

# Beyond the bale

PROFIT FROM WOOL INNOVATION

ISSUE 58 MARCH 2014

## THE SHEEP'S BACK

IMPROVING ON-FARM PRODUCTIVITY  
MARKETING AUSTRALIAN WOOL  
THE NEXT GENERATION

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## AWI ONLINE RESOURCES

With a strong focus on market intelligence and on-farm tools to lift profitability, AWI's new Wool.com website, revamped in August last year, is proving popular with woolgrowers.

Wool.com includes information and publications across a range of topics including: sheep health, welfare and productivity; wool harvesting and quality preparation; production systems and eco credentials; education and extension.

The site also provides information on where woolgrower levies are invested by AWI.



## Drought resources

With dry conditions affecting regions across Australia, the drought resources section of the website will be of particular interest. It contains a range of drought planning, management and recovery resources available for woolgrowers going into, enduring and recovering from drought. To access these resources visit

[www.wool.com/droughtresources](http://www.wool.com/droughtresources)

The following four key AWI publications are also available hard copy from the AWI Helpline on 1800 070 099: Managing Sheep in Droughtlots; Stock Water – a Limited Resource; Managing Fodder Prices for Droughts; Which Sheep do I Keep?

## AWI e-newsletters

AWI also produces several (free) e-newsletters to which woolgrowers can subscribe and receive by email:

- Weekly wool market review (weekly)
- AWI woolgrowers' newsletter – including market intelligence report (monthly)
- Beyond the Bale e-newsletter (quarterly)
- AWI media update (ad hoc)
- Woolmark.com newsletter (monthly)

To subscribe, visit [www.wool.com/subscribe](http://www.wool.com/subscribe)



*Beyond the Bale* is published by **Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI)**, a company funded by Australian woolgrowers and the Australian Government.

AWI's goal is to help increase the demand for wool by actively selling Merino wool and its attributes through investments in marketing, innovation and R&D – from farm to fashion and interiors.

## AWI INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

- 1. ON-FARM R&D
- 3. MARKETING
- 2. OFF-FARM R&D
- 4. GLOBAL BUSINESS SERVICES

View the interactive online edition of *Beyond the Bale*, with pop-up videos and image galleries, at <http://beyondthebale.wool.com>

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# Getting on with business

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

**On-farm input costs:** The rise in on-farm input costs continues to place pressure on woolgrowers' profitability. AWI acknowledges woolgrowers' concerns about these costs. Our on-farm R&D portfolio will continue to develop and promote products and practices to reduce the cost of production on-farm through innovations in areas such as sheep health and nutrition, genetic technologies to breed more productive sheep, pastures and grazing, and shearing and woolhandling.

**Mixed enterprises:** How and where wool fits into a mixed enterprise has often been a difficult question for many producers, but those producers who fit wool within their business are finding it does work and is an important additional enterprise. Given the recent past experience of variable seasonal conditions, plus the high input costs of cropping, producers in the wheat-sheep zone and low rainfall areas are seeing the benefit of having a wool enterprise to manage their risk.

**Wild dogs:** The devastating impact of wild dogs has been felt across many areas of the pastoral zone and along the Great Dividing Range in NSW and Victoria. However, there have been successes in wild dog control when farmers and landholders come together to tackle the problem in a coordinated way. In these situations, some producers have been confident enough to increase their flock size and some farmers to return to sheep. Funding is available to groups under AWI's 'Community Wild Dog Control Initiative' with applications open to new groups as well as those groups that have previously received funding from AWI. AWI is keen to help groups develop long term solutions.

**Attracting and retaining shearers and woolhandlers:** Adequate numbers of highly skilled professional shearers and wool handlers are key to the profitability of the Australian wool industry. Hundreds of shearers and woolhandlers are being trained directly through AWI-funded programs across Australia. AWI is also providing increased support for shearing and woolhandling competitions across the

country to promote excellence within the shearing industry, and to encourage young people to join the industry. If we want to attract – and retain – these new professionals in the industry, we need to ensure that they have professional and safe shed conditions in which to work.

**The Woolmark brand's 50-year anniversary:** 2014 marks the 50th anniversary of the world-famous Woolmark brand. The Woolmark logo has been applied to more than five billion products worldwide since it was first launched in 1964. Its enduring appeal continues to deliver significant returns to Australian woolgrowers who own it. As well as its use on products through the Woolmark Licensing Program, the logo is being used widely to promote Australian wool through all of AWI's global marketing campaigns.

**International Woolmark Prize:** This initiative is wholly aimed at increasing the global demand for wool. This year's competition has been incredibly successful at showcasing the versatility and quality of Merino wool to the fashion and textile industries and consumers. It continues to gain extraordinary momentum, generating significant interest across the globe; we will continue with, and expand, the award next year. Through this competition, we now have a network of the world's leading influencers of fashion – at the jury, designer and media level – endorsing wool, and broader recognition of the fibre's qualities amongst consumers across the world.

