark Company has been the natural result of an innovative return of this incredible fibre in one of Woolrich's most iconic pieces," explained Woolrich John Rich & Bros Creative Director Andrea Canè. "The Woolrich Arctic Parka, made with Loro Piana Storm System fabric, incorporates in one garment tradition, innovation, technology and contemporary style.

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.woolrich.com](http://www.woolrich.com)



# TASMANIAN MERINO

## CAMPAIGN IN KOREA

Woolgrower Allan Phillips from 'Glen Stuart' looks on while Korean merchandising representatives from Rogatis and Lotte learn about **Tasmanian Merino wool** in December 2015.

An AWI-supported retail campaign – in which the premium natural story of **Tasmanian Merino wool** is being conveyed to consumers – aims to boost consumption in the **Korean men's suit market**.

**W**ith support from AWI, the natural story of Tasmanian Merino wool is being conveyed to consumers 9,000km away in South Korea.

With the Asian country having a population of more than 50 million and more than 500 people per square kilometre, it is no wonder that South Korean brands are attracted to the natural beauty of Tasmania (where there is a population density of less than eight people per square kilometre).

A retail campaign – promoting suits made from Tasmanian Merino wool – by Korean men's suiting brand Rogatis and the Lotte department store is currently under way at 27 Lotte branches across South Korea, with support from AWI. The autumn/winter campaign was launched in September and runs through to December.

The campaign follows on from a visit to several Tasmanian wool-growing properties a year ago by merchandisers and buyers from Rogatis and Lotte to learn more about Tasmanian Merino wool. The visitors were guided by Roberts Ltd, which owns the Tasmanian Merino™ brand. The visit inspired Rogatis and Lotte to launch the Merino suiting campaign for the prestige market in Korea, using the Tasmanian Merino™ story.

State Wool Manager at Roberts Ltd, Alistair Calvert, said the Tasmanian Merino™ brand stands for sustainability and traceability.

"Our pristine environment, fresh water and clean air are the ingredients that create the high-quality product that end-consumers value and our livelihoods depend on," he said.

"The growing interest in 'place of origin' aligns with a broader desire among consumers to know more about where the things they buy are grown and made. This creates the imperative for traceability."

The Tasmanian Merino™ brand, along with the Woolmark logo, are displayed on the suiting tickets and labels of the Rogatis suits at the Lotte stores.

AWI's support of the Rogatis and Lotte campaign aims to increase Merino wool consumption in the Korean men's suit and separates market. The campaign is communicating to consumers that Merino wool is a premium ingredient in business suits; is a natural, biodegradable and renewable fibre; and has heritage with a verified supply chain.

The target market is men in their early 30s to mid 40s who are looking for practical and luxurious business suits, including travel suits. These consumers are down-to-earth but fashion-forward, seek value, and are very receptive to hearing about the provenance of their purchases.

Alongside the suiting in the stores, there is point-of-sale collateral and video, produced by the AWI videography team and Roberts Ltd, that showcases the natural benefits of Merino wool. There is also social media and online PR activities being conducted to boost market awareness of the Merino wool suits.

Initially, 3,000 Tasmanian Merino™ branded men's suits have been released to the stores, with reordering procedures in place dependent on the progress of sales.

The suits were woven by Samsung C&T

(a vertical weaver and fashion house) which imported four tons of the 18.5 micron Tasmanian wool top through Tianyu for this campaign, sourced by Roberts Ltd.

Following the completion of this consumer promotion for the autumn/winter season, the brand's will launch a Cool Wool campaign from April 2017. **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.tasmanianmerino.com](http://www.tasmanianmerino.com)

A retail display at **Lotte department stores** including, alongside the suits, a video showcasing the natural beauty of Tasmania.



# JAPAN'S ENDURING DEMAND FOR WOOL

Japan continues to be an important market for wool apparel, due to the country's population, climate and affluence. AWI is therefore very active in the country where its 126 million people are acknowledged for their luxury goods consumption and understanding of quality.



The GQ Japan website promoting the use of wool by high profile Japanese designers.

## JAPANESE DESIGNERS TALK WOOL TO GQ

In partnership with GQ Japan, AWI visited the studios of six renowned Japanese menswear designers as part of a newly launched web series titled 'Wool and Japanese Designers'. The six-part series interviews each of the leading fashion designers, with GQ Japan's website hosting a different interview each month.

Part one talks to Yohji Yamamoto of the YOHJI YAMAMOTO brand. The exclusive interview, conducted by GQ Japan editor-in-chief Masafumi Suzuki, highlights Yamamoto's passion for wool and how wool is incorporated into his designs. With more than 130,000 people watching this first video on The Woolmark Company's YouTube channel, in addition to the traffic driven to GQ's own website, there was a high level of anticipation for the remaining five episodes.

The idea for the video series was born out of a desire to invite consumers into a designer's world, whilst exploring their relationship with Merino wool and positioning the Woolmark brand at the forefront of cutting-edge fashion in Japan.

## NANO UNIVERSE PROMOTES ULTRAFINE MERINO WOOL

Nano Universe, one of the largest Japanese retailer brands, recently ran a large-scale men's knitwear campaign in collaboration with AWI. Taking place throughout 50 stores across Japan during September and October, the campaign focused on Woolmark-certified, 100% Australian Merino wool items of 16.2 micron. 21,000 pieces were for sale, available in four styles and six colours.

Famed Japanese actor Tori Matsuzaka fronted the campaign, driving the message of luxury and comfort. In addition, the tagline 'Made by beautiful sheep' nods to the provenance of Australian Merino wool, with in-store imagery used to support the campaign.

The campaign garnered comprehensive media coverage, including local TV advertising and print advertisement in seven of the most influential male magazines. This was complemented by a two-week outdoor campaign that displayed the campaign video in one of Tokyo's busiest places, in the heart of Shibuya fashion district. Nano Universe's 50 retail stores also had point-of-sale collateral promoting the campaign, with special window installations in its five flagship stores. In addition, the brand hosted a dedicated page on its website, along with comprehensive digital content on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.



Japanese actor Tori Matsuzaka fronting the Nano Universe campaign, supported by AWI.



Japanese menswear label Attachment has released a 24-piece Merino wool collection, available now.

## JAPANESE LABEL ATTACHMENT HEROES TASMANIAN MERINO WOOL

AWI has partnered with Japanese menswear label Attachment to create a wool collection, with more than 4,500 garments on sale throughout Attachment's seven stores and 50 stockists across Japan, and online shop.

Designer Kazuyuki Kumagai has long worked with wool in his collections, with about 70 per cent of the label's current autumn/winter 2016 collection using the natural fibre. It was from the designer's existing love of wool's naturally inspiring benefits that a collaboration with AWI's subsidiary The Woolmark Company, was realised resulting in a special capsule collection crafted from Tasmanian Merino wool.

"The appeal of wool is that it can change to suit various expressions whilst providing high heat retention," explains Kamugai of the collection, which arrived in Attachment's various Japanese boutiques in October.

"It can have a soft feel with thanks to the fineness of the yarn, but it can also be fulsome, and form a great coat with a sturdy quality. It can have a luxurious feel, too, or something unique by mixing it with linen or hemp. Wool has infinite possibilities, and I believe that it's still possible to create new types."

Attachment's capsule collection comprises 24 pieces (including two available exclusively in-store) in a variety of colours, including thick wool melton coats, a speciality of the label, as well as wool flannel pants and knitwear, all showcasing the beautiful texture of Merino wool.

# CHINESE LABELS UNITE FOR

# COOL WOOL

Six influential Chinese designers have collaborated to produce Cool Wool collections, which will be available to buy from multi-brand concept store Dongliang in early-2017.



Six Chinese designers presented a 'Globetrotting with Cool Wool' fashion show at the Labelhood Pioneer Fashion & Arts Festival, as part of Shanghai Fashion Week spring/summer 2017.

Chinese consumers will soon get the chance to buy the latest Cool Wool collections from six influential, independent labels, thanks to a collaboration between AWI and multi-brand concept store Dongliang.

First shown in October during Labelhood Pioneer Fashion & Arts Festival, as part of Shanghai Fashion Week spring/summer 2017, the collections will be available in store at Dongliang Shanghai and HUG Chengdu from February 2017 onwards.

The Cool Wool collaboration aims to highlight the trans-seasonal and lightweight properties of Merino wool and extend the retail season for wool apparel into spring and summer, thereby increasing the demand for Australian Merino wool.

The initiative educated the designers about the fibre's provenance, wool fabric development and technical innovations, to gain deeper knowledge and greater inspiration about the fibre. It also helped connect the designers with suppliers along the wool supply chain.

Shushu/Tong, Yirantian, Boundless, Babyghost and former International Woolmark Prize finalists Ban Xiao Xue and Xu Zhi each created their own unique interpretations of Cool Wool fabrics, ranging from 17.5 microns to 21.5 microns.

Each look, based around the theme Globetrotting with Cool Wool, showcased the natural qualities and modern functionality of Merino wool, such as breathability, temperature regulation, softness, elasticity and elegance. Signature pieces with customisable details further demonstrated how Cool Wool can be suited for any season, place or occasion. **B**



**Boundless** chose two fabrics from Shandong Ruyi Group perfect for a travel collection. Chosen for their moderate density, breathability, fine yarn count and natural elasticity, these fabrics had the essential features for the collection.



**Yirantian**, known for striking a balance between comfort and creativity, uses three kinds of Shandong Ruyi Group fabrics in shades of black and coffee-beige – colours which are cool, laid-back yet convey an easy elegance - to create timeless and classic pieces.



**Xu Zhi** created simple, neat and classic silhouettes that pay tribute to the artist Monet's iconic natural scenery. The fine details of the Holland & Sherry fabrics express Xu Zhi's signature design aesthetic for women: independent and strong, yet soft and feminine.



**Babyghost** takes the wild child on an adventure, in cool, neutral shades of textured grey and dark blue, using fabrics from Jiaying Diyang Textiles.





# KNITWEAR DEVELOPMENT CENTRE STRENGTHENS CHINA'S MANUFACTURING SECTOR

Knitwear manufacturing giant Xinao has opened an innovative **Knitwear Development Centre in China** in collaboration with AWI to meet the demands of tomorrow's global consumer.

One of the world's leading worsted spinners of wool, Xinao, has opened a Knitwear Development Centre in collaboration with AWI. Located in Tongxiang, in China's Zhejiang province, the facilities provide an education and development hub for knitwear textile fashion trends, technological innovation, product development, and promotion.

and development coupled with training and education to ensure that the success of Xinao will continue."

According to AWI Eastern Hemisphere General Manager John Roberts, investment such as this from AWI has extensive long-term benefits for Australian wool.

Xinao and AWI have commissioned the education services of processing experts throughout the supply chain to lecture and educate students who visit the centre, ensuring wool is at the forefront of the minds of the next generation.

"The Knitwear Development Centre in Xinao provides a platform to develop new and innovative ways to use wool and develop innovations that continue to meet the ever-changing needs of the consumer," he said. "Whilst we have previously invested in other development centres like the one in Nanshan, Xinao's is specifically focussed on knitwear, which is identified as a key growth area for wool.

The new centre comprises three main spaces:

- research and development unit – housing laboratories and small scale processing machinery to conduct experimental trials
- training and education department – containing a 100-seat lecture theatre devoted to training future textile technologists, designers and engineers
- fully equipped textile testing laboratories – supporting the research and development unit, providing hands-on training for students, as well as maintaining the high degree of quality for which Xinao has become renowned.

"AWI's three-year strategic plan has a key focus on sports and outdoor apparel, which is predominantly made up of knitted products for next-to-skin and base-layer garments. To create heightened growth in this sector we must change people's perceptions of wool and what it can do.

"Facilities such as the Xinao Knitwear Development Centre allow AWI to work with major commercial textile entities like Xinao to develop and commercialise products in a 'real time' processing environment and a 'real time' commercial environment. Effectively, the centre is a mini mill which adheres to all the global commercial processing standards and allows our internal technical team to run trial batches from raw wool to finished garments that are ultimately tested and assessed for commercial viability. This allows AWI to be nimble and innovative and keeps wool at the forefront of innovation."

"We believe that the way forward for the next decade lies with innovation," explained Xinao CEO Zhou Xiaotian during the centre's official opening. "Innovation is needed to develop new processes and products to meet the demands and requirements of tomorrow's global consumer. So this is why we made the decision to invest in research

The new **Xinao Knitwear Development Centre** provides a place for research, development and education.



**Shushu/Tong** used Cool Wool fabrics from Tessilbiella and Jiangsu Sunshine Group to blend classical Chinese aesthetics and London street culture to create "a traveller's secret weapon", keeping wearers comfortable whilst looking stylish.



**Ban Xiao Xue** chose Idole Trading Co fabric to then combine different kinds of embroidery with brightly coloured geometric patterns to create a carefree mix of modern and traditional elements.



# SPORTY WOOL

PERFORMANCE, SOFT AND GLAMOUROUS

As activewear gains pace in high-end fashion, *Vogue Italia* puts wool sportswear to the test, proclaiming it a highly versatile and high-performance fibre.

On the catwalks of London, Paris, Milan and New York in the past few years, we have seen models being sent down the runway in slouchy sweats and sneakers, adding athleticism to events once reserved for flowing gowns and tailored suits.

As activewear gains pace in the world of high-end fashion, more and more traditional sports brands are turning to premium fibres, such as wool, to add a touch of luxury to their performance apparel. And now, with fashion bible *Vogue Italia* dedicating two pages to Merino wool and activewear in its August edition, it can be said that the once humble T-shirt or sneaker is now on the radar of the world's leading brands.

Showcasing a selection of premium performance brands working with wool – including adidas, Bandavej, Aeance, Woolrich, New Balance, Helly Hansen, Reda Rewoolution, Odlo and Rossignol – *Vogue Italia* reinforces the fact that performance and luxury now go hand in hand.

Considered the softest wool in the world, cites *Vogue Italia*, Australian Merino wool

is distinguished by quality factors that make it particularly suited to sportswear. Readers are educated on wool's performance benefits, including moisture management,

odour resistance, breathability and natural elasticity – reminded they need not give up elegance, even when training. **B**



A double-page spread in *Vogue Italia's August issue* highlights wool as the ultimate performance fibre, showcasing leading global brands and their innovative use of wool.

## AWI x adidas

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTED IN TURKEY

AWI continues to work hard to promote Australian wool in Turkey, which has an increasing opportunity for wool due to the country's strong manufacturing market, potential luxury market and its proximity to the lucrative western European markets.

"Fashion and sport are coming together, and they're coming together at a fast rate." So said adidas Senior Director Running Apparel and Customization Craig Vanderoef at the 9th Istanbul Fashion Conference.

At a time when the performance attributes of Merino wool are being increasingly recognised and adopted across the global sportswear industry – as evident in the *Vogue Italia* article (see above) – Mr Vanderoef brought his experience of ground-breaking product development to this prestigious event in Istanbul, sponsored by AWI and organised by the Turkish Clothing Manufacturers Association.

"We asked ourselves, how could we take every bit of performance, every bit of style, and put it all in one piece," he said at the conference. "A running piece that keeps me warm when it's cool, cool when it's hot, is highly visible and protects me from the wind and rain. And I want it to be seamless and I want it to look great and not stink when I go out after I work out."

And so adidas, with the expert advice from AWI and the technical support from knitwear partners Stoll, chose Merino for their latest Primeknit T-shirts, providing runners with thermo-regulation, anti-odour



adidas Senior Director Running Apparel and Customization Craig Vanderoef addresses the 9th Istanbul Fashion Conference in Turkey.

properties and movement throughout their run and day (see the September 2016 edition of *Beyond the Bale*).

"We brought experts and craftsmen together with the common goal and common hope that we'd be better together than if we were apart. Without the help of Woolmark or Stoll, we would have been able to make a nice garment, but it wouldn't be able to do everything we wanted it to do. An open innovation world allows for more." **B**

MORE INFORMATION  
[www.adidas.com](http://www.adidas.com)

# MOUNTAIN DESIGNS

## CORESPUN MERINO

Australian outdoor brand and retailer **Mountain Designs** has released a range of apparel made from **Corespun Merino** – an innovative fabric technology that uses a yarn made from Australian Merino wool wrapped around a strong nylon core.



The **Mountain Designs Corespun Merino range** includes men's and women's short sleeve T-shirts (pictured) suitable for outdoor adventures to everyday wear.

**C**ombining comfort, performance and durability, the Mountain Designs Corespun Merino clothing is a great choice for multi-day hiking, climbing, travelling and everyday outdoor activities.

Sourced and spun in Australia, Corespun Merino is an innovative yarn constructed by wrapping Merino wool fibres around a durable multifilament nylon core. The result is a yarn and fabric of 87% Australian Merino wool and 13% nylon, with all the comfort and performance of Merino wool on the outside and improved strength from the nylon on the inside.

Corespun Merino retains all the natural benefits of Merino wool – it allows the skin to breathe, moves moisture away from the body and prevents odour-causing bacteria from growing.

The Corespun Merino apparel is certified by the The Woolmark Company as Wool Rich Blend.

"At Mountain Designs we're always searching for new and innovative ways to create comfortable high performance garments," said CEO of Mountain Designs, Caroline Machado Campos.

"When our designers set their sights on creating superior wool garments they tirelessly explored a range of textiles.

The goal was to create clothing with all the technical benefits of Merino but with increased strength and durability. They found this impressive combination in the Corespun Merino fabric technology.

"Corespun Merino holds onto all the softness and technical benefits of Merino wool but is 40% stronger than 100% Merino wool of the same weight. The durable nylon core of the thread makes the fabric more resistant to tears and abrasion as well as providing greater stretch and recovery. This means it lasts longer and can handle a bit of tough love on the trail or climb."

Mountain Designs worked with Woolmark certified suppliers in the development of this range.

### CORESPUN MERINO RANGE

The Corespun Merino range comprises a men's and women's short sleeve T-shirt (both available in five colours), and a men's ¼ zip long sleeve pullover and women's hoodie (both available in two colours).

The T-shirts are perfect for outdoor adventures, overseas holidays and everyday catch ups with friends. They feature beautifully hand-drawn prints exclusive to Mountain Designs.

The ¼ zip long sleeve pullover and hoodie are designed for free movement and comfortable wear during physical activities such as hiking or climbing, but they can also be worn travelling or just relaxing.

The Corespun Merino range extends Mountain Designs' current Merino wool range that includes 100% Merino wool baselayers and scarves, and Merino wool blended jackets, pullovers, cardigans and socks.

### PREMIUM AUSTRALIAN BRAND

Mountain Designs has 37 stores across Australia and a strong retail presence through its online store.

In August, the company opened its new flagship store at Broadbeach on the Gold Coast, with Alyssa Azar, the youngest Australian (aged 19) to summit Mount Everest, attending the launch.

Ms Machado Campos said the grand opening had a fantastic turn out and a visit from the Channel 7 news crew.

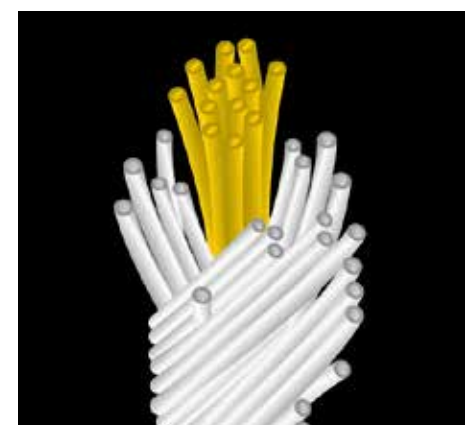
"Located within Queensland's largest shopping centre, the new-look store is already a talking point with local adventurers and travel lovers," she said. "It brings together a modern design with environmental elements, drawing inspiration from nature and adventure. Echoing our love of the outdoors, the store features large Poplar trees lining the store's front facade, cobble stones, rope detailing and recycled timber panels."

Ms Machado Campos says with Mountain Designs being Australian owned and operated for more than 40 years, Merino wool grown in Australia is important to the company.

"Our 100 per cent Australian heritage is fundamental to who we are as a brand and it helps set us apart from our competitors. As a home grown company, we feel it is important to support Australian wool as much as possible."

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.mountaindesigns.com/  
md-corespun-merino-shirts](http://www.mountaindesigns.com/md-corespun-merino-shirts)

A **Mountain Designs Corespun Merino yarn** comprises Australian Merino wool fibres (87%) wrapped around a multifilament nylon core (13%).



# TERTIARY EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

AWI continues to foster the education and development of tertiary textile and fashion students – inspiring them in the early stage of their careers about the properties and benefits of Merino wool, and encouraging them to continue to use the fibre in their designs as they progress through their professional lives.



Judges Dormeuil chief designer **Aline Galimberti** and 2015/16 International Woolmark Prize Europe menswear finalist **Jonathan Christopher** with award winner Central Saint Martins graduate **Jacob Monk** (centre) and with some of his fabric designs (pictured right).

## ORIGINAL AND COMMERCIAL DESIGNS WIN UK TEXPRINT AWARD

**AWI continues to encourage the use of Merino wool in textile designs, by once again sponsoring an award at Texprint – the UK's leading graduate design prize.**

Central Saint Martins graduate Jacob Monk won this year's Woolmark Prize Texprint Award, praised for his original and "very commercial" designs.

Shining the spotlight on the best emerging textile designers studying at colleges across the UK, entrants must incorporate a minimum of 60 per cent Merino wool into their textiles and demonstrate a good understanding of the fibre's qualities and potential application in fabric. The Woolmark Company has supported this special prize for six years.

Inspired by a recent trip to Barcelona, Jacob created his woven collection using Merino wool he had dyed himself in order to achieve the colours he desired. The lightweight fabrics were created with men's trans-seasonal suiting in mind, mixing Merino wool and mohair yarns for added texture and hand feel. Jacob further developed his collection by applying hand and machine embroidered patterns, also using Merino.

The Woolmark Company Texprint Award was judged Dormeuil chief designer Aline

Galimberti, along with 2015/16 International Woolmark Prize Europe menswear finalist Jonathan Christopher of Jonathan Christopher Homme.

"In awarding Jacob this prize, there is the aspect of encouraging and helping to develop talent," explained Ms Galimberti. "Jacob needs to believe in himself because what he does is so well thought-out, creative, original and very commercial. He has a real link with a fibre like wool which is not easy to create, and his work is truly exciting."



One of the winning designs created by Esmod Berlin student **Hocheol Moon**, who won the inaugural Wool Award as part of the prestigious **Mittelmoda Fashion Award in Milan**.

## EMERGING DESIGNER FUSES CLASSICAL SHAPES WITH MODERN TWIST

**AWI has sponsored the Mittelmoda Fashion Award in Milan to help encourage the use of Merino wool by fashion students.**

Esmod Berlin student Hocheol Moon has taken out the inaugural Wool Award, as part of the prestigious Mittelmoda Fashion Award, held in Milan during the Milano Unica trade fair.

24 finalists sent their collections down the runway, with Hocheol Moon awarded for the most innovative collection made from wool in a special award sponsored by AWI.

"Hocheol Moon won the special Wool Award offered by The Woolmark Company for the best use of wool, and as well as the Absolute Prize for the most creative collection offered by Mittelmoda International Lab and Camera Nazionale della Moda Italiana," explained AWI Global Strategy Advisor Fabrizio Servente, who also sat on the judging panel for the competition.

"Hocheol presented six outfits of great taste, where enough space was given to the perception of high quality. All outfits are mainly made from high quality wool and were designed with a rare balance of classic shapes along with an unusual and innovative twist. The young designer has been able to enhance the best use of wool in his collection, making it saleable in the market."

Mittelmoda is a historic fashion award that involves students from across the world. By joining this award, AWI was able to become part of an international association that organises one of the most important student prizes and promotes the use of wool between fashion students about to embark on their chosen career path.

## BIELLA MASTERS STUDENTS VISIT AUSTRALIA

**AWI has once again supported a visit by five Biella Masters postgraduate students wishing to enhance their knowledge of the wool industry and how the fibre is produced.**

A group of five students entering the textile industry visited Australia in September to further explore the origins of Australian wool and develop a greater understanding and appreciation of the premium fibre and Australian industry.

Based in Biella, Italy, the group examines the entire supply chain, starting from the raw materials through to the final product, passing through: combing, dyeing, worsted spinning, woollen spinning, weaving, fabric design, finishing, clothing manufacturing, knitting, retail, clothing and fashion, marketing.



The **Biella Masters** students take some time out during their farm visit to a property in **Goulburn**.

## ITALIAN STUDENTS AND MAX MARA WORKING WITH WOOL

**Nine student fashion designers had the opportunity of a lifetime, designing a 10-piece collection for luxury fashion house Max Mara, made from 90 per cent Merino wool.**

AWI has partnered with luxury Italian fashion house Max Mara and the Istituto Marangoni's final year Fashion Design students to highlight the value of Merino wool and throw their combined support behind emerging design talents.

A newly launched program called the Textile Project gave the students the opportunity to each make a 10-piece capsule collection for Autumn 2017, with a minimum 90 per cent Merino wool.

Max Mara and Istituto Marangoni professors mentored the students throughout the



Winning Italian fashion students **Martina Micci** and **Celeste Chiaramonte** (centre) flanked by two of the other students **Carlotta Ferrari** and **Marzia Lombardo**, who took part in the program.

During their visit, the students visited John Reardon's 'Roseglen' property in Goulburn and met with key representatives from AWI.

"We were very impressed by the work carried out by The Woolmark Company and Australian Wool Innovation and the meetings allowed us to be more involved and inspired," said student Roberta Accardi after the trip. "This experience further increased our desire to learn more to make a significant contribution to the textile world."

Marta Maniero also described the trip as invaluable: "Travelling around Australia, visiting the farms and the auctions, exchanging points of view with the experts and in particular meeting the people who commit themselves to produce and promote the best wool in the world has been not only an incredible learning opportunity, but in particular has made us aware about the potential of Merino wool. Now we will be committed even more to promote the use of this unique and amazing fibre."

design project, guiding them in textile research and in the collection's development phase, whilst AWI staff assisted in passing on their knowledge of Merino wool and explaining to the students the versatility and inherent benefits of the natural fibre.

In October, the finalists each had the opportunity to showcase their hero piece in the Max Mara store in Corso Genova, Milan, along with the mood boards and concepts behind the collection. Both Max Mara Fashion Director Laura Lusuardi and AWI Country Manager for Italy Francesco Magri judged the final designs and chose one winner each: Martina Micci, who wins a three-month internship at Max Mara; and Celeste Chiaramonte who wins a three-month internship at Riccardo Rami Studio, AWI's consultancy office in charge of the development of The Wool Lab.

"The aim of the textile project was to communicate to young fashion designers the knowledge and the culture of fabrics that are fundamental to design high quality collections," explained Ms Lusuardi. "The fabric is part of Max Mara's DNA and The Woolmark Company has been the natural partner to share this experience with."

# WOOL4SCHOOL

## EXPANDS TO YEAR 12 STUDENTS

**AWI's Wool4School student design competition** has expanded to include Year 12 students, allowing all high school students to explore the versatility of Australian Merino wool and gain insights into the fashion industry.

Registrations are now open for the 2017 Wool4School design competition, with AWI encouraging all Australian high school students to enter.

Next year's competition has expanded to include Year 12 students, with the winner to be offered the exceptional opportunity to attend the prestigious Whitehouse Institute of Design under a full scholarship to further their education in the fashion industry.

Last year's Wool4School competition winner in the Year 11 category, Chanelle Davenport from Innisfail State College, is delighted that she will be able to take part in next year's competition as a Year 12 student.

With her eyes set on becoming a fashion designer after high school, Chanelle entered the 2016 Wool4School competition knowing it was a great opportunity to gain an insight into the fundamentals of design.

"It's also one of few competitions open to someone my age," Chanelle said. "In Far North Queensland, we don't have a lot of opportunity to wear wool, so I was excited to learn that wool could be used to create so many unique fabrics.

"I'm extremely happy that Wool4School has opened up to year 12 and I will certainly be entering again – the more experience the better. I have felt it has helped me hone my skills in designing as well as opening up new opportunities for me to explore after school. I just love the fact that it's a great way for young people interested in fashion design to gain experience in the industry. I enjoyed the whole process from the initial idea to planning the product."

Since its launch in 2012, Wool4School has evolved to include more than 40,000 students nationwide, as well as extending into Hong Kong.

For high school students dreaming of becoming a fashion designer, next year's brief is to design an outfit for their favourite musician to wear on stage during a performance. The original outfit must be made from at least 80 per cent Australian Merino wool and include a wool accessory.

While participating students do not have to make their designs, students illustrate and carefully describe the textiles used in their work. State and year level winning students and teachers have the opportunity to win some amazing prizes.

AWI Group Manager for Education & Extension, Julie Davies, said Wool4School is an important part of an expanded education program at AWI.

"We have an education offering to develop not only the next woolgrowers, textile experts and fashion designers but the next generation of consumers as well.



Year 11 2016 Wool4School winner Chanelle Davenport and her teacher Elizabeth Provians from Innisfail State College in Queensland.

It was very pleasing to see the 2016 winners coming from right across Australia, with both government and independent schools well represented, highlighting the wide attraction of the competition. **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.wool4school.com](http://www.wool4school.com)



An extract from Chanelle's winning entry in the 2016 competition. Students were asked to design an outfit for an Australian sports team, which also reflected the Aussie team spirit. For Chanelle, a tennis outfit proved a **winner in the Year 11 category**.

## WOOL4SCHOOL 2017 GETS MUSICAL

Registrations are now open for the 2017 competition. Students are asked to design an outfit for their favourite musician to wear on stage during a performance. The outfit, complete with wool accessory, should be made from at least 80 per cent Australian Merino wool.

### HOW TO GET INVOLVED

#### Woolgrowers and parents

Contact your local high school and encourage them to get involved in the Wool4School program. Information for schools and teachers is available at [www.wool4school.com](http://www.wool4school.com).

#### Year 7-12 teachers

Simply register your school and year groups at [www.wool4school.com](http://www.wool4school.com) to receive a free Merino wool fabric pack and resource kit for the classroom.

#### Year 7-12 students

Learn more about the exciting competition at [www.wool4school.com](http://www.wool4school.com) and talk to your teacher about getting involved.

#### Key dates

Registrations and submissions open: 30 November 2016  
Registrations close: 31 May 2017  
Submissions close: 26 July 2017



The four Hong Kong student fashion award winners watching the action in a Flinders Range shearing shed at Boudaglen.

# BROADENING HORIZONS

HONG KONG STUDENTS DISCOVER ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES OF WOOL

**Four emerging fashion designers from Hong Kong** visited Australia in August to learn first-hand about the wool production process and be inspired to continue using Merino wool in their designs.

A delegation of award-winning young fashion designers from Hong Kong's leading tertiary organisations recently visited Australia to learn about the origins of Australian Merino wool and experience the Australian wool industry first-hand.

Two students from Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HKPU) and two from the Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI) recently won fashion awards, with the ultimate prize of journeying to Australia to encourage the graduate students to continue to use wool in their designs as they progress through their careers. The students were all recipients of awards from various fashion competitions at their design college, with awards sponsored by both AWI and the Flinders Merino woolgrowing group of South Australia.

AWI sponsors these fashion design awards to promote the benefits of Australian Merino wool to the next generation in a region crucial to global textiles and fashion. As one of the world's major knitwear exporters, Hong Kong is the gateway for southern and eastern Chinese wool processors and manufacturers,

as well as a global hub for sourcing wool garments for major international brands.

This is the eighth year AWI has welcomed a group of Hong Kong designers to experience Australia's wool industry from farm to fashion.

While in Melbourne, the students visited RMIT to meet with Australian fashion students, the Council of Textile and Fashion's Textile & Fashion Hub, the National Wool Museum, AWTA and a wool auction before heading to South Australia for a five-day farm stay at 'Glenroy Estate', which is part of the Flinders Merino group. This unique experience – so different to their lives in Hong Kong – allowed the students to develop a greater appreciation for the farm to fashion journey and draw inspiration from the natural and beautiful environment where Australian Merino sheep are reared. They even got to try their hand at shearing. The group also visited Michell Wool and Adelaide TAFE.

Winner of the Flinders Merino Award, Lion Sze Tsz Ki from HKPU (who was presented with the award in Hong Kong by Young

Farming Champion Chloe Dutschke – see the September edition of *Beyond the Bale*) said:

"It is my pleasure to receive this award that provides an opportunity to visit Australia. This trip gave me the chance to learn the processes before forming a wool fabric. We learned the whole procedure of making wool material, from sheep through to the final design. This trip inspired me to try different possibilities of wool to apply on different designs."

Winners of the Best Use of Australian Merino Awards – Gloria Ling Wing Nga (HKPU), Nick Choy Chun Lok and Gwendelyn Ho Wing Choi (both HKDI) – all agreed the trip was an experience of a lifetime.

"This trip provided me with lots of opportunities from farm to fashion to learn more about the Australian Merino wool industry," said Gloria Ling Wing Nga. "I really enjoyed living on the farm as this broadened my horizons of being a city girl, especially since we had the chance to shear a sheep. In addition, visiting a wool lab, wool auction and different fashion institutes allowed us to communicate and share information to enrich our knowledge." **B**

# CREATING CLOTHING FOR ALL ABILITIES

When occupational therapists, engineers and designers came together for a special design project, they created new ways of working with wool to help those with disabilities.



Designer Jeongsu Lee creating a pattern for the SUITable prototype at the Open Style Lab's facilities in Boston, USA.



The SUITable jacket, made from 100% Merino wool, was designed for the special needs of people with disabilities.

A group of students in the USA are changing the way we think about fashion. Designing innovative and adaptive clothing for consumers with disabilities, the Open Style Lab program promotes the idea of universal and inclusive design.

They are creating new products tailor made to specific client's needs and making style accessible to people of all abilities, through innovative design, research projects and exhibitions.

For the past two years AWI has provided support to Open Style Lab's ten-week program held at MIT International Design Center in Boston for designers, engineers and occupational therapists. By offering wool workshops and technical advice, as well as an introduction to Chinese manufacturer Nanshan who supplied fabric, AWI was able to assist in the creation of SUITable, an adaptive sportscoat that is designed to be adjustable for continuous thermal comfort. The wool jacket features front flaps that easily open and close for added ventilation. There are also hidden pockets for convenience and accessibility.

SUITable was made in response to the needs of Jim Wice, the Director of Disability Services at Wellesley College in Massachusetts. A spinal cord injury has affected Jim's ability to move and feel below his chest.

The jacket embraces the natural properties of Merino wool, such as temperature regulation and breathability.

This year's team – comprising occupational therapist Amy Fleischer (Tufts University), engineer Logan Sweet (Olin College of Engineering), and designers Jeongsu Lee and Searom Jung (Samsung Art & Design Institute, South Korea), in collaboration with Mr Wice – developed the product, using a temperature and humidity sensor to measure how well various laser-cut patterns retained heat and moisture so as to achieve the most efficient result.

"Open Style Lab has been conscientious of sustainability efforts and has strived to use natural fabrics when and if possible," explains Open Style Lab Executive Director Grace Jun. "Merino wool is among the highest quality of natural wool with softness that provides comfort. Comfort is a key theme that has frequently come across in our research and case studies over the past two years. AWI has really helped our fellows and clients understand the possibilities and potential of wool, in particularly Merino."

SUITable co-creator Amy Fleischer said Mr Wice has specific thermal comfort and adjustability needs secondary to a spinal cord injury. "We feel that clothing for individuals like him ought to reflect more than the medical needs of this community," Ms Fleischer said. "SUITable's increased adjustability allows our client to be more comfortable in a variety of settings and to continue living his life in style. Technical innovations in wool manufacturing have helped us to create a jacket that addresses

his needs and promotes a look that is personally satisfying.

"As a fibre enthusiast (knitter), I have a strong affinity for working with wool. AWI's presentation was very enlightening and it provided factual reasons to support my preference for natural fibres such as wool. AWI introduced wool as a performance fibre and explained its properties and benefits, such as the ability to manage moisture and help control temperature. These qualities stood out to our team as being highly relevant to the problems we aimed to solve with our garment. The MerinoPerform WP fabric was especially exciting for all of its technical innovations, as well as its clean surface, which provided the polished, professional look our client wanted."

Open Style Lab's success has recently gathered the attention of The White House, where students were invited to take part in an inclusive fashion show. Three years and 60 solutions later, the program is now expanding into New York where it plans to grow inclusive design education and research, particularly at Parsons School of Design, where it currently offers an accredited course. Ms Jun also says they are currently in talks with fashion companies and manufacturers in New York City to commercialise their innovative products. **B**

MORE INFORMATION  
[www.openstylelab.com](http://www.openstylelab.com)



# DEBUNKING THE MYTH OF WOOL ALLERGY

A high-powered group of medical professionals from across the world have reviewed research papers published during the past 100 years to critically assess scientific studies claiming wool causes allergy. **This new analysis found no evidence that wool is an allergen**, and if a fabric does cause any sensations of itch and prickle on the skin then it is because of the large diameter of the fibres and not due to the fibre type being wool.

**W**ith support from AWI, two papers debunking the myth of wool allergy have been prepared and recently submitted for publication in high ranking international and Australian journals

The papers are a result of AWI strategy to challenge a misconception amongst some people that wool is an allergen, and demonstrate that suitably selected superfine Merino products are healthy for the skin, especially for those with the most sensitive skin.

The research papers were undertaken under AWI's 'Fibre Advocacy' program that aims to build and extend the scientific basis for wool's wellness credentials, including support the establishment of high value next-to-skin product categories associated with positive health outcomes for consumers.

According to a global consumer survey commissioned by AWI, currently 10% of all the people who won't consider buying a wool garment believe they are allergic

to wool. Similarly, although most of the medical community accept that wool is not an allergen, avoidance of wool garments is frequently recommended by medical professionals, particularly to patients with atopic dermatitis (eczema).

Until now, the "evidence" behind beliefs that wool is an allergen had not been critically appraised, nor had it been examined in the light of modern wool garment production practices.

Therefore, AWI brought together a multidisciplinary collaboration of allergists, immunologists and dermatologists who are internationally recognised in the fields of eczema and contact dermatitis, and a leading wool textile chemist, to re-examine the issues. Their task was to review the historical literature during the past 100 years and critically assess the validity of those claiming wool is an allergen.

This high-powered group of professionals from across the world concluded that the

evidence to date fails to support the notion that wool is an allergen. The historical papers that implicate wool as the cause of allergic reactions on the skin have important limitations that counter their findings. In fact, studies with fewer limitations and stronger 'skin prick testing' methodology demonstrate no evidence of allergy to wool.

Importantly, it was found that any skin irritation caused by garments is due to the incidence of coarse fibres protruding from the fabric (ie diameters >30 micron) and that this cause is independent of fibre type. Skin irritation can just as readily be caused by coarse synthetic fibres as by coarse wool fibres.

Furthermore, recent studies suggest that contemporary superfine or ultrafine Merino wool with their reduced fibre diameters do not provoke itch, are well tolerated and in fact benefit eczema management – see the article 'Superfine Merino good for skin health' in the September 2016 edition of *Beyond the Bale*.

It was also found that known allergens applied during textile processing are minimally present in wool garments today given current industry practices and are unlikely to lead to allergic reactions.

"This is the first ever review to critically examine recent and historical claims that wool can cause an allergic reaction, and to address the limitations of many of the earlier papers that have been cited as evidence for the existence of wool allergy," said AWI Program Manager of Fibre Advocacy and Eco Credentials, Angus Ireland.

"These limitations include incomplete and inconsistent skin prick or patch testing methodology, and allergy testing with wool garments of coarser fibre diameters and with higher levels of lanolin, additives and dyes than wool garments found today.

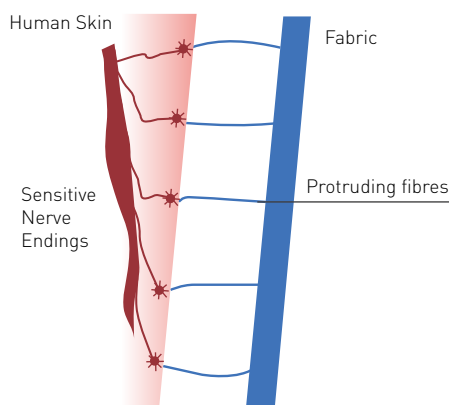
"By contrast, recent papers with more robust methodology challenge the earlier reports of hypersensitivity to wool. They concluded that the evidence to date fails to support the notion that wool is an allergen, or that wool fibre causes allergic reactions."

The new appraisal introduces novel and important insights, unreferenced to date in medical literature, regarding textile related physiology and modern fibre specification and processing.

"This latest review is of high relevance to allergists, dermatologists and physicians – and of course consumers. The ultimate aim is that this research will lead to increased consumer demand for Australian Merino wool.

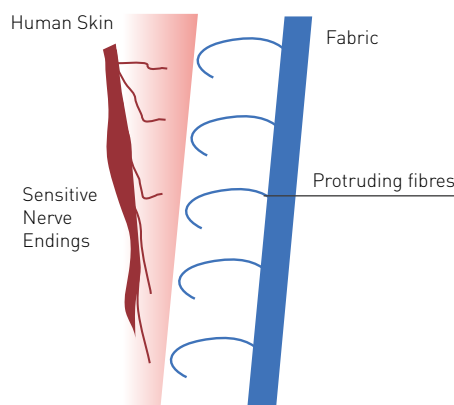
"Collecting the evidence that wool is not an allergen is the first step in the process of overcoming the misconception that it is an allergen. A communications and marketing plan is being prepared to promote the outcome of this study in conjunction with the positive studies showing wool to be beneficial in the treatment of eczema."

## COARSE FIBRES



Coarse fibres have less tendency to bend, causing skin irritation.

## SUPERFINE/ULTRAFINE MERINO FIBRES



Superfine/ultrafine Merino fibres bend easily, causing minimal or no skin irritation.

# NEW WOOL MAGAZINE

SHOWCASES AUSTRALIAN MERINO WOOL



**WOOL** is a new quarterly magazine published by The Woolmark Company, which promotes the inspiring benefits and qualities of Merino wool to a consumer audience in a way that is accessible, engaging and educational.

Through its inspiring shoots, interviews, profiles, videos and practical guides, the quarterly *WOOL* magazine showcases Merino wool to consumers in a high-end fashion and lifestyle context.

First published in April 2016 by AWI's subsidiary, The Woolmark Company, *WOOL* magazine positions Australian Merino wool as a premium fibre in luxury fashion, performance sportswear and interior design.

"We show readers the benefits of Merino wool through beautiful, well-made products and a mix of well-known and emerging brands – with the aim to increase demand for the fibre in a truly authentic way," said *WOOL* magazine editor Mitchell Oakley Smith.

"The Woolmark Company seeks to build demand for Australian Merino wool in the core categories of menswear, such as tailoring, and womenswear by marketing it as a premium ingredient in luxury fashion. In the magazine, we promote the world's leading and best emerging designers, to educate customers about the benefits of Merino wool and to help influence their end-purchase.

"The magazine also regularly includes sports content, profiling major brands working with wool in this category, to better educate consumers on the benefits of Merino wool as a technical fibre that meets their demand for comfort and performance.

"Interior designers, textile artists and architects who are increasingly embracing Merino wool for the home – from rugs and carpets to bedding and artworks – are also showcased in each issue of the magazine."

## WIDE READERSHIP

*WOOL* magazine embraces innovation in The Woolmark Company's digital, print and social media platforms.

The print edition of *WOOL* is sent to The Woolmark Company's extensive global database of partners, including targeted media, International Woolmark Prize alumni, Woolmark licensees and trade. It aims to inspire licensees and potential partners to increase their use of Merino wool, and educate them on the inherent possibilities of the natural fibre and of partnering with The Woolmark Company in its global marketing efforts.

The magazine also harnesses the engagement and reach of The Woolmark Company's extensive social media platforms, connecting with an educated, fashion savvy and socially responsible consumer audience around the world. Through the company's various social media channels, the magazine reaches 2.8 million people and generates more than 50 million impressions.

The magazine is additionally distributed to The Woolmark Company's monthly *WOOL*

## OTHER AWI DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS AVAILABLE TO CONSUMERS AND TRADE



### WEBSITES

[www.woolmark.com](http://www.woolmark.com)  
(for a trade audience)

[www.merino.com](http://www.merino.com)  
(for a consumer and  
fashion audience)



### VIDEO

[youtube.com/  
thewoolmarkcompany](https://youtube.com/thewoolmarkcompany)



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### PERISCOPE

[@woolmark](https://periscope.com/@woolmark)



### SNAPCHAT

[woolmarkcompany](https://www.snapchat.com/add/woolmarkcompany)

e-newsletter database of more than 50,000 subscribers.

Published in English, Simplified Chinese, Japanese and Korean, *WOOL* magazine's reach is geographically diverse, amplifying its messaging to a global audience. The top countries in which it is read include India, the USA, Italy, United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, China, New Zealand and Hong Kong.

"*WOOL* magazine has garnered extremely positive industry and reader feedback for its educational and inspirational messaging. Many brands featured in the magazine have shared imagery on their own social media platforms, amplifying our message to an incredibly large and engaged audience," Mitchell adds. **B**

### MORE INFORMATION

View the magazine online at  
<http://magazine.merino.com>.

Subscribe to new editions at  
[www.merino.com/wool-subscribe](http://www.merino.com/wool-subscribe)



AWI LAUNCHES  
NEW PODCAST  
FOR WOOLGROWERS:


# THE YARN

**T**he Yarn is AWI's new free podcast. In addition to regular communications such as the quarterly *Beyond the Bale* magazine, monthly e-newsletter, regular social media and media releases, The Yarn is a fortnightly audio report from across the wool research, development and marketing body.

Designed to be listened to on a smartphone for people on the go, The Yarn has been created as a regular report for those who AWI principally works for: Australian woolgrowers.

With staff and networks around Australia and offices in various key consumer markets around the world, AWI staff report from across the company's broad scope. From the paddocks and shearing sheds on Australian farms to wool processing facilities, design studios and catwalks in key markets around the world.

The development of The Yarn is in line with AWI's new digital communication strategy that uses new low cost in-house ways to report directly to those AWI works for.

If you have a question you would like to raise as part of the AWI podcast please email AWI Corporate Communications Manager Marius Cuming: [marius.cuming@wool.com](mailto:marius.cuming@wool.com) 

#### MORE INFORMATION

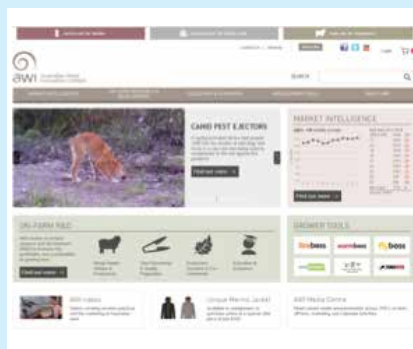
Episodes of The Yarn are now available to download or subscribe to at the iTunes Store or at [www.wool.com/podcast](http://www.wool.com/podcast)

# AWI DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS AVAILABLE TO WOOLGROWERS

## AWI WEBSITE WOOL.COM

Wool.com is designed specifically for woolgrowers seeking information on lifting profitability. The site provides access to AWI publications and reports together with information of where woolgrower levies are invested. Wool.com complements AWI's other two main websites: Woolmark.com website for a trade audience, and the consumer-focused Merino.com website.

Access the website at [www.wool.com](http://www.wool.com)



## ONLINE BEYOND THE BALE AND E-NEWSLETTER

An interactive online edition of the *Beyond the Bale* magazine provides readers with access to AWI digital content including pop-up videos and image galleries, hyperlinks to other digital content, and search and print features.

An archive of editions back to December 2006 are available from the site.

Access the online edition at <http://beyondthebale.wool.com>



## AWI MONTHLY WOOLGROWER E-NEWSLETTER



The AWI Market Intelligence monthly report is included with AWI's monthly woolgrower e-newsletter.

The AWI e-newsletter is emailed to woolgrowers each month. It points to highlights of the latest information and news released by AWI. It also includes an AWI Market Intelligence report that provides insights into economic, finance and trade issues affecting global demand for wool, and what this means for the Australian wool industry.

Subscribe at [www.wool.com/subscribe](http://www.wool.com/subscribe)

## WOOL MARKET WEEKLY REPORT



This report provides weekly commentary on the wool auction market from AWI trade specialists.

Subscribe at [www.wool.com/subscribe](http://www.wool.com/subscribe) or view at [www.wool.com/market-intelligence](http://www.wool.com/market-intelligence)

## THE BROADER VIEW



This annual 8-page publication is specifically for non-Merino woolgrowers. Access it at [www.wool.com/publications](http://www.wool.com/publications)

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Keep up to date with AWI's Twitter and YouTube channels:



[twitter.com/woolinnovation](https://twitter.com/woolinnovation)



[youtube.com/AWIWoolProduction](https://youtube.com/AWIWoolProduction)



# OVER THE MOON AT MOONAH

Fiona and Darren Sanders with their flock of Merinos feeding on lucerne at Keith in South Australia.

After completing a **Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM)** course, South Australian woolgrowers **Darren and Fiona Sanders** increased their expectations for their flock of Merino ewes and subsequently **lifted their marking percentages** with outstanding results.

**F**or woolgrowers Darren and Fiona Sanders of 'Moonah' near Keith in the south-east of South Australia, the main profit driver of any grazing business is production per hectare. To this end they have a focus on their flock's reproduction rates and wool cut.

"We have managed to manipulate our flock to deliver a high level of fecundity and lamb survival, while producing a respectable weight of wool," Darren said. "The bottom line is if you provide your ewes with their requirements, you will receive a sound return on investment. The same applies to weaners."

The Sanders moved to Keith in 1996 after 13 years in the dairy industry. They were given an opportunity by Darren's parents to manage their own property and began business together in 2000 purchasing their first flock of Merino ewes and growing cereals.

Sixteen years later, they today run a self-replacing Merino flock at their 852ha property. This year they will join 1,450 ewes, which are 19.5 micron plain bodied Merino ewes. Approximately 25-30% will be joined to White Suffolk rams for prime lambs. They are also trading Merino wethers.

## APPLYING LIFETIME EWE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Darren and Fiona participated in a Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) course with the Keith group in 2014 and 2015, facilitated by farm consultant Ken Solly. The LTEM course, supported by AWI, provides materials and develops skills to help sheep producers improve animal nutrition, lambing percentages and weaning rates.

Darren says the best aspect of LTEM was learning the nutritional requirements of ewes through the reproduction cycle, understanding how this is influenced by pregnancy status (multiples/singles) and determining Feed On Offer (FOO) and potential supplementary requirements.

"Since being involved with our LTEM group with Ken Solly we have increased marking by 23% to 131.5% ewes mated. This includes all maidens and an AI program involving 160 ewes, which represents 14% of last year's overall flock," Darren said.

"We were able to achieve this in two years by paying particular attention to the ewes' needs and not allowing them to fall below condition score 3.

"Ewe status, condition scoring and FOO assessment is an integral part of ewe management. It allows us to predict what ewe requirements will be, assess what is on offer in the paddock and ensure we supplementary feed if necessary to fulfil their requirements.

"Condition scoring gives us the ability to separate ewes if necessary. Only those that require supplementary feed based on their reproduction status and condition score receive grain. This also ensures supplementary feed costs are reduced to optimal levels."

The Sanders say they have adopted at 'Moonah' much of the knowledge they acquired through LTEM, and lists the following aspects in particular:

- Pasture assessment (FOO) and supplementary feeds to manage ewe requirements

- Ewe nutrition at critical periods throughout the reproduction cycle
- Maintaining a minimum condition score for improved all year-round performance
- Managing twin bearing ewes differently to single bearing ewes
- Measuring marking and weaning percentages against potential foetuses
- The versatility of grain as a supplement.

## SELECTION STRATEGY

Fiona says their business's breeding focus is based around both lambs weaned and wool production.

"Increasing our marking and weaning percentages allows us to increase our selection pressure for our replacements, ensuring the most productive genetics are retained. It also increases our surplus stock sales, improving our bottom line," she said.

"For a long period of time, non-breeders have been discarded from the flock regardless of their wool production on the basis of 'one strike and you're out', with the exception of maidens, but this year the same will apply to maidens.

"We have introduced EID technology in an effort to determine a nucleus mob of high performing ewes to breed replacement flock rams. We utilise ASBVs to select sires for our AI program."

Darren says to get real value out of scanning costs you must scan for multiples.

"They have 14% greater requirement at day 120 pregnancy, 16% increase at lambing and a 29% increase at peak lactation; if you get it right they'll give you a significant increase in production," he said.

"Conversely if you're feeding singles to multiple requirements you're blowing dough. It's a no brainer!"

## OTHER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

For the past ten years, the Sanders have aimed to maximise their Merino production around their own lucerne seed enterprise. Their property now comprises 572ha of lucerne based pasture for grazing, plus 280ha irrigated for lucerne seed. A small area (80ha) is sown annually to barley as part of their pasture renovation program.

"The 2005-06 droughts caused havoc and a steep learning curve – we drought-lotted 2,000 ewes for two summers. During this time we leased a neighbouring property and irrigated lucerne for seed," Darren said.

"This experience gave us an insight into the viability of lucerne seed and we began searching for an irrigation block, purchasing our initial property at Coombe in 2009 then subsequently the neighbour's property in 2014, selling the original farms to do so."

Shearing at 'Moonah' is undertaken every six months. Fiona says this has been proven to be cost effective and has significant

management benefits providing staple length is 60-65mm minimum.

"There are reduced crutching costs, higher tensile strength, increased fleece wool production and reduced skirtings, improved ewe condition scores, plus we get to market our wool twice a year," she said.

"Interestingly, there is anecdotal evidence that twice a year shearing has also contributed to increased conception rates and marking percentages, because commencing six monthly shearing coincided with increases in marking percentages."

Utilising Faecal Egg Count's (FECs) the Sanders only drench their sheep when there is a genuine need.

"Scouring can occur from multiple causes – often it's not worms," Darren said. "By monitoring FECs we now only drench once a year, pre-lambing. We have managed to develop a worm resilient flock this way."

A fox baiting program is carried out every year in conjunction with an NRM facilitated producer group. Baiting throughout the district occurs simultaneously and has proven to be very successful. **E**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
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# LIFETIME EWE MANAGEMENT TRAINING

**L**ifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) is a nationally accredited, one-year course run by RIST (Rural Industries Skill Training) and supported by AWI.

LTEM training provides hands-on on-farm training for small groups of producers (5-6), under the guidance of a professional trainer, in the management and nutrition of breeding ewes to maximise reproduction efficiency and progeny performance.

Each participant monitors a mob of their own ewes to demonstrate the effects of nutrition and management in their environment.

LTEM is structured to maximise the retention of knowledge, development of skills and practice change across a number of key areas, including:

- Weaning and preparing ewes for next year's joining
- Setting up for joining: when and what to feed ewes to optimise ewe condition
- Linking ewe condition at joining with lambing potential
- Mid-pregnancy: managing nutrition for single and twin lamb survival
- Late pregnancy: optimising lamb survival and the future wool production of progeny
- Economic analysis of different feeding strategies.

To date more than 2,700 sheep producers across Australia, representing about a quarter of the national ewe flock have participated in LTEM, since the program began in 2006. In the 2015/16 financial year, 400 producers

funded by the most recent AWI contract graduated from LTEM. In 2016/17, RIST and AWI will support more than 500 woolgrowers to undertake the program.

On-going evaluation of group members continues to show significant benefits to participants through improving weaning rates and reducing ewe mortality. Producers that graduated from LTEM in 2015/16 increased the number of lambs weaned by about 6% (102% before LTEM to 108% after LTEM) and reduced ewe mortality by 0.8% (3.4% pre-LTEM to 2.6% post LTEM). **E**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
For information on the LTEM course, contact **Rural Industries Skill Training (RIST)** on 03 5573 0943 or visit [www.rist.com.au](http://www.rist.com.au)

# GET MOTIVATED AND MAKE CHANGE

Consultant **Nathan Scott** says sheep producers should have a clear written down plan on how they intend to make positive changes to their businesses and, importantly, put time frames around completing tasks.

**T**he Australian sheep and wool industry is in a very exciting place at the moment. From auto-drafting based on electronic identification tags to monitoring sheep using drones, there are lots of new technologies coming available that will influence how producers run their businesses. Furthermore, there is more producer engagement now than there has ever been.”

So says consultant Nathan Scott of Achieve Ag Solutions in Geelong who gave an inspiring and entertaining presentation at this year's BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB conference on ways producers can get motivated to make a real difference to their business. BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB is AWI's producer network in Victoria.

“We are nowhere near what is physiologically and biologically possible with sheep yet, so there will be plenty more opportunities for the sheep industry,” he said. “But the responsibility for adoption and management – whether it's improving conception rates or easier sheep handling – sits with us, producers. It's our industry, it's our future, we shouldn't blame others.

“People who say farmers can't change are wrong! Farmers are very interested in opportunities and are wanting to change. But as an industry we've got to get better at how we adopt new technologies and

concepts. It's important that people equip themselves with the right tools so they can implement change quickly, efficiently and as confidently as they can, without adding more risk to their business.”

Nathan advised producers to concentrate on aspects of their business that can largely be brought under their control.

“There are various things that will always sit outside our control and be a concern for us, such as weather and prices. Our aim should be to bring under our control and influence as many things as we can, such as genetics, pastures, nutrition, labour, animal welfare and pests.”

## MAKING TASKS TIME-BOUND

Nathan says producers should have a clear plan of what they want to implement within their business.

“However, the problem is that if you simply put together a high level 'to-do list' of say half a dozen things that you want to improve – such as increase lamb survival or drought proof your farm – each of those tasks are very broad, which most likely will lead to you procrastinating.

“You could break down each of the broad tasks into more detailed tasks – tasks that you can actually achieve – but then the problem is that your list grows dauntingly large, and because

of the 'paradox of choice' you are unlikely to make any decision on which task to do.

“So I recommend to start using a calendar, such as a wall chart. It must be very visible, and in a place where you will look at it regularly. Put time frames around each of the detailed tasks, tie tasks to an end point. If you are a procrastinator, making tasks time-bound will help make things happen.

“When you complete a task and cross things off the calendar, you'll get a hit of the feel-good chemical dopamine in the brain, which drives motivation to do the next task and so on.”

## THE RIGHT MINDSET

Nathan says success is largely governed by optimism, and the ability to see stress as a challenge rather than a threat.

“Making change is about having the right mindset to achieve things and applying yourself; it's not about the level of IQ.

“Don't aspire to be average, aspire to be the best. Averages can be deceptive – remember the warning about the man who drowned crossing a stream with an average depth of six inches!” **B**

### MORE INFORMATION

Nathan's presentation is available to view for free via the BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB website [www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/bestwool-bestlamb](http://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/bestwool-bestlamb)

## SHEEP ELECTRONIC IDENTIFICATION

**A**ccording to sheep specialist Nathan Scott of Achieve Ag Solutions, new technologies such as electronic identification (EID) tags have the capacity to make managing sheep easier and more profitable.

“In most commercial sheep enterprises, data collection and animal management have traditionally occurred on a mob by mob basis. However through the use of Radio Frequency Identification tags, animals can be monitored and managed individually throughout their life,” Nathan says.

“The use of individual animal management is designed to maximise returns from the most productive animals within the flock, whilst minimising the cost incurred from the least productive.”

For wool producers, Nathan says EID makes the collection of individual fleece data such as micron and fleece weight more accurate and more efficient. Most importantly, it makes the use of this data for animal selection and culling significantly easier.

“You can rank your flock on fleece value, cull the worst performers, and capitalise on the most profitable sheep. Not only that, but you can combine this information with reproductive performance to discover the animals delivering real profitability to your business. No more passengers!”

The most basic EID systems can help producers in the counting and recording of stock when they are handled, together with any treatments that they may receive.



**Nathan Scott** demonstrating the use of electronic ear tags at a **Central Murray BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Group event**. Nathan is reading the tag reader to find out the lambing history of a ewe – this ewe had a history of 2,2,2,2 (twins every year), whereas the next ewe read 1,1,1,0 (singles every year, then did not raise a lamb). *PHOTO:* Caroline Ellis Photography.

“While EID makes all the necessary data collection more accurate, more labour efficient, easier, and therefore more likely to occur, it isn't a silver bullet or a golden goose; it is simply another tool to use within your management system,” Nathan points out. **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.achieveag.com.au](http://www.achieveag.com.au)

# SHEEP HANDLING SUCCESS

AWI's producer network in Queensland, **Leading Sheep**, has undertaken workshops to promote the latest sheep handling innovations, to help producers take advantage of labour saving opportunities and increase profits within their sheep business.

**S**heep producers in Queensland have attended 'Sheep Handling Made Easy' workshops to get ideas on ways to improve on-farm infrastructure and management practices within their sheep businesses.

Run by the AWI state network Leading Sheep, the events aimed to increase sheep producers' knowledge and understanding of how to reduce labour and lift profits.

Six events were held – at Longreach, Augathella, Bollon, Muttaborra, Surat and Clifton – with 233 participants, including 108 businesses, 62 females and 41 people less than 40 years of age.

There was a range of sheep handling equipment on display and working demonstrations were a feature. Products featured included the Clipex Sheep Handler, Prattley 3-Way Auto Drafter, Peak Hill Immobiliser, Rod Holland stock lift,

Arrow Farmquip V-Express Sheep Handler and Arrow Farmquip Sheep and Goat handler.

The workshops were a great opportunity for producers to see how the equipment works and how it can make sheep handling/drafting easier, ask questions of producers who are currently using them, and get further details and costs from the company representatives.

Producers learnt how this equipment can be integrated into their sheep business, and can help with such practices as drenching, drafting, vaccinating and crutching.

An evaluation of attendees found that the days were rated 8.5 out of 10 for satisfaction and 100% of attendees would recommend it to others. Ninety-six per cent said that they learnt something new and 73% indicated an intention to make



A demonstration of the Clipex Sheep Handler at Bollon.

a change on their property, with 35% very likely to make this change.

Participants at these events represented 880,000 hectares of land, 316,000 sheep and 31,000 cattle.

Some of the feedback from the day included:

- "I am a young producer looking at establishing my own grazing business so am very interested in new technology and ideas that may help my future business."
- "Thanks for allowing time for us to chat to other producers knowledge sharing."
- "It was great to see some machines working sheep."
- "It was very well organised, very informative and had a great range of representatives and displays."

## AWI STATE NETWORKS

AWI state networks provide opportunities for producers to get involved in educational and practical programs that focus on making positive changes to production and management practices.

The networks are fundamental to the spread of new ideas, continuing education and the adoption of best practice.

Networks are present in each wool growing state and all woolgrowers are encouraged to get involved.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED, CONTACT THE COORDINATOR IN YOUR STATE:

AWI GROWER NETWORK	COORDINATOR	PHONE	EMAIL
Pastoral Profit (national)	Pene Keynes	08 8841 4500	pastoralprofit@ruraldirections.com
Sheep Connect NSW	Megan Rogers	0427 459 891	admin@sheepconnectnsw.com.au
BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB (Vic)	Lyndon Kubeil	03 5761 1649	lyndon.kubeil@ecodev.vic.gov.au
Sheep Connect SA	Ian McFarland	0437 659 353	ian.mcfarland@sa.gov.au
The Sheep's Back (WA)	Andrew Ritchie	08 9736 1055	andrew@iconag.com.au
Leading Sheep (Qld)	Nicole Sallur	07 4654 4220	nicole.sallur@daf.qld.gov.au
Sheep Connect Tasmania	James Tyson	0409 006 774	james.tyson@utas.edu.au

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# COORDINATION: THE VITAL STEP IN WILD DOG CONTROL

## FAST FACTS

- Sheep producers around Wongwibinda, 60km north-east of Armidale on the Northern Tablelands of NSW, have got on the front foot to reduce the devastating number of wild dog attacks on their flocks.
- With the assistance of an AWI-funded wild dog facilitator, the producers are now collaborating effectively with private and public land managers and stakeholders.
- Combatting wild dogs along this eastern fringe on the Tablelands is important not only for the sheep producers here on the escarpment, but also to stop wild dogs moving further west and into sheep producing areas where the pests are currently not as established.

For more than a century, the area east of Armidale supported an extensive sheep and wool industry. Wild dogs were historically managed extremely effectively through a combination of aerial baiting at rates of 40 baits per km, trapping by wild dog controllers and the erection of wild dog netting fences.

However during the past 15 years, wild dog impacts have increased due to range of factors. Changes in land use from sheep to cattle saw a break down in wild dog control programs and reduced maintenance of wild dog barrier fences on the edge of the public/private land interface, thus allowing wild dogs to move into areas where they were once absent.

This coincided with changes in wild dog management on public estate which included a reduction in the aerial bait rate to 10 baits per km on the escarpment – a policy invoked across all public estate in NSW following concerns about impacts of aerial baiting on quoll populations. These changes put significant pressure on remaining sheep producers in the area as wild dog predation and stock attacks reached historically high levels, particularly in the Wongwibinda area.

“We saw a lot more dogs,” says Wongwibinda Wild Dog Control Association Chair, James Robertson. “During the past few years I’ve lost possibly 1,500 sheep and lambs, whereas 15 years ago, we hardly ever saw a dog.

“Wild dogs made sheep production almost unviable in parts of the Northern Tablelands, with even reports of losses of calves. This has enormous flow on effects to the local economies with reduced employment and money.

“As properties go out of sheep and stop undertaking control, there is also the real danger of wild dogs pushing further west and impacting on the next sheep property there.”

Gaps in the delivery of aerial baiting was a great concern to landholders in the region, with landholders worried that these areas were a source of wild dogs that moved onto adjoining private lands. Wild dogs were breeding and moving throughout the entire landscape, on both private and public land.

Aside from the financial losses caused by wild dog predation, there is also a major impact on the emotional health of those farmers affected by wild dogs, which is hard to measure. Dealing with animals’ extreme injuries, the need to euthanase animals, and never knowing what you may find next time you enter a paddock is a huge burden to carry and takes an enormous toll on individuals.

## TURNING A CORNER

This dreadful situation is beginning to change, following the signing and implementation of three Wild Dog Management Plans in March this year by the Wongwibinda Wild Dog Control Association (WDCA), Chandler River WDCA and Jeogla WDCA. Each of these three WDCAs have a membership of public and private land managers.

For the first time all three wild dog groups autumn baited at the same time in May this year, which had been a major issue in the past. Furthermore, a substantial increase in baiting was undertaken across all land tenures – in National Parks and State Forests, as well as private land.

With much of the region including steep and forested country with limited road access, broad scale aerial baiting coordinated by LLS was undertaken. A new AWI-funded wild dog facilitator provided assistance to revise many of the historical aerial baiting runs, based on current wild dog activity and impacts, including additional runs being delivered in rough country in private ownership. With cooperation from NPWS, additional strategic

aerial and ground baiting lines were added to some key areas of adjoining public estate. The delivery of a strategic and coordinated baiting program consisting of targeted aerial and ground baiting across private and public estate has started to show dividends with a reduction in wild dog sightings and attacks reported by landholders in the regions.

All stakeholders also actively participated in the annual autumn ground baiting program on more accessible country, in conjunction with the aerial baiting, with regular checking and replacing of baits, and continuation of baiting until bait take declined.

As well as these coordinated strategic initiatives, the new Wild Dog Management Plan also includes agreed responsibilities and procedures after reports of wild dog activity and/or predation, for example in relation to requests to the NPWS for the deployment of a professional wild dog controller for baiting and/or trapping on an affected property adjoining NPWS land.

Following the autumn baiting program a professional wild dog controller was employed, using AWI funding, to trap and bait any dogs that remained on private land and help bring the area back under control. Aerial baiting has been scientifically proven to remove more than 90% of dogs at rates of 40 baits per km. However, to be effective, integrated control using a range of additional methods is required to control any remaining dogs. NPWS also conducted proactive control on their estate at the same time to remove dogs which had evaded the aerial baiting program or had moved into the areas after the program was completed.

Northern Tablelands LLS Invasive Species Team Leader, Mark Tarrant, says the agreement by all stakeholders on the Wild Dog Management Plan was the “keystone” that had been missing from wild dog control activities in the region.

“Obtaining agreement on the Plan from all stakeholders has put wild dog control on the front foot again,” he said. “There has been a huge increase in participation and everyone is working to an agreed outcome. This should continue into the future, so it’s a big win.”

This sentiment is echoed by Janelle Brooks, the NPWS area manager for the Dorrigo Plateau during the development of the Plan.

“The finalisation of the Plan has meant there





A remote camera photo of wild dogs on private property around **Wongwibinda**. These wild dogs were subsequently trapped by a NPWS funded professional wild dog controller. PHOTO: NPWS

is an agreed, written-down process – on responsibilities, activities and how to access available funds. All stakeholders are following the Plan which means that wild dog control is being undertaken in a coordinated way across public and private land.”

There is still a lot more work to be undertaken in the area. However following implementation of the Wild Dog Management Plan and its subsequent results, there is now talk by a number of producers keen, but cautious, to increase sheep numbers within the area.

Proactive control will now be maintained at this level as per the agreed management plans by all stakeholders with an anticipated decline in dog numbers over the next three to five years.

“It has been very quiet on the dog front lately. With all stakeholders working together, we seem to have turned a corner which bodes well for the future,” James Robertson added.

## ROLE OF AN INDEPENDENT FACILITATOR

It has been a long and difficult road to get to this more positive situation.

Control efforts were hampered for several years by conflicting management approaches, and differing rationales for wild dog management, between landholders and public land managers. This had stalled the development and agreement of the Wongwibinda Wild Dog Management Plan.

In mid-2015, a wild dog facilitator funded by AWI, Dave Worsley, was appointed to assist woolgrowers and other key stakeholders in the north-east of NSW to work together to lessen the impact of livestock predation by wild dogs. One of his initial focuses was the Wongwibinda area.

Dave’s position is funded by AWI and managed by the Invasive Animals CRC in

partnership with AWI, NSW Department of Primary Industries, NSW Farmers and Northern Tablelands LLS. The position complements other AWI-funded wild dog coordinators operating in western NSW, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia, in addition to the National Wild Dog management facilitator Greg Mifsud.

Their role is to facilitate collaboration between landholders (in new or existing wild dog management groups) and with other key private and public stakeholders, locally and across shires. They also help coordinate on-ground wild dog control activities.

The coordinators use a ‘nil-tenure landscape level’ approach with local communities that highlights the benefit of focusing on the ‘common problem’ rather than attributing ownership of the dogs to particular land managers.

This approach encourages good working relationships between private and public land managers. More importantly, it can have a positive impact on the emotional well-being of farmers in the area who now feel that something positive is being done to address the constant financial and emotional impact of wild dogs.

## REACHING AGREEMENT

Collaboration between stakeholders – although vital – can be challenging without the external help provided by an independent facilitator, as was the case at Wongwibinda.

“One of my first tasks was to help move forward with development of the Wongwibinda Wild Dog Management Plan and seek all stakeholders’ agreement with the Plan. This involved negotiating difficult historical issues and driving negotiations,” Dave said.

“Aerial and ground baiting conducted effectively by all stakeholders has proven highly effective in other regions. But the results can be

disastrous where holes appear and there is a lack of consistency – the area north-east of Armidale was an example of such a situation.

“Baiting can only be effective when it is broad scale, coordinated, strategic, integrated and cooperative.

“Although there were many challenges with the negotiations, I made a commitment to get a result by the May 2016 aerial baiting program. This was my critical date as otherwise another 12 months would pass without relief for affected producers.

“As an independent facilitator I was able to provide an outside perspective and focus on the real issues and problem. Bringing in and using other independent experts such as the National Wild Dog Facilitator Greg Mifsud added credibility to the process.”

Dave’s lengthy discussions with many individual landholders ultimately gained their consents for aerial and ground baiting across an extensive area. With this swell of landholder commitment Dave continued negotiations with NPWS and LLS which eventually resulted in an offer, and subsequent agreement on the Wild Dog Management Plans by the three wild dog groups.

Janelle Brooks from NPWS says Dave put a lot of effort into talking face to face with all the separate stakeholders.

“The lack of wild dog control coordination prior to the Plan had been frustrating for all stakeholders and led to relationships being tested during significant wild dog activity,” she said. “However Dave was able to facilitate frank and open discussions due to his commitment to being a neutral facilitator. We wouldn’t be in this now positive position if it wasn’t for Dave.”

Mark Tarrant from Northern Tablelands LLS says Dave’s independence enabled the eventual finalisation of the Wild Dog Management Plan.

“Through Dave’s impartiality he managed to get commitment from public and private stakeholders,” he said. “With Dave as the facilitator I could also concentrate on my role as a stakeholder for LLS. Everyone has made very good progress.”

Dave has also helped secure funds for resources such as training days, monitoring cameras, Canid Pest Ejectors and reactive trapping.

He has also been working with North Coast LLS to coordinate the Hernani and Tyringham wild dog groups that now bait in conjunction with the Wongwibinda, Chandler River and Jeogla Wild Dog Control Associations around the national park area. In addition, he has helped establish an Ebor baiting group which has baited twice in conjunction with the other groups. E

### MORE INFORMATION

Dave Worsley can be contacted on 0429 638 078 and [dave.worsley@invasiveanimals.com](mailto:dave.worsley@invasiveanimals.com)

# AERIAL BAITING HITS THE MARK

An aerial wild dog baiting program, part funded by AWI, was once again conducted this year in the **pastoral sheep zone south of the dog fence in northern South Australia**, complementing existing ground baiting to target wild dogs threatening sheep production.

**“E**specially since the aerial wild dog baiting program, the lack of evidence of dog activity is clearly a good sign of how effective and crucial this program really is in the joint effort of controlling the wild dog population.”

Such was the generally very positive feedback from landholders involved in this year's aerial baiting program in South Australia, which strongly reinforced the value of the investment.

This particular landholder continued: “The program is obviously excellent and must continue in our opinion. The running of this property has become a simpler task and more time can be spent on productive land management as opposed to chasing the elusive wild dogs that pop their head up from time to time.”

The aerial baiting was undertaken for 10 days during April, following a successful trial in autumn 2012 and further programs in the autumns of 2013 to 2015.

**“The aerial baiting program is an outstanding initiative by AWI and all running it. This is one of the reasons sheep production is able to continue to thrive in South Australia. The importance cannot be measured accurately but coupled with ‘Biteback’ ground baiting is essential to the wool industry.”**

*Woolgrower involved in the aerial baiting program.*

Loading baits onto the plane.



This year, the baits were dropped (from a Cessna 210 aircraft) along a route of more than 10,000km, with baits generally laid at a rate of five baits per km. It concentrated on inaccessible areas, especially rugged ranges and margins of large salt lakes.

The aerial baiting complemented the concurrent autumn ‘Biteback’ wild dog ground baiting program run in South Australia, with many properties participating in both programs.

Funds for the aerial baiting were provided by AWI, the South Australian Sheep Industry Fund, Federal Drought Funding and Biosecurity SA with in-kind support from Natural Resources SA Arid Lands.

## CONSULTATION, PLANNING AND MAPPING

An important part of the program is that it links sheep producers and other landholders in a coordinated effort to counteract the wild dog problem.

“It has to be a united approach,” commented a producer in the program's feedback survey. “It is good most people are enthusiastic.”

Landholders from 97 wild dog-affected properties, members of 22 wild dog planning groups, had identified areas of wild dog activity for the potential flight path. This was supplemented by information from phone conversations with additional landholders.

The draft flight path was consolidated onto regional maps, for landholder approvals,

then digitised into GPS-ready formats for bait distribution. The dispensing carousel in the Cessna was linked to the GPS to automatically release baits at consistent 200m intervals irrespective of air speed.

Unbaited exclusion zones (buffer zones) were created around defined infrastructure such as homesteads and public roads to minimise the risk to domestic dogs. Individual landholders specified additional restrictions as required.

## THE BAITS

The total production for the aerial baiting program was 60,000 baits. Of these, 54,000 were distributed by the contract aircraft, 2,000 by local pilots and the remainder used for ground baiting initiatives.

Landholders participating in the ‘Biteback’ ground baiting program used 99,000 baits in spring and autumn 2015/16. Bait usage in the Arid Lands NRM region inside the dog fence thus totalled 160,000 baits of which 38 per cent was contributed by the aerial program.

Baits were prepared from 8 tonne of kangaroo meat by paid casuals and government NRM staff at the bait production facility at Oraparinna in the Flinders Ranges National Park. The baits were laid out on racks and dried prior to transport to 11 airstrips for aerial distribution.

## IMPROVING FARMERS' WELLBEING

Sheep producers involved in the aerial baiting program expressed general optimism that it would improve their ability to run more sheep and produce more wool.

Notably, they overwhelmingly said that participating in the wild dog program also improves their wellbeing, with a producer commenting: “Wild dog programs make a huge difference to reducing stress for growers when we know dogs are active. It helps significantly for peace of mind and dog control especially in difficult terrain.”

Aerial baiting of inaccessible areas was strongly supported in several comments as an essential component of any wild dog control program. Typical was: “I feel that this program is very beneficial to our enterprise as it allows us to access areas that we would otherwise not be able to.”

# PREPARING FOR THE RELEASE OF RHDV1 K5 IN 2017

The roll out of a strain of **rabbit calicivirus** new to Australia is scheduled for **March 2017**. It will boost current biocontrol activity that is already impacting pest rabbit populations and help woolgrowers increase their productivity.



Wild rabbits are Australia's most widespread and destructive agricultural and environmental vertebrate pest, costing \$200 million in lost agricultural production every year and impacting 157 threatened native species. *PHOTO: John Schilling*

The new virus known as RHDV1 K5 will be rolled out early next year at more than 600 sites across Australia in an effort to significantly reduce wild rabbit populations and their negative impact on agricultural production and native ecosystems.

Community organisations, Landcare groups and government land managers will be participating in the national roll-out of the virus, co-funded by AWI.

A commercial product of RHDV1 K5 will also be available shortly after the official release.

AWI On-farm Program Manager Ian Evans said the RHDV1 K5 release will boost rabbit biocontrol in Australia.

"This is a national initiative to better control rabbits, particularly in areas where the current strain of RHDV1 has not had as much success, like the cool-wet regions of Australia," Ian said. "Population reductions are anticipated to be improved by anywhere from 0-40% depending on location and susceptibility of the rabbit population to RHDV1 K5, but knockdowns like those seen with the release of calicivirus in 1996/97 are not expected.

"RHDV1 K5 is not a silver bullet and we need private and public land managers to be vigilant in not taking their foot off the pedal when it comes to their regular rabbit control. Rabbit biocontrol is beneficial when applied as part of an integrated and complementary pest management approach.

"If we are to make any serious dent in the population, a coordinated community-led response will be needed; RHDV1 K5 offers a new opportunity to begin a conversation with neighbours with the aim of integrated best practice rabbit control at a landscape scale."

## RABBITSCAN HITS THE 12,000 MILESTONE

Woolgrowers, other landholders and community groups across Australia can get involved with the initiative by using RabbitScan to record rabbit problems in their local area, and use the RabbitScan map to improve the management of rabbits in their region.

RabbitScan is available free as a website and smartphone app – via [www.rabbitscan.org.au](http://www.rabbitscan.org.au).

FeralScan coordinator, Peter West, says more than 12,000 records of rabbits, their damage and now evidence of disease have so far been entered into the RabbitScan database.



"Many landholder groups and communities are now working together to use RabbitScan to map problem areas for rabbits, such as rabbit warrens along roadsides, and are using the data they have gathered to plan and coordinate cost-efficient rabbit control as a group," he said.

Similar tools for other invasive species including wild dogs (see right), foxes, and feral pigs are available at [www.feralscan.org.au](http://www.feralscan.org.au). FeralScan is a landholder, community, industry, research and government collaboration led by the Invasive Animals CRC and NSW Department of Primary Industries. **B**

### MORE INFORMATION

RabbitScan is available for use via [www.rabbitscan.org.au](http://www.rabbitscan.org.au) and within the FeralScan app which can be downloaded to your iPhone and Android smartphone from iTunes and Google Play.



The **WildDogScan** mapping tool is available as an app for your Smartphone as well as a website.

## DISCOVER THE WILDDOGSCAN APP

WildDogScan is a free resource, available as a website and smartphone app, that can be used by anyone to record sightings of wild dogs, the damage or problems they cause, and the areas where control is being undertaken.

WildDogScan is a tool for livestock producers, pest controllers and community members to help them monitor wild dog populations, and to better target the pests through coordinated control programs.

Across Australia, there are up to 140 landholder and wild dog control groups using WildDogScan to plan control efforts and decide how to best reduce wild dog problems as a community. The program allows group members to update each other on wild dog activity with real time notifications.

More than 3,000 wild dog sightings and reported wild dog impacts at more than 1,000 locations have so far been recorded.

Users can view and print maps, view and export pest records, view or upload photos, and see where other people in their local area are also reporting pest animals. **B**

### MORE INFORMATION

WildDogScan is available for use via [www.wilddogscan.org.au](http://www.wilddogscan.org.au) and within the FeralScan app which can be downloaded to your iPhone and Android smartphone from iTunes and Google Play.

# YOUNG FARMING CHAMPION LIVING AND BREATHING WOOL



Max Edwards from Wellington in NSW is the latest Young Farming Champion sponsored by AWI.

The latest AWI-sponsored Young Farming Champion, Max Edwards from near Wellington in NSW, is keen to share his passion for the wool industry with urban students and the public to show there is a bright and prosperous future in the industry.

“Even back in primary school, show and tell was always my favourite part of school; every week I had a new story or experience for my class about farming and wool. This desire to share my background and passion for agriculture is something that has never left me and I doubt it ever will.”

So says Max Edwards, a fourth generation woolgrower born and raised near Wellington in Central West NSW, and it is this positive attitude towards the wool industry that makes him ideal as the latest Young Farming Champion promoting the wool industry.

Co-sponsored by AWI, the Young Farming Champion initiative helps young farmers like Max promote positive images and perceptions of farming to students participating in Art4Agriculture's school program who might never have considered a career in agriculture.

“Growing up in rural Australia has definitely defined me as a person and all my best memories are based around the family farm ‘Catombal Park’.

“Since I could crawl, I have always been heavily involved in all activities at the farm, which in the early days mainly consisted of trailing my Dad's shadow in the paddocks and sheep yards, or trying not to fall asleep in the long heat of days spent rocking in a baby swing in the shearing shed. Whatever

was happening on the farm, I was always surrounded by wool.”

Max's interest in the wool industry didn't diminish after he started boarding at St. Joseph's College in Sydney.

“I think it's safe to say the local Joeys boys' heads were quickly put into a spin when the country boys would tell stories of their holiday activities. Meeting people who had never swum in a dam or tipped a sheep gave me a deep appreciation for my background and I jumped at every chance to drag my city friends out to the farm for a visit so I could share my world with them and see their excitement.”

Post-HSC, Max was eager to get out into the industry to gain as much experience and knowledge as possible.

“Over the past years I have been fortunate in being exposed to many different production systems including different farms within the Central West, ‘Glenwood’ Merino Stud, various grazing management field days and working with Peter Milling and Co stock and station agents at the local Dubbo sale yards.

“It was in my gap year when I quickly noticed how important the relationship is between producers and community networks.”

Max is now in his fourth year at The University of Sydney completing a Bachelor

of Animal and Veterinary Bioscience which has further strengthened his interests in extensive livestock production systems, particularly sheep and wool.

“Over the course of the past four years I have enjoyed once again being able to share my background and experience with the students, many of whom were largely unfamiliar with the sheep and wool industry, especially during practical sessions where many laughs were shared.

“I have developed a special interest in the field of remote monitoring and applying precision livestock management, an area that will no doubt be crucial in years to come. My honours research project, currently running on my family farm, is also in this field and involves remotely weighing sheep in the paddock and recording daily weight changes to help make better management decisions.”

Although Max is extremely eager to return to the land, he is also very keen to further develop farming technology and ensure it reaches the producers it would help the most.

“Along the way I plan to continue sharing my passion for wool production and inviting everyone I meet to come and see the world of Australian farmers.

“I hope when I am 86, like my Grandpa, I will be ringing my son and grandson to check ‘that everything is ready for shearing tomorrow’, still with great enthusiasm and always with the desire to improve the quality of our sheep and their wool.” **B**

## YOUNG FARMING CHAMPIONS

2017 APPLICATIONS OPEN

Expressions of interest are now open to become a 2017 Art4Agriculture Young Farming Champion. As a Young Farming Champion sponsored by AWI, you would actively engage with the public and school students, spreading your passion for wool, bridging the rural-urban divide, and inspiring the next generation of youngsters to consider a career in the wool industry. **B**

### MORE INFORMATION

[www.art4agriculture.com.au/yfc](http://www.art4agriculture.com.au/yfc)  
Lynne Strong 0407 740 446  
[lynnestrong@art4agriculture.com.au](mailto:lynnestrong@art4agriculture.com.au)



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# WOOL A STAR WITHIN SOUTHERN CROSS

When AWI was invited to attend the 60th Yilgarn show at Southern Cross recently, they found in the heart of the Central wheatbelt of WA a wool competition that rivals that of any wool-growing district.



Fleeces on display at the **Yilgarn Show in WA.**

**T**he Western Australian wheatbelt has had its fair share of ups and downs in recent years given the region's reliance on grain, but for many, wool has been a stable feature of their business.

This was the common story heard by AWI director David Webster and wool trade consultant Scott Carmody when they visited Southern Cross to judge the Yilgarn Show fleece competition earlier this year.

Scott and David judged the 85 fleeces on display at the show, entered in 16 classes by local woolgrowers and the passion for growing wool in a region so dominated by grain production was evident not only in the quality of entries but in the many conversations they had on the day.

"It was wonderful to be invited to judge the show. A lot of the local farmers mentioned how if they didn't have sheep, they would have had to walk off the farm years ago. Many of the farmers who were sadly no longer in the district didn't have an annual wool cheque as a safety net. Unfortunately, putting all their eggs in the one cropping basket was their downfall," Scott said.

The heart of the Central Wheatbelt of WA is hardly the place you would expect to find a wool competition to rival that of any dedicated wool-growing district. The Shire of Yilgarn is 30,720 square km in area and has a population of approximately 1,600. Yilgarn is known by many as the Gateway to the Wheatbelt and the Goldfields and more readily identified with vast areas of crops of

The winning fleece of **R & J Panizza Partnership** from Marvel Loch.



wheat, canola, barley and oats and goldmines. Southern Cross is the major town centre of the Shire of Yilgarn and is 370km east of Perth along the Great Eastern Highway.

The seed for lifting the profile of the wool section of the Yilgarn show came about with a chance meeting head organiser and Southern Cross local George Irving had with AWI director Mr David Webster at the Wagin Woolarama earlier in the year. The local Southern Cross area wool-growing community expressed concerns over the lack of knowledge of their local farming community about the benefits of running a few wool sheep as an additional source of income, especially in times of crop failure.

This year could not be more applicable as George reports of widespread frost damage and very low grain prices impacting heavily on the WA harvest and hence the land holders' income and viability. Mr Irving said, "David Webster seemed really keen to get involved, so later on I rang AWI head office in Sydney and talked to them and they agreed to supply wool judges David Webster and Scott Carmody. I was really pleased to have AWI support us like that."

Overall winners with most points across all fleece classes were:

- 1st prize went to R & J Panizza Partnership of father Bob and son James, from Marvel Loch.
- 2nd on overall points was Sanman Nominees of Robert and Tony Dal Busco, from Southern Cross.
- A first time entry from the Birtles family, from Bodallin, won Champion Ewe Fleece. **B**



## BREED MORE MERINO EWES

✓ BEST NATURAL FIBRE ✓ GREAT TASTING MEAT ✓ MOST PROFITABLE BREED

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# NEW MERINO CAMPAIGN ENCOURAGES PRODUCERS

## TO BOOST MERINO EWE BASE

The **Australian Association of Stud Merino Breeders (AASMB)** has launched its new **Breed More Merino Ewes** campaign that highlights Merinos are achieving profitable results for producers compared to other breeds and enterprises across Australia in a range of production systems and rainfall zones.

**T**he AASMB in September launched a new campaign highlighting the profitability of Merinos as the ultimate dual purpose breed and encouraging producers to increase Merino breeding ewe numbers in their enterprise mix.

The campaign – titled **Breed More Merino Ewes** – acknowledges the Merino ewe as the backbone of the Australian sheep industry and that there are many industry businesses and organisations which have a common interest in the breed's continued success.

It is the first national industry supported campaign of its type in the Merino industry and targets the whole supply chain, from producers to exporters, to ensure there is a critical mass of the meat and wool supply that is integral to the industry.

AASMB chair Georgie Wallace, Tasmania, says the decision to launch the campaign was sparked by the fact that Merinos have a great story to tell in profitability and performance.

"There are many producers achieving outstanding financial returns in terms of dollars per dry sheep equivalent per hectare through best practice flock management and business planning," she said.

"We know that Merinos have the capacity to outperform other livestock enterprises and be competitive with returns from grain

growing enterprises. Financial analysis is proving their profitability in different rainfall zones right across Australia."

AWI CEO Stuart McCulloch says the organisation was quick to support the AASMB's campaign because of the need to increase the Merino ewe flock to take advantage of the enormous global fibre and food opportunities in future.

"To do this, AWI has made the strategic decision to focus heavily on increasing the reproductive efficiency of the Merino with the aim of lifting the average weaning rate in Merino to Merino joining by three percent in the next three years," he said.

"Also, our recent announcement to extend the Lifetime Ewe Management course to a further 1,500 woolgrowers over the next three years builds on what has been the most successful sheep extension program in the proud history of the Australian sheep industry with participants significantly lifting weaning rates across the board.

"Australia was largely put on the world stage on the back of the Merino. It is an animal that has delivered enormous wealth to this country and has been carefully bred for all Australian conditions." **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.merinos.com.au](http://www.merinos.com.au)

## MERINO SUCCESS STORIES

Many Merino producers are achieving outstanding financial returns – in terms of dollars per dry sheep equivalent or per hectare – through best practice flock management and business planning. Here's a snapshot of what producers from across Australia are saying about Merinos.



### JAMES DERRICK, NEW SOUTH WALES

"I've done the calculations and Merinos come out on top. I'm switching back for ease of management, it's much simpler and more efficient to run a single breed enterprise. I feel the Merino lambs will more than fill the requirements previously filled by the crossbred lambs." See page 41 for a full case study of James.



### MARTIN RAMSAY, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

"Merino profitability on my farm is driven by three key factors – stocking rate, bodyweight and fleeceweight. While these key factors vary year-on-year, I've seen a steady improvement in all of them since I've been benchmarking." See page 40 for a full case study of Martin.



### BRENT FLOOD, VICTORIA

"Merinos have the wool cut, the wool quality and they are the backbone of the first-cross ewe industry. For the amount you can run per acre they are a very profitable article. They have a genuine profitability. One semi-load of wool is the equivalent of 40 loads of barley in the current market."



### ED RIGGALL, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

"From an economic perspective, sheep meat and wool indicators are fantastic. If you're not enthusiastic about the prospects of sheep meat and wool now, you'll never be. On a sheep confidence index I would rate it as a 10 out of 10."



**Martin and Howard Ramsay** with shearers at his property at Warooka, South Australia: "Two-thirds of my income used to come from cropping, now livestock would be three-quarters." PHOTO: Bronte Blyth

## STOCKING RATE, BODYWEIGHT AND FLEECEWEIGHT DRIVE **MERINO PROFITABILITY**

Merinos are the breed of choice at **Martin Ramsay's 'Glenayr'** property at **Warooka** on South Australia's Yorke Peninsula.

### WHY MERINOS? MARTIN RAMSAY'S TOP 3 REASONS:

- **Profitability** – Gross margin returns in the past four years have averaged \$241-\$250 per winter grazed hectare.
- **Performance** – electronic identification has helped to put a dollar value on each hogget ewe, ranging from \$95-\$147 each.
- **Enterprise fit** – Merinos suit Martin's enterprise as a sole operator after big returns with limited cropping land.

**M**artin Ramsay runs the 1,214ha 'Glenayr' property, which consists three-quarters self-replacing Merino flock and one-quarter share-farmed crops, with his father Howard. The average annual rainfall is 450 millimetres.

Martin says while he had dabbled in crossbreds, for the past 20 years he had focused solely on his self-replacing 1,000 ewe Merino flock, running about 2,700 Merinos including lambs and hogget ewes.

For 15 of those 20 years, Martin has benchmarked his flock, making solid improvements in increasing dollars per hectare., the current average gross margin is \$94 per hectare per 100 millimetres of growing season rainfall.

Martin says the economic returns helped him to decide to focus solely on a self-replacing Merino flock. This was because while the returns were similar for Merino and crossbred production, it was the fleece potential from the Merino wether lamb that caused overall Merino profitability to come out on top.

### DRIVING PROFIT

While about 374ha of arable land at the 1214ha property is share-farmed, Martin focuses on livestock working with Landmark animal production specialist Daniel Schuppan to process benchmarking data.

Merino profitability on-farm is driven by three key factors – stocking rate, bodyweight and fleeceweight – which Martin closely manages. Stocking rate had grown to 7DSE per winter grazed hectare with wool production at 24.5 kilograms/winter grazed hectare.

"While these key factors vary year-on-year, I've seen a steady improvement in all of them since I've been benchmarking. This takes the guess work out of measuring profitability and you can get a clearer picture of where you're going season to season," he said.

"Only half the land we have is arable and suitable for cropping, and we only share-farm a portion of it. It wasn't economically viable for me to run cropping in comparison to livestock due to machinery costs, and not having any machinery agencies or mechanics nearby to service or fix machines when needed.

"Beforehand, two-thirds of my income would have come from cropping, now livestock would be three-quarters."

Average lambing percentage was about 110 to 115 per cent, but was slightly lower this year due to "terrible weather" when ewes lambed in July-August.

### MEATY PROFITS

Ewes lamb in July-August and all sheep are shorn in November-December. For the past four years, all wether lambs have been weighed after shearing, with the heaviest two-thirds put into

paddocks with grain feeders, and the remaining lighter lambs run on Kikuyu pastures.

Lambs weighed, on average, about 25 kilograms liveweight at Christmas, and were sold in April-May at targets of 50kg/w, dressing out at 20-22kg carcaseweight. He recently sold lambs for \$5.20-\$5.50/kgcw and was "very happy" with the price.

"The later in the season I can sell them, the better the price," Martin said. "It also means I can shear a fleece off them which is extra profit."

### FUTURE FOCUS

Electronic identification tags have been used to record bodyweight, fleeceweight and micron performance in ewe hoggets for the past two years. Martin says it creates better individual performance data in his flock.

For the first time in 2016, Martin also used current wool, sheep and lamb prices to calculate a dollar value for each ewe based on their bodyweight, fleeceweight and micron. Values varied from \$95-\$147, after firstly culling 20 per cent visually.

"There was up to a \$52 difference per animal between the top and the bottom of the ewes I classed, after first culling visually. It's quite a difference," he said.

Pastures were also a focus for the future, with Martin saying Kikuyu pastures had been planted to give more green feed over summer.

"One block had quite salty water, and previously we couldn't run any young stock there, only about 200 wethers. We have now planted it to Kikuyu and have also connected the paddock to the mains water line, about three kilometres away, so we can have fresh water," he said.



# MERINO WETHERS

## PROVE PROFITABLE IN FEEDLOT

Merino lambs have proven and consistent returns of up to \$30 per head more than prime lambs at James Derrick's Karoola Station feedlot in Gundagai, NSW.

### WHY MERINOS? JAMES DERRICK'S TOP 3 REASONS:

- **Feedlot performance** – Merino wether lambs come out \$30/hd above prime lambs.
- **Ease of management** – Single breed enterprise is profitable and easier to manage and operate.
- **Weight gain** – Merino lambs have a good average weight gain of 210 grams a day over six weeks in the feedlot.

James, who runs the 2,050ha property with the help of wife Sheryl and son Andrew, has run a feedlot for the past four years, finishing 90 per cent of his lambs through the system. He also buys in lambs to finish, depending on the season, prices and available grain and feed.

James says at current prices, a Merino lamb aged six months will cut about \$18/hd worth of wool. Then fed for 42 days, and dressed out at 22 kilograms carcaseweight for a price of \$4.80/kg, the lamb will gross \$123.60/hd. If the \$50 purchase price is deducted from this price, as well as the cost of feeding at \$22 and a shearing cost of \$5, this gives an approximate profit margin of \$46.60/hd.

In comparison, a second-cross lamb aged six months will cut approximately \$6/hd of wool and if fed for 42 days, will dress out to 22kgcw at \$5.80/kg. This lamb will gross \$133.60/hd, less purchase cost at \$90, feeding cost \$22 and shearing cost \$5. This gives an approximate profit margin of \$16.60/hd.

"There's a \$1/kg difference between second-cross lambs and Merino lambs, but once you add in the amount of wool that you can shear off a Merino, it becomes a \$30 difference in the returns, with the Merino well ahead of the crossbred," James said.

During the past 12 months they have averaged a sale price of \$140/hd for crossbred lambs and \$125/hd for Merinos.

### MERINOS SOLE FOCUS

The Derricks run 4,500 breeding ewes, comprising 1,800 first-cross ewes and 2,700 Merino ewes. James plans to switch the flock back to 100 per cent Merinos and is in the process of phasing out the first-cross ewe flock.

"I've done the calculations and Merinos come out on top," he said. "I'm switching

back for ease of management, it's much simpler and more efficient to run a single breed enterprise. There may be a need from time to time to purchase second-cross lambs for the feedlot but I will no longer run terminal sires and breed my own lambs.

"I feel the Merino lambs will more than fill the requirements previously filled by the crossbred lambs."

James said the feedlot began as he sometimes struggled to get lambs finished in time straight from the paddock.

"I commenced feedlotting to gain control of finishing sheep for market when natural conditions are ever changing. It is an opportunity feedlot. It's very easy and simple to run," he said.

"Now only finished sheep are sold, whereas before they had to be sold no matter their condition due to feed requirements or lack thereof. The feedlot makes it a more consistent income and keeps up a constant cashflow."

### LAMB TURNOVER INCREASE

While the feedlot was closed over June and July, due to excessive rainfall with 152 millimetres falling during these months (average annual rainfall 711mm), James plans to increase turnover from 6,000 lambs per year to 10,000 lambs/yr.

The feedlot usually runs from February to May then August to November, during milder weather, but covers and shade are being built to ensure lambs have shelter in the yards.

Crossbred lambs enter the feedlot at 36kg liveweight and Merinos at 38kglw. All are shorn beforehand to clean them up and ensure they have a good, even pelt. Merinos enter the program at 38kglw so they meet weight gain targets more easily.

Bought-in lambs have a five-day transition to being grain fed. First, they are trail-fed grain then introduced to feeders.

Lambs are weighed every 10 days and sorted into pens by weight differences of up to 4-5kg. On average, Merino lambs gain 210 grams a day over six weeks, in comparison to crossbred lambs at 240g/day.

They were sold at a maximum feed period of 42 days, or six weeks, at 22-23kgcw, and marketed either to a processor or through the Wagga Wagga Livestock Marketing Centre.

Crossbreds are sold at six months and Merino lambs sold at eight to nine months to allow for shearing.

"We're quite lucky where we are located as we have a processor in Gundagai 20 minutes away, another at Junee 30 minutes away, then the Wagga Wagga saleyards also 30 minutes away," James said.

"Usually we take out some contracts four weeks out, but we also spot kill through the abattoirs, which means you can book in, then the following week drop lambs off for slaughter. To date all Merino lambs have gone to spot market not allowing any feedback at this time.

"We constantly aim to have at least a \$10 to \$20 margin of profits for each lamb sold.

"We keep a close eye on prices throughout the season and keep calculating feed costs as we go to make sure it remains profitable."

### ON-FARM DIVERSIFICATION

Crops such as canola, wheat, lupins and ryegrass silage are produced on-farm, with all except for canola used in the feedlot.

The average flock micron was 19-micron for Merinos and 26-micron for crossbreds, with genetics coming from the Derrick's stud, Karoola Downs Poll Merino, started by James in 1987. Commercial adult ewes cut 7.2kg of greasy fleeceweight/hd.

Lambs drop in May-June for stud ewes and June-July for commercial ewes, with shearing in early October. Lambs are weaned early, from eight to 16 weeks, so ewes can put on condition quickly, ready for mating.

"I started out following the tradition of my father and grandfather," James said. "It became my own passion and I got into the breeding of my own rams which led to me and my father starting our own stud with Poll Merinos.

"Merinos remain profitable and always have some income with wool and meat value particularly in poll genetics. Merino ewes are necessary for a maternal cross in a prime lamb enterprise. Medium wools are well suited to our rainfall and climatic area with pasture and range country.

"During my grandfather and father's time the Merino enterprise basically contributed only a wool income. All other enterprises have been added in the past 10 years mostly through my own instigation and the need to diversify." **B**



Participants in AWI's Feedbase Advisory Forum near **Esperance in Western Australia**, standing in one of **Tom Pengilly's** vetch paddocks recently cut for hay, looking at another of his vetch paddocks. Hard seeded legumes are not only proving to be robust performers in tough Western Australian conditions, but are also putting essential nitrogen back into nutrient deficient soils.

# LEGUMES FILL THE FEED GAP

Wool is becoming an increasingly important part of mixed enterprises, partly due to co-investment by AWI and its predecessor into the **development of new hard-seeded legume varieties.**

**H**ard-seeded legumes are providing mixed farmers around Esperance in Western Australia with a profitable option to fill the autumn feed gap for their sheep, as well as providing nitrogen rich soil for their crops.

Young farmer Tom Pengilly, who along with his parents Bruce and Trudy farm nearly 4,000 ha on their property 100km north-west of Esperance, has seen great success in the adoption of legumes and grazing crops.

The Pengillys run a mixed enterprise, with 60 per cent cereals and 40 per cent Merino sheep. Aside from running 3,500 Merinos, they grow wheat and barley as their two cereal crops. The property has mostly clay-loamy soils, with the occasional patch of sand, and receives 250-300mm of rainfall depending on the year.

In September, Tom attended an AWI Feedbase Advisory Forum that visited several properties in the Esperance region, and spoke about the benefits of introducing legumes into his enterprise's feedbase.

"Pastures are a key part of the rotation and sheep are a key part of the system," Tom said. "The legume base for the nitrogen fixation is mainly for the cereal side of the business but the added benefit that naturally comes with that is a greater feedbase so we can run more animals.

"We've been trialling some non-traditional legumes such as Casbah biserrula, a yellow strain of very hardy serradella and vetches, which have really found a place in our enterprise. While it's not necessarily a silver bullet for everyone, it's definitely done the trick in our local environment. We get the option to graze over winter, freeing up other pastures, and

the benefit of organic nitrogen fixation for the following cereal crop. It is a variety that we find benefits both our enterprises.

Tom said these hard seeded legumes are making inroads because of their impressive ability to be planted during the hot summer months while remaining dormant until the break in the season.

"Because they are a hard seeded variety, they are a really good fit for our location. We put them in around early February. They then take a bit of time to break down their hard pod, and the seedlings start to come up anytime between early March and April which helps fill in that feed gap early on.

"At the moment, thanks to these new legumes, we are producing more feed than we can keep on top of; our end goal is definitely to increase numbers of Merinos and take advantage of the feed that we are creating."

Twenty-four-year-old Tom, who undertook AWI's Breeding Leadership course in February 2014, said he is very positive in the way things are shaping up for his business.

**"In all honesty, it's scary how positive our future – and the industry – is looking. With our adoption of these legumes and the new feedbase we're creating the ability to progress our business."**

Woolgrower Tom Pengilly

"The next challenge for us is actually management, as we're struggling to keep up with our own progress. We're now busy learning how to use this feedbase and how far can we take it."

Dave Vandenberghe, who also attended the AWI Feedbase Advisory Forum, farms 5,500 ha north of Esperance with his wife Katherine. They crop 3,000ha and run 5,000 adult sheep and 2,500 lambs.

Dave said the new legumes have transformed their farming system, and they will increase their number of Merinos due to the increase in feed that the legumes have made available. Indeed, such is their new-found optimism for wool that they have recently built what is the first new shearing shed in the region for probably a decade or two.

"These hard seeded legumes are absolutely changing our business," Dave said. "We're very confident about the sheep aspect of the business. Wool is an increasingly important part of our mix. In a bad year you still have the same income, it's just that it might cost you a little bit more to get there."

AWI General Manager for Research, Dr Paul Swan, told the Feedbase Advisory Forum it was encouraging to see sheep making a comeback in what had become mostly a permanent cropping region.

"The climate around Esperance means there is a real autumn feed gap, but the area has been a real hotspot for innovation in pasture plant breeding and there is a close relationship between pasture scientists and farmers to come up with solutions," Dr Swan said.

"AWI and its predecessor made a long-term investment in new types of legume suited to modern cropping systems, such as biserrula, vetch and serradella. It is wonderful to experience how AWI research can absolutely transform a farmer's system, and to talk to

# SHEEP'S BENEFITS

## FOR MIXED FARMING SYSTEMS

The many benefits that come with enterprise diversity in mixed farming systems were highlighted at the **Birchip Cropping Group's (BCG)** fourth annual **Sheep Management Showcase** held in August.



Founding member of the **Birchip Cropping Group (BCG)** Ian McClelland examining Merinos on show at the **BCG's Sheep Management Showcase**.  
PHOTO: BCG

The buoyant mood at this year's popular Sheep Management Showcase in the Mallee region of Victoria was undoubtedly a reflection of the good state of the sheep industry at the moment and with forecasts suggesting that the good prices and demand will continue, farmers eagerly sought advice on how to improve production and efficiencies on their farms.

Farmers, who had travelled from across Victoria and interstate to attend the Showcase, were not disappointed with an excellent line-up of high calibre livestock specialists providing them with information and ideas on how to make more from sheep.

Keynote speaker and Naracoorte based agribusiness consultant Ken Solly urged producers to monitor, measure and know your costs.

growers like Tom and Dave who think their prospects are so positive."

However, Dr Swan added that whilst there have been many favourable pasture-related research outcomes generated by AWI projects, there has not been as much adoption and practice change by woolgrowers as expected.

"AWI has therefore formed an advisory panel to help understand the barriers to adoption of such favourable feedbase practices, and develop strategies to overcome these barriers."

Tom Pengilly is a committee member of the 'ASHEEP' Group – which has 100 members in the Esperance area – and he said it is because of this group that his business has

"If you don't know what it is costing you to run your business, how can you identify ways to improve it?" he asked.

Mr Solly said it was important to be realistic when setting goals and to ensure they were effectively communicated and in line with what business partners (who are often family members) wanted.

More than once during the Showcase, which included presentations from Wimmera based consultant Tim Leeming, Scott Dennis of Achieve Ag Solutions and VFF Livestock President Leonard Vallance, farmers were reminded of the value of sheep to farm businesses in the medium to low rainfall zones, particularly in terms of managing income fluctuations and variable climate.

BCG CEO Chris Sounness said that particularly after the difficulties encountered due to below average rainfall in 2014 and 2015, it had become evident that farms which operate at 75 per cent cropping and 25 per cent livestock outperformed businesses that are 100 per cent cropping in long-term profitability.

Armed with this knowledge, farmers were encouraged to consider how they might do things better.

Mr Leeming, Mr Dennis and Mr Vallance all made mention of the way farmers had embraced technology to improve cereal production (such as auto-steer on tractors and yield monitors on headers) but lamented the fact that on many farms the livestock operation continued to run as it always had.

seen success in the adoption of pastures and legumes, right through to grazing crops.

"Our local grower group has helped enormously with adoption. Getting a farmer-mentor group around you is definitely a major positive," Tom said.

"Don't be afraid to fail. Adoption of new practices or products is not necessarily going to work perfect first time, but having that mentor group allows you to go to other farmers to seek advice and learn from their experience, and pretty much help each other grow."

**MORE INFORMATION**  
Listen to Tom and Dave talk about their adoption of legumes on AWI's podcast available at [www.wool.com/podcast](http://www.wool.com/podcast)

Mr Leeming made a strong case for investing in genetics while Mr Dennis highlighted the possibilities available with electronic ID tags (EID) and automatic sheep handlers that have the capacity to record and collect sheep data and significantly reduce the labour (see page 30).

"Have a look at what's out there and get excited," he said.

Building on Mr Solly's advice to "monitor and measure" to identify where improvements can be made, livestock scanner Raquel Tyler (OnTrack Livestock Scanning) encouraged producers to pregnancy scan their ewes.

According to Ms Tyler knowledge of the ewes' pregnancy status enabled producers to identify poor performers, meet the nutritional requirements of pregnant ewes and improve lamb survival.

"It's one thing that producers can quite easily do to improve productivity," she said.

During the day farmers also got to see some new and innovative sheep equipment in action with demonstrations and presentations from Atlex sheep yards, Stephen Pasture Seeds, Gallagher sheep handlers, Clipex sheep handler, fencing and stockyards and Advantage Feeders.

The 2016 Sheep Management Showcase was supported by several organisations including AWI, Making More From Sheep (an AWI and MLA project) and AWI's state network in Victoria BESTWOOL/ BESTLAMB.

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.bcg.org.au](http://www.bcg.org.au)



Nodules formed by *Rhizobium* bacteria on the roots of a legume. When nodules are present, legumes can "fix" nitrogen from the air, satisfying their own nitrogen nutrition requirements and providing excess nitrogen to other plant species.

# NUFFIELD SCHOLARS

## INCREASING PRACTICAL FARMING KNOWLEDGE

**Felicity McLeod** from Wentworth in western NSW has been awarded the **2017 Nuffield Scholarship supported by AWI**.

As the recipient of the Nuffield Scholarship, Felicity will investigate how to increase income potential through diversification in pastoral wool enterprises.

She will look at utilisation of the natural resource base, flexibility in species mix and multi-species infrastructure to help woolgrowers looking to improve whole-farm profitability, productivity and sustainability.

Felicity oversees her family owned property, Tor Downs, which is situated halfway between Broken Hill and Wentworth on the Great Anabranck Creek in western NSW. Tor Downs Station is 40,000ha and is currently carrying 90 per cent of the company's Merino flock and 50 per cent of its cattle. The three family owned properties – Coombah, Popio and Tor Downs – total an area of approximately 120,000ha.

By learning more about the entire farm system involved in the wool supply chain as part of her scholarship, Felicity hopes to improve woolgrowers' business bottom line, animal health, quality, total grazing pressure and staff health, safety and retention.

"I believe that by ensuring producers are aware of the best practices available to suit their enterprise, supply and product consistency could be significantly improved, thereby increasing income," Felicity said. "I am very excited to have been given this amazing opportunity by AWI."

Felicity has a proven track record of commitment to the Australian farming industry, having participated in various committees to help improve the agricultural industry.

Felicity will travel to South America and South Africa as part of her scholarship. After returning from her study tour, Felicity will share her findings with other woolgrowers and stakeholders.

"AWI is proud to continue its involvement with Nuffield by offering a specific wool-focused scholarship," said Julie Davies, AWI Group Manager, Education & Extension.



Nuffield Scholarship recipient **Felicity McLeod** from Wentworth in western NSW.

"It is a unique opportunity for a woolgrower to study a particular subject of interest, and increase practical farming knowledge, management skills and techniques in the Australian wool industry. Previous Nuffield Scholars have contributed significantly to our knowledge of our industry."

## RECENT AWI NUFFIELD WOOLGROWER SCHOLARS

By supporting the Nuffield Scholarship program, AWI is increasing practical farming knowledge and management skills in the Australian wool industry.

Previous AWI Nuffield woolgrower scholars and their study areas are:

**2016 - Jack England, Kingston, SA**

Jack is studying variable rate fertiliser application in livestock systems.

**2015 - Robert Webb, Tarana, NSW**

Robert is studying the use of fire as a native pasture management tool.

**2014 - Tim Gubbins, Moyston, Vic**

**Report:** Maximising the reproductive potential of the Merino from conception to weaning.

**2013 - Matthew Ipsen, Wareek, Vic**

**Report:** World's best practice in lamb survival, in particular the first three days of life.

**2012 - James Walker, Longreach, Qld**

**Report:** Linking production and financial metrics in agriculture.

**2011 - James Robertson, Renmark, SA**

**Report:** Improving sheep efficiency through weaning nutrition.

**2009 - David Cussons, Kojunup, WA**

**Report:** Talking agriculture - a study of communication techniques and approaches to crisis communication.

**2008 - Ben Ranford, Cleve, SA**

**Report:** The role of farmer collaboration in creating supply solutions.

**2007 - James Walker, Carrick, Tas**

**Report:** Wool and sheep production in the global market.

**2007 - Andrew Bouffler, Lockhart, NSW**

**Report:** How to fully utilise and rapidly improve the Australian maternal ewe flock (including Merinos) to ensure continuity of supply into our valuable meat and wool markets.

**2006 - Robert Kelly, Guyra, NSW**

**Report:** Production versus marketing: where should Australian wool producers focus? **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.wool.com/nuffield](http://www.wool.com/nuffield)

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# WET WEATHER CAUSES SURGE IN PARASITES AND DISEASE

While **plentiful rain** is welcome for pasture growth, it brings a variety of issues well into the next season for sheep health, with **parasites** being at the top of the list.

## FLOODING

Sheep isolated due to floodwaters face a particular risk from worms and flystrike.

When continually grazing the same small area, worm populations rapidly build, even from an initial low level of infection.

Maggots drop from struck sheep that cannot be attended due to isolation. The maggots pupate in the soil for about one week and re-emerge as flies to strike other susceptible sheep.

Illness from these parasites and any other diseases will be compounded if the wet conditions restrict feeding and sheep lose condition.

### ACTIONS:

- If floods or wet conditions are predicted and could isolate sheep for some weeks, drench them just before the flood arrives and then move them to high ground.
- A flystrike preventative treatment may be warranted at the same time.
- Consider a long-acting treatment against barber's pole worm if the isolation is expected to be six weeks or more.



**Blowflies** can strike susceptible sheep that are isolated due to floodwaters.



**Lungworm** prefer cooler, wetter environmental conditions. *PHOTO:* Dr Kristy Stone, Riverina Local Land Services

## WATERLOGGED SOIL

Worm eggs can hatch without rain if the soil is waterlogged. While a cooler spring could have slowed development of some worms, they will be flourishing in the warmer climates.

Expect more haemonchosis (barber's pole) this summer and autumn in areas with historically few problems. If it occurred last year, expect worse this year. Even if the frequent rain stops, infective larvae will remain on the pastures for months unless there are particularly hot and dry conditions.

Lungworms are already causing illness this year. They prefer the cooler wetter conditions and cause loss of appetite, ill-thrift and coughing.

### ACTIONS:

- Increase the frequency of Worm Egg Count monitoring to 4-weekly during risk periods, in particular through summer and autumn.
- If coughing is noted, consult your veterinarian, as diagnosis of lungworm is not straightforward. Treatment with a benzimidazole (BZ) or macrocyclic lactone (ML) drench is generally effective.

## FREQUENT RAIN

A colder spring may have delayed emergence of flies in some areas, but in many regions there are already plenty about. Where sheep are subject to frequent rain events there will be a rise in the amount of fleece rot, the main cause of body strike.

Better pastures are also likely to result in increased dag, which is a major cause of breech strike.

Where marking occurs at this time, wounds will be a prime target for the extra fly pressure.

### ACTIONS:

- Monitor for flies frequently, particularly for body strike 2–3 days after a rain event.
- Be prepared to apply preventative treatments or to crutch earlier than usual this year.
- Have chemical and equipment ready in advance.
- Ensure all marking wounds are treated with an effective flystrike preventative, especially on the wool adjacent to wounds.



Better pastures caused by good rain are also likely to result in increased **dags**.

## EXPANSES OF GROUNDWATER

With more water about, comes larger populations of mosquitoes and sandflies, and these insects can spread the blood parasite, *Mycoplasma ovis*. This organism ruptures the red blood cells of the infected animals and causes anaemia and the disease called Eperythrozoonosis ("Epi").

With anaemia, first consider barber's pole worm (and then liver fluke in those regions where the intermediate snail host occurs). However, don't just assume barber's pole worm. Mustering severely anaemic sheep for an unnecessary drench can result in greater losses, and bringing the sheep closer together can increase the spread of the blood parasite.

### ACTIONS:

- If anaemic animals are found, immediately collect and send dung samples from the mob for a WormTest. If worms do not appear to be the problem, Epi should be suspected.
- If unsure after a WormTest, consult your veterinarian because diagnosis is not straightforward and blood from healthy animals will need to be collected.
- Manage Epi by leaving the animals undisturbed (but mustering and drenching is required if it is barber's pole worm).
- Discuss treatment of valuable animals with your veterinarian.

## SOME OTHER WET WEATHER DISEASES

Wet ground will cause softer feet and more foot diseases.

### ACTIONS:

- Valuable heavy animals – particularly rams – should be kept on the driest country.
- Monitor for lameness and have treatments at the ready for stock affected with these painful conditions.



Barber's pole worms are more likely to cause disease in southern Australia this year. PHOTO: Deb Maxwell

- Metacam 20 is a new meloxicam product registered for use to reduce inflammation; consult your local veterinarian for advice.

Lush pastures and more weeds will see a rise in the number of sheep affected by photosensitisation, as has already been reported from southern NSW, where offending plants haven't been able to be identified.

### ACTIONS:

- Watch for sheep with pink and swollen faces.
- Move affected sheep into a shed and feed for a week or so of recovery.
- Consider applying a flystrike preventative treatment to their faces, as sheep rub their sore faces, opening wounds that attract flies. **B**

# flyboss

FlyBoss provides sheep producers with management tools and the latest information on flystrike. FlyBoss is available at [www.flyboss.com.au](http://www.flyboss.com.au)

# wormboss

WormBoss provides the latest information about worms and management tools including Drench Decision Guides and Regional Worm Control Programs. WormBoss is available at [www.wormboss.com.au](http://www.wormboss.com.au)

## PARABOSS: BEST PRACTICE ADVICE FOR MANAGING SHEEP PARASITES

ParaBoss is a suite of three products – LiceBoss, WormBoss and FlyBoss – developed to help sheep producers in the management of lice, worms and blowflies.

The LiceBoss, WormBoss and FlyBoss websites are sources of detailed management information and regional programs that will assist in managing the major parasite risks for sheep. The websites have been developed by expert panels of parasitologists and veterinarians from across Australia.

ParaBoss provides access to the three websites at [www.paraboss.com.au](http://www.paraboss.com.au).

Subscribe to ParaBoss News, the twice monthly free email newsletter with state outlooks on the current state of sheep parasites as well as feature articles and the quick quiz to test your knowledge of sheep parasites. You can subscribe on the ParaBoss website.

Join us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/paraboss.com.au](http://www.facebook.com/paraboss.com.au) to see weekly posts on flystrike, lice and worm control.

ParaBoss is funded by AWI and MLA and coordinated by the University of New England with industry oversight. **B**



MORE INFORMATION  
[www.paraboss.com.au](http://www.paraboss.com.au)

# paraboss



# MERINO LIFETIME PRODUCTIVITY PROJECT UPDATE

## FAST FACTS

- The AWI-funded Merino Lifetime Productivity (MLP) project is a \$5 million, 10-year collaborative partnership between AWI, the Australian Merino Sire Evaluation Association, nominating stud Merino breeders and site hosts around Australia. The project aims to increase the understanding of the genetic capacity for the Merino ewe to deliver high quality wool, lambs and meat throughout its life.
- The MLP project now operates at five sites across Australia. The sites operate as standard sire evaluation sites at the conclusion of which, the project continues with ongoing measurement and visual classing of all ewe progeny throughout their lives including four to five joinings and annual shearings.

## NEW SITES

The MLP project has recently welcomed two new sites increasing the number of active sites to five. Three original sites, Harrow in western Victoria ('Elders Balmoral'), Temora in the Riverina of NSW ('MerinoLink'), Pingelly in the Great Southern region of WA ('Pingelly'), are now supplemented by sites at Armidale in the New England region of NSW ('New England'), and the most recently established site located at Trangie in the Central West region of NSW ('Macquarie').

The Macquarie site committee has teamed up with NSW DPI's Trangie Agricultural Research Centre and the New England site committee is partnering with CSIRO's Chiswick research facility to deliver the new sites.

Setting itself apart from the other four sites, and in addition to the standard trial design, the Macquarie site aims to explore possible interactions between ewe type and sires. Ewes have been sourced from commercial clients of two NSW based studs,

Centre Plus and Towalba, and will be evenly allocated to each sire.

The New England site will run traditional superfine/fine ewes sourced from the ewe base of the CSIRO Chiswick station. New England adds a critical summer rainfall site and as such offers a chance for the project to explore a unique set of environmental conditions throughout life in a traditional fine wool growing region.

The addition of the two new sites will see a total of 166 sires and approximately 5000 F1 ewe progeny evaluated for life across the five sites.

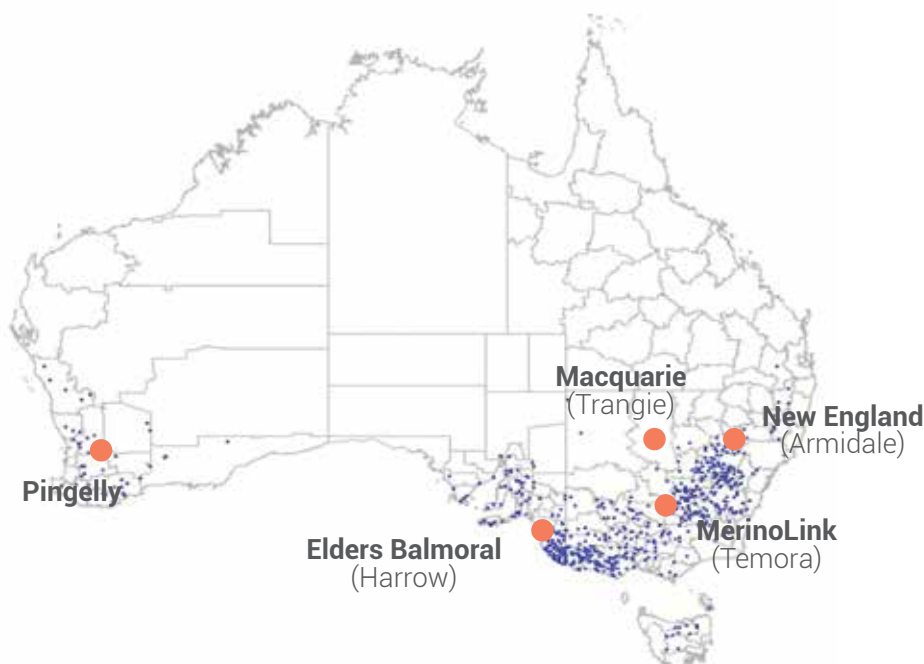
## SIRE NOMINATIONS

In a strong industry show of support for the MLP project, more than 100 sire nominations were received for the 59 positions available for the next round of joining at the Macquarie, Pingelly, MerinoLink and New England sites.

The project team is working with the site committees, project executive and industry steering committees to finalise the joining lists at each site. A strong set of sire selection principles will guide the selection and those that miss out this year are encouraged to consider involvement in the next round of joinings. The project team look forward to advising the industry of the final joining list as soon as the selection process is completed.

The selection principles underpinning sire choice for each site requires sires to be industry representative (horn/poll, different types, different breeding philosophies). In addition, sires are sought with high and low performance for traits, a balance of young and old sires and also rams that have had significant impact in the industry through on farm sales, semen sales or in show winning success.

A diverse list of sires involved will enable the project to fully explore all the characteristics that impact on lifetime productivity and help strengthen existing selection approaches to better achieve improved lifetime productivity and profitability.







# Merino Lifetime Productivity Project

## GET TO KNOW THE SITES

SITE	RAINFALL (MM)	EWE BASE	NUMBER OF SIRES JOINED OR JOINING	SITE CHAIR (SITE MANAGER)
Elders Balmoral	470 winter rainfall	17.2um, fine wool base, selecting for growth, fertility and wool cut	24 sires 2015 & 2016	Tom Silcock M: 0419 882 239 (also Manager)
MerinoLink	500 slight winter dominant	18um, previous sire evaluation progeny, and studs with ASBVs	13 sires 2016 & 2017	Richard Keniry M: 0427 878 541 (Sally Martin M: 0400 782 477)
Pingelly	440 winter rainfall	19.5um, meaty Merino ewes	15 sires 2016 & 2017	Brett Jones M: 0428 323 012 (Bron Clarke M: 0418 957 293)
New England	700+ summer dominant	17um, traditional ultra-fine flock	15 sires 2017 & 2018	Duncan Lance M: 0447 297 135 (Jen Smith Ph: 02 6776 1381)
Macquarie	500 evenly distributed	Even split of Centre Plus Poll Merino and Towalba Merino bloodlines	16 sires Dec 2016 & 2017	Matthew Coddington M: 0428 635 386 (Sue Hatcher Ph: 02 6391 3861)

## KEEP UP TO DATE

The MLP project website is kept up to date with project activity and will undergo a face lift within the next 12 months. Make sure you bookmark [www.wool.com/MLP](http://www.wool.com/MLP) to keep up to date with the latest in MLP developments.

The first drop of progeny, the Elders Balmoral 2015 drop, have recently had their results updated and can be accessed via the MLP website. The ewes were extensively classed and measured at post weaning age and were first reported in June this year. This data has now been updated with carcase measurements and a worm egg count and a full fleece

### Elders Balmoral 2016 Field Day



assessment on their brothers at yearling age. The yearling assessment of the 2015 drop wethers was funded separately by AWI to enable repeat fleece measurements on siblings at post weaning and yearling age stages. This data will help to strengthen the accuracy of post weaning ASBV estimates in the national genetic evaluation program MERINOSELECT.

The MLP project would like to acknowledge the invaluable support of the site hosts, the committees, project sire entrants, industry steering group and the wide range of individuals and organisations working to help the MLP achieve such important outcomes for the Australian sheep and wool industry.

### Elders Balmoral 2015 F1 Ewe (at 7 months old)



## MLP FIELD DAYS

The MLP site field days will be held in conjunction with standard sire evaluation field days over the coming years. These field days are a chance to view the progeny from sires entered and to network with other sheep breeding enthusiasts.

Come along next year and look at the first and second drop of progeny at Elders Balmoral, and the first drops at MerinoLink and Pingelly.

### ELDERS BALMORAL

Friday 24 March (Harrow, Vic)

### PINGELLY

Tuesday 4 April (Pingelly, WA)

### MERINOLINK

Early March or early April

– check the MLP website for details

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.wool.com/MLP](http://www.wool.com/MLP)  
 MLP Project Manager  
 Anne Ramsay, 0400 368 448,  
[stenhouseconsulting@bigpond.com](http://stenhouseconsulting@bigpond.com)

# MARKET INTELL

## AVERAGE MONTHLY EMI COMPARISON THE EMI CONTINUES TO PERFORM WELL

The chart opposite provides a snapshot of how well the AWEX monthly Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) and a range of microns have performed for the past three months (August 2016 – October 2016) in Australian dollar terms compared with the past five years August 2011 to July 2016 (circles) and the previous decade September 2001 – August 2011 (squares).

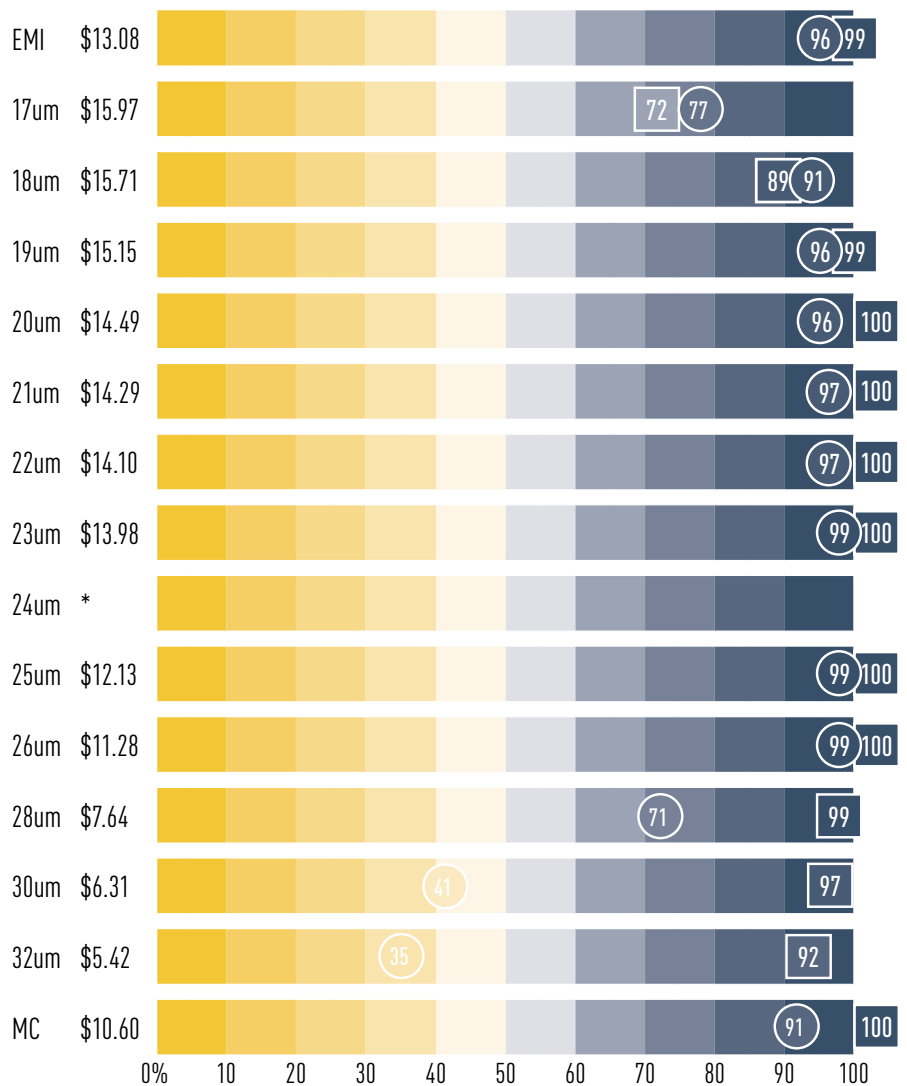
From August 2016 – October 2016, the monthly EMI averaged at \$13.08, tracking at the 96th percentile against the past five-year monthly EMI. The percentile value (96th) indicates that the five-year monthly EMI recorded a price lower than \$13.08 for 96% of the time. Or to put it another way, in the past five years the monthly EMI has recorded a price higher than the current \$13.08 (August 2016 – October 2016) for only 4% of the time.

While the EMI is tracking at the 96th percentile over the past five years, it is at the 99th percentile when compared to August 2001 – July 2011. This means the current EMI of \$13.08 (August 2016 – October 2016) is higher now than it was for 99% of that decade.

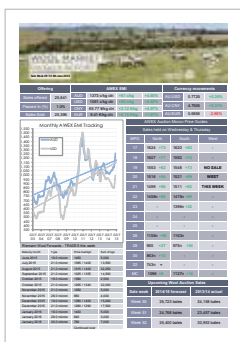
The mid microns and Merino Cardings (MC) have performed particularly well recently. For the past three months (August 2016 – October 2016) Merino Cardings averaged at \$10.60, operating at the 91st percentile for the past five years and the 100th percentile for the first decade of the century.

For the same period, 18 micron averaged at a monthly value of \$15.71 (89th percentile and 91st percentile respectively), 21 micron averaged at \$14.29 (97th percentile and 100th percentile), and 28 micron averaged at \$7.64 (71st percentile and 99th percentile). **B**

**AVERAGE MONTHLY EMI FOR AUGUST 2016 - OCTOBER 2016 COMPARED WITH**  
● PAST 5 YEARS AUGUST 2011 - JULY 2016 ■ THE DECADE SEPTEMBER 2001 - AUGUST 2011



\*Insufficient data



### AWI'S BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

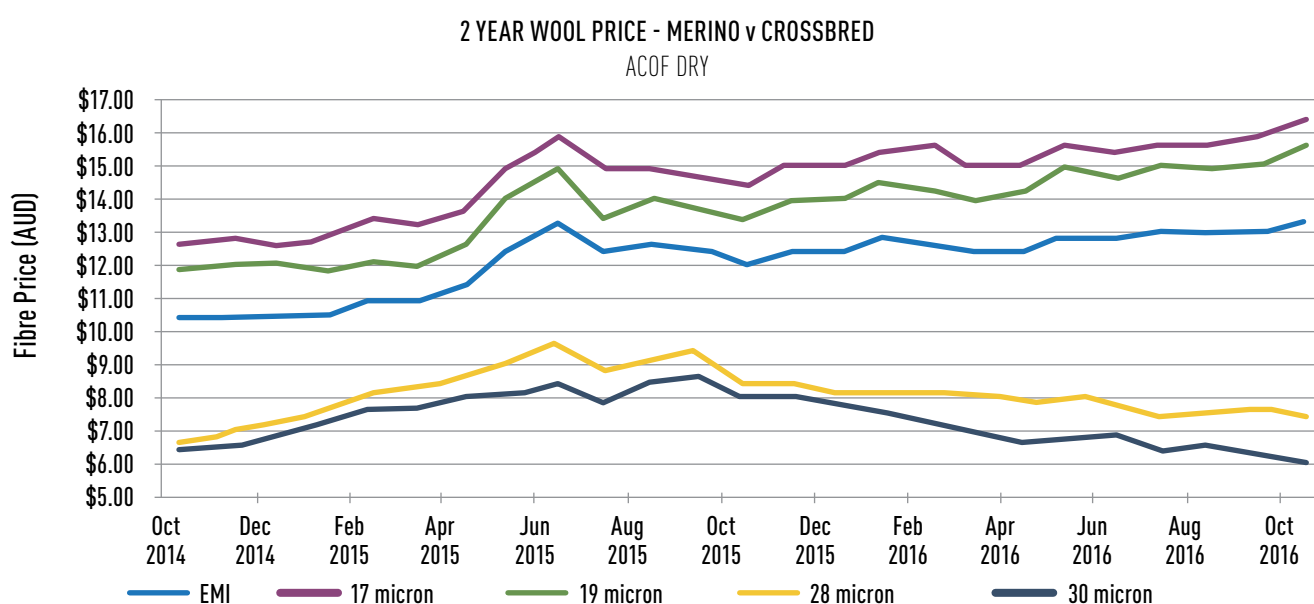
AWI provides weekly market reports and monthly electronic newsletters, which can be subscribed to at [www.wool.com/subscribe](http://www.wool.com/subscribe) or by direct download from the AWI website at [www.wool.com/marketintelligence](http://www.wool.com/marketintelligence)

These reports provide weekly commentary on the wool auction market from AWI trade specialists and monthly insights into economic, finance and trade issues affecting global demand for wool, and what this means for the Australian wool industry.

# IGENCE REPORT

## END OF YEAR SUMMARY

As we head into the annual three-week Christmas recess in wool auction sales, we make a brief assessment of the current price situation and identify any trends emerging from the 2016/17 season thus far.



The base of all agricultural trade inevitably swings back to a simple supply versus demand analogy, and at present this could not apply to wool trade more fittingly. This is due to several reasons, but predominantly, the lack of stocks globally in all parts of the supply chain sees wool very reactive to key pricing influencers.

Changes to expected volumes offered and adverse or unpredicted currency or price conversion movements from garment back to the raw material are examples of two of those simple key ingredients currently plotting the traded price course of wool. These effects are part of the 'hand to mouth operation' and this sourcing method is likely to continue into the foreseeable future, so exaggerated price movement of a greater magnitude may result given adverse changes in the fundamentals.

Overall sentiment and current market indicators are highly suggestive of positivity remaining on the demand side. Prices should stay in the higher percentile bands in those wool type areas of production that are stable or lower in supply. Conversely the wool types growing in supply will be somewhat restrained until a price point is hit whereby they can be consumed on a greater scale at a lower consumer price point.

### GROWTH IN PRICE FOR MERINO FLEECE TYPES

At the beginning of November in the 2016/17 season, the Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) sits at 1320 ac/kg clean compared to an EMI of 1207 ac/kg clean just 12 months ago. All Merino fleece types are in a positive position compared to a year ago, with impressive gains of around 100 ac/kg clean seen for those wools finer than 19.5 micron and 50 ac/kg clean for types in the range of 19.6 to 25 microns - see graph above. The crossbred segment has seen a lesser performance over the year as the growing global supply has taken toll on that sector of the market.

### DROP IN AMOUNT OF WOOL TESTED...

The AWTA Key Test Data for the 2016/17 season released in early November indicated there had been a 3.6% drop in the amount of wool tested compared to the 2015/16 season. A volume of 110.8 million kg greasy has been tested since the season commencement in July 2016, compared with 114.9 mkg greasy for the corresponding period last season, a drop of 4.1 mkg greasy. Whilst those figures demonstrate overall weight tested is down, the comparisons of

when total lots tested and total bales tested are exposed, it shows a season to season reduction in sale lots of 6.1% (ie larger lot size) and 4.4% less bales (ie heavier bales). As an aside, these figures give stimulus, as both larger lot size and heavier bales aid in the overall cost efficiency of the industry's selling and logistics systems.

### ...BUT INCREASE IN AMOUNT OF WOOL AT AUCTION

Interestingly, and perhaps contradictory to the supply trend, is the change in the amount of wool offered at auctions. This season has actually seen an increase of 5.2% in first hand offered wool at auction. In early November of the 2016/17 season 64.8 million kg clean had been offered for sale compared to 61.6 million kg clean. Encouragingly, this larger offering has not aggressively impacted upon the demand for the fibre and prices have remained at very positive levels in the Merino sector and average prices for the crossbred descriptions.

Adding to the supply paradox, production figures released and updated by the Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee has continually forecast the 2016/17 season to be unchanged at 325 million kg greasy in wool production terms. **B**

Wool agent **Lizzy Shen**

# AN INSIDER'S VIEW ON CHINA

**China-based wool agent Lizzy Shen** provides in this article, written especially for *Beyond the Bale*, her frank and informative insights into the Chinese wool industry, from an insider's perspective.

As a wool agent, Lizzy represents many Australian exporters and constantly assists them to make substantial sales each year into **Chinese textile markets**. She is extremely well respected throughout the wool supply chain both in Australia and China.

**F**or me, 2016 has brought some big surprises in the wool industry. Regrettably the second biggest top making mill in China went bankrupt – it had been in business 16 years and produced 10,000 mt tops per year. We also saw one of the top 10 buyers at Australian auction close their business after running for about 10 months. It is a true reflection of how hard both wool importers and exporters are struggling to make a living in our industry.

On a positive note, at the beginning of 2016 I would not have imagined that T55FNF<sup>1</sup> (21 micron Merino fleece) would go above USD11.00/kg CIF<sup>2</sup> again in the middle of the year; nor would I have thought that 18.5 micron greasy wool for carbonising would reach USD10.50/kg CIF at auction. All these high price levels point to a good calendar year for Merino of all descriptions, and I think that Merinos will continue to sell well due to global low stocks and good demand.

However, it has been a very tough and painful year for all crossbred mills and traders, no matter if it is long for combing or short for carding. Right now, the USD prices of crossbreds such as T424FNF<sup>1</sup> (28.8 micron crossbred fleece) have reached the low level of early 2011, so some big companies have started to buy for stocks with no real orders in hand.

Chinese wool importers take the biggest risks in respect of time than any other players in the industry. After they confirm their purchases, it will be at least 50 days until the greasy wool will reach them in China from Australia. When they try to sell the wool tops, it is two months later. During those two months, anything could happen. I remember clearly at the IWTO conference in May 2015, my clients booked fine open top (knitwear) greasy with me, predicting a

profit of <sup>3</sup>RMB15/kg, but when they finally sold the tops in August, they lost RMB5/kg. After experiencing so many market fluctuations, importers are aware that nothing is for sure until the products are sold. Furthermore, if you think about the continual RMB devaluation throughout the whole year (-4% until early November), it is quite hard for any Chinese wool importer to make a good profit as most of them pay for the wool 90 days after the wool is shipped from Australia.

Importers only tend to want to buy when others are buying. If others are not buying, they feel like waiting with the others, hoping for a lower price. Because of this sentiment, we have seen Chinese importers act in a similar manner. They can all be quiet for one or two weeks, then they rush to buy all at once. I understand this is not ideal for exporters, and even importers. I have been trying to stimulate the clients to buy consistently each week, but many of them prefer to catch the low point, like what they try to do on the stock market.

China demand in wool is mixed for different

categories. No doubt, crossbreds is not good due to large stocks in tops, yarns and fabrics carried from last season, and we still have not seen any signs of improvement yet.

Ever since T55FNF went above USD10.00/kg CIF, most greasy wool traders, and top, yarn and fabric makers didn't want to hold any extra stocks, so there have been hardly any stocks since April 2016. All the mills have been operating in a hand to mouth manner, including all the big and medium top makers. This style of purchase will keep going unless we see T55FNF go below USD10.00/kg CIF, if it does.

Carding demand was so-so before August. Then we saw it booming in August to October. By mid-October, all the Merino carbonised wool was sold and all the carbonising mills are looking for wool; for example, types like good colour, 18.5 micron, two-inch in greasy length went up USD1/kg within one month after the Nanjing Wool Conference. Fine cardings will receive fairly good demand in 2017 due to barely no stocks in China and products are going finer and higher quality year after year. **B**

## AWI NOTES

<sup>1</sup> T55FNF / T424FNF etc are probably familiar terms to our middle to older aged woolgrowers from the days of the AWC scheme types. This system pre-dates the current AWEX ID typing. China in general still uses the old AWC scheme type descriptors to this day when ordering wool from Australia.

<sup>2</sup> CIF means cost of insurance and freight. Most wool is sold under these terms

into China. In China the only price that is generally relevant to them when importing is USD CIF, or the less used AUD CIF. Greasy prices received by woolgrowers are completely foreign to China users.

<sup>3</sup> RMB means renminbi, the official currency of the People's Republic of China. The yuan (CNY) is the basic unit of the renminbi. **B**

# STAYING RELEVANT

## AMIDST SHIFTING FASHION INDUSTRY DYNAMICS



**Stuart Ford**, AWI General Manager  
– Western Hemisphere

**AWI's General Manager for the Western Hemisphere, Stuart Ford**, who is based in our Paris office, provides his perspective on how traditional models in the fashion industry are changing and the opportunities for wool.

**P**redictions about the fashion industry are as plentiful as flies in an Australian summer, and often as distracting. One thing that is clear to most observers though, is that there is a tangible change in consumer behaviour, both in the way they weigh up buying decisions and also how they consume information.

Some of the sentiment drivers of this are macro and global that we are unable to influence. That includes factors as diverse as Brexit market wobbles, the uncertainty about the US election, changes in climatic patterns, wildly oscillating currency fluctuations, and the demise of the conspicuous consumer mentality, to name just a few.

However, other issues such as changes in the ways consumers evaluate product, increasing fibre performance knowledge, a plethora of available channels to market, a desire for return to authentic products, wholesaler-model challenges and a drive to value we do have to be aware of, and we do need to actively help our brand partners manage.

Traditional models are challenged. We now see direct from runway to store collections, a conflation of men's and women's lines and a headlong rush to the highly-competitive athleisure space from the fashion houses and designers facing declining sales in traditional segments. We also see retailers challenged by an always-on-sale mentality and a breakdown of the traditional die-hard designer allegiances. People shop around. They mix and match the high-end with the mass-merchant, the new with the vintage. We see designers hopping fashion house to fashion house in an attempt for competitive differentiation and creative license. We are deluged with stories of retailers reducing

store numbers or folding entirely depending on their level of management expertise and/or depth of their pockets.

In a recent conversation with a leading fashion house here in Paris, the head of the company opined that the consumer driver mix had changed to where now the quality, value and authenticity of the product are the key differentiators and the designer name a secondary consideration... and this opinion from a designer himself. *Sacre bleu* – how dare they do this! Hard times for the old school design aficionados indeed. Consumers vote with their wallet as well as their heart.

So as our potential brand partners change their approach, we as an enabler of wool consumption need to adapt our marketing approach accordingly. We have to be more agile and nimbler as selling seasons truncate and clients want products to market in increasingly rapid production cycles. We have to be more innovative in our product and process supply chain as brands demand the newest and most functional fibres for their lines. We have to be more creative in the way we tell the fibre story to consumers eager to make sustainable buying decisions. We need to manage an increasingly complex digital landscape where consumers want to marry emotionally-charged attention-grabbing multi-media content with the opportunity for immediate purchase and resulting instant gratification.

We also operate in a world of celebrity ascendancy. A famous luminary in one field can launch a cross-platform sales channel in another, such as a Kanye West sneaker line, a Gwyneth Paltrow clothing line, or Kate Hudson athleisure line, and somehow have instant fashion credibility. Equally as

disruptive is that an unknown blogger can suddenly break out and become the flavour of the day but gone tomorrow. By the time passes between writing this article and it appearing in print, several dozen bloggers will have cycled in and out of favour. Trends, colour palettes and silhouette can also change equally as quickly driven by these market influencers.

There is however good news for wool among this market madness. Consumers are looking for authentic product with a sustainable heritage. They are more informed about the benefit and impact of the fibre for function, feel and drape. They care about longevity and performance. Brands are looking for high-yield products to maximise profit per square metre, pricing stability and competitive advantage. Everyone is looking for a story to tell about the product that elevates it above the other multitude of options in a cluttered market.

We have a challenging road ahead in the consumer marketplace in the Northern Hemisphere, but we have a good start and an eager team. The trick is to stay relevant and abreast of the industry directions and that you can only do through immersion in the market on a daily basis. This market insight then needs to be fed back to the supply chain in a continuous cycle of performance improvement. This allows the supply chain to react to consumer trends and deliver product that our brands are keen to market and that at the end of the day is how more wool gets consumed and sold. The glitz, glamour and cameras of the fashion world offer the sizzle and the magazine covers, but it is the hard yards at retail level that guarantee our continued success.

Onwards!

# COMPETITIONS PROMOTE EXCELLENCE

AWI provides support to **shearing and woolhandling competitions at local, state and national levels.** The aim is promote excellence and encourage better techniques in shearing and woolhandling.



South Australian shearer **Shannon Warnest** winning the **2016 Australian National Shearing** title.

**A**WI once again sponsored the National Championships and Trans-Tasman Tests, which were held this year at Warialda in NSW in October.

In addition to these competitions at the event, a highlight was workshops at which novice, intermediate and senior wool handlers and shearers had the opportunity to learn and refine their skills amongst some of the very best professionals in the country. They then also had the opportunity to compete in the novice to senior shearing and woolhandling competitions at the event.

AWI provides support for this event, plus many local, regional and state shearing and woolhandling competitions across the country, with the main aims of promoting excellence

within the shearing industry, and to encourage young people to join the industry.

AWI Shearing Industry Training Development Coordinator Jim Murray says AWI is keen to raise the profile and status of the shearing industry by enabling participation in well conducted shearing and woolhandling competitions.

“Competitions help encourage better techniques in shearing and woolhandling, which is for the benefit of the woolgrowing industry from which they derive,” he said.

“AWI’s support aims to encourage a quality workforce, an interest in wool, and an appreciation of the art and skill of shearers and wool handlers. AWI’s financial support for competitions makes a significant impact on the viability of many competitions.

“The National Championships are particularly significant as they serve as selection trials for the Australian team, which will contest next year’s World Shearing and Wool Handling Championships in Invercargill in February.”

Former World Champion Shannon Warnest from South Australia won the National Shearing final for the eleventh time and will represent Australia in his sixth world titles along with Jason Wingfield. 25-year-old Sophie Huf of Victoria won the National Woolhandling final for the first time and will compete in her first world titles along with Mel Morris. John Dalla of South Australia continued his dominance of blade shearing in Australia, winning the National Blade Shearing final for the eighth time at just 27 years of age. He will compete at Invercargill along with Ken French.

Australia regained Trans-Tasman Shearing Test supremacy with a big win over the New Zealand team. Australia has now won 31 of the 60 tests since the first official Trans-Tasman Test was held in 1974.

## 2016 NATIONAL SHEARING AND WOOLHANDLING CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS

### NATIONAL SHEARING FINAL

1. Shannon Warnest (SA) 88.40
2. Jason Wingfield (Vic) 91.20
3. Daniel McIntyre (NSW) 96.05
4. Justin Dolphin (SA) 96.25
5. Wayne Hosie (NSW) 98.80
6. Robert Glover (Tas) 100.60

### NATIONAL BLADES FINAL

1. John Dalla (SA) 54.48
2. Ken French (Vic) 75.22
3. Brad Keller (Vic) 87.97
4. Shaun Wilson (NSW) 92.68
5. Mal Griffiths (Vic) 97.15
6. Jim Murray (NSW) 103.85

### NATIONAL WOOLHANDLING FINAL

1. Sophie Huf (Vic) 27.63
2. Mel Morris (Tas) 28.47
3. Aroha Garvin (WA) 29.23
4. Angela Wakely (NSW) 32.33
5. Lisa Wardlaw (Vic) 33.53
6. Michelle Walker (Tas) 36.43

### NATIONAL TEAM FINALS

1. New South Wales 88.18
2. Victoria 102.60
3. Western Australia 103.15

### TRANS-TASMAN SHEARING TEST

#### 1. Australia 291.07

Daniel McIntyre 93.90  
Shannon Warnest 97.53  
Justin Dolphin 99.64

#### 2. New Zealand 308.28

Nathan Stratford 96.76  
Rowland Smith 105.71  
Tony Coster 105.81

## BEYOND THE BALE BOOT COMPETITION WINNERS

Congratulations to the ten winners of the *Beyond the Bale* Boot Competition, which was run on the back of the address sheet of the September edition of *Beyond the Bale*. The winners receive a pair of R.M. Williams boots. The ten winners are: Anthony Gardiner, Mt Burr SA; Nola Wanlace, Maryborough Vic; Ian Grigg, Bungaree Vic; John Marriott, Point Lonsdale Vic; Eckhard Goers, Derrinal Vic; Thomas Hardwicke, Sutton NSW; John Crawford, Victoria Valley Vic; Darryl Delahoy, Bulart Vic; Edwin O’Brien, Cumnock NSW; Daniel Pryse, Torrita Vic.

# READERS' PHOTOS!

Have you got any interesting photos that you'd like to share with other readers of *Beyond the Bale*?

If so, please email the image and a brief description to the editor of *Beyond the*

*Bale* Richard Smith at [richard.smith@wool.com](mailto:richard.smith@wool.com).

Here are a few photos that we have recently received from readers.

## DEW ON THE EWES

Peter McCallum sent in this photo of his ewes and lambs on a foggy morning between Booleroo Centre and Melrose in the Southern Flinders Ranges area of South Australia.



## BIODIVERSITY ON FARM

Lisette Mill of the Basalt to Bay Landcare Network sent in this photo of a brolga amongst sheep on Susan and David Rowbottom's 'Rowensville' property in South Western Victoria.



## PLAY TIME

Leanne Ohlmeyer from Waikerie in South Australia sent in this photo of her son Ben with their lambs playing together.



## BASIL'S FIRST SHEARING

Don Piper of 'Earlston Park' near Violet Town in north eastern Victoria sent in this photo of his son Basil, at 6 months of age, in the shed after shearing.



WIN!!!

If you submit a photo that gets published in Readers' Photos, you'll receive an autographed copy of Andrew Chapman's 'Woolsheds'.

This 216-page hardback book is an invaluable historical record of an Australian icon. It is also available to purchase from [www.andrewchapmanphotography.com](http://www.andrewchapmanphotography.com) and good bookshops.

## ALL HANDS ON DECK

Shirley Blyton from Numeralla in NSW sent in this photo of her granddaughter Ellie, who normally works in Canberra, helping out on a busy day in the shearing shed.



## COOPWORTH EWE AND TWINS

David Bain of Stockyard Hill in Victoria sent in this photo of a Coopworth ewe demonstrating the breed's excellent mothering ability, with her two lambs sheltering from the rain.



## A SUPERFINE JOB DONE

Adam Jones of 'Redside' at Melton Mowbray in Tasmania sent in this photo of his superfine Merino clip ready for dispatch.





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1. Hosking BC et al. 2010. A pooled analysis of the efficacy of monepantel, an aminoacetonitrile derivative against gastrointestinal nematodes of sheep. Parasitol Res 106, 529- 532. 2. Baker KE et al. 2012. Efficacy of monepantel and anthelmintic combinations against multiple-resistant *Haemonchus contortus* in sheep, including characterisation of the nematode isolate. Vet Parasitol 186(3-4), 513-7. \*Contact Elanco Animal Health or your rural supplier for terms and conditions. Offer valid 15/09/16–15/12/16 or while stocks last. ZOLVIX contains 25 g/L monepantel, a member of the Amino-Acetonitrile Derivatives (AADs) class of anthelmintics. For full product details contact: Elanco Customer Assistance 1800 633 768 TOLL FREE, 8:30 am–5:30 pm EST Monday to Friday from anywhere in Australia. Elanco, ZOLVIX™ and the diagonal bar are trademarks owned or licensed by Eli Lilly and Company, its subsidiaries or affiliates. ©2016 Elanco, a division of Eli Lilly and Company Limited. EAH16193A AUSHPZOL00021



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