**Wool in sports/outdoor apparel:** AWI continues to cement Merino fibre's presence in the sports and outdoor market, collaborating with leading manufacturers and brands to promote the natural benefits of wool as a performance fibre. A majority of the world's leading outdoor brands now incorporate Merino wool innovations in their collections. And while there has been widespread uptake of Merino wool in next-to-skin apparel, Merino wool is also now emerging as a fibre used in outerwear and lining.

**Interiors:** The woollen interiors sector remains strong despite ongoing challenging global economic conditions, according to Woolmark licensees at the influential Heimtextil trade show. This is good news for

growers of broader micron and crossbred wool. As in previous years at Heimtextil, AWI co-hosted the Wool Arena – a focal point for the industry to promote the fibre at the show – highlighting the superior natural benefits of all wool. This year AWI also showcased The Wool Lab Interiors – the guide to the best wool textiles and the most interesting and innovative applications of wool in the furnishing and interior textile sectors.

**E-communications:** Feedback from woolgrowers indicates that our monthly Woolgrower e-newsletter has proved successful in providing them with a regular snapshot of key projects and events involving AWI. It complements well our quarterly *Beyond the Bale* magazine. To subscribe to any or all of AWI's free e-newsletters visit [www.wool.com/subscribe](http://www.wool.com/subscribe).

**AWI Scanner App:** AWI has released an App through which AWI shareholders and wool levy payers can view and update their contact details (phone number and email address) on the AWI register, and view the amount of wool levies they have paid in the past three years. Visit [www.wool.com/shareregistry](http://www.wool.com/shareregistry) for details.

Stuart McCullough  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Australian Wool Innovation





# INTERNATIONAL WOOLMARK PRIZE

The winner of the 2013/14 International Woolmark Prize Rahul Mishra of India, with two models wearing his winning designs.

## FAST FACTS

- The modernity and quality of Merino wool apparel was showcased to the world's media at the final of the 2013/14 International Woolmark Prize.
- Rahul Mishra from India was announced as the winner of the award at an event held last month during Milan Fashion Week.
- The high profile judging panel of the award included Frida Giannini, Franca Sozzani, Tim Blanks, Angelica Cheung, Alexa Chung, Colette Garnsey and representatives from the global IWP retail partners.
- An important element of the initiative is the commercialisation of Australian Merino wool products within leading retailers across the world.

The quality, versatility and modernity of Merino wool apparel was showcased to the world's media last month at the final of the 2013/14 International Woolmark Prize – the pinnacle of AWI's activities to promote the use of wool in fashion.

The International Woolmark Prize, held for the first time last year, is a reincarnation of the award for excellence in design using wool that was created in 1953 by the International Wool Secretariat (IWS) to support emerging designers. That IWS award has an impressive alumni – the following year after it was established, a young Karl Lagerfeld and Yves Saint

Laurent, now world famous and iconic designers, won IWS awards for their innovative designs.

AWI CEO Stuart McCullough said AWI relaunched the awards last year to demonstrate the key role for Merino wool in the international fashion industry, with the aim to increase the global demand for Australian wool.

"This global search for the very best upcoming designers has put Merino wool into the hands and minds of tomorrow's trend setters," he said. "Their designs and ideas will be seen on catwalks today but will be worn in the streets of Shanghai, Tokyo, Paris and New York for many years to come and this is why the International Woolmark Prize is such an important investment for woolgrowers.

"The award is our commitment to supporting the future of the wool in the international fashion industry and we are honoured to have received backing from the global industry by way of our premier retail partners and judges both at the international and regional level.

"The competition has gained extraordinary momentum over the past two years, generating a significant interest across the globe. It has evolved into a highly coveted, internationally recognised award. We will continue with, and expand, the award next year to also include a menswear award."

Rahul Mishra was announced as the winner of the 2013/14 International Woolmark Prize. The fashion designer from

India was presented with the award at an event held on 21 February during Milan Fashion Week.

His winning Merino wool collection was based on craftsmanship and his incredible knowledge of techniques and embroidery.

"For me, Rahul has won because of his ability to apply his knowledge of embroideries through wool, one of the most versatile fibres with originality in an unexpected way," explained judge Frida Giannini, Gucci's Creative Director.

"His interpretation was so delicate and beautiful," said fellow judge Alexa Chung. "I was really moved by Rahul's story. I believe he is well deserving of this award."

The designer declared: "I feel like this is a dream and this is giving me new hopes for my future career. This award will change the perception of global fashion in regards to Indian fashion and this is all because of wool – an amazing fibre, the fibre of possibilities."

## THE COMPETITION

After a global search, reaching across 20 countries and involving 48 emerging designers nominated by fashion industry figures in their respective regions, the final five designers (who each won their regional competitions last year and therefore the right to compete at in the final) were:

- **ffiXXed** – based in Hong Kong, representing Asia
- **Christopher Esber** – from Sydney, representing Australia

- **Sibling** – from the UK, representing Europe
- **Rahul Mishra** – from India, representing the India and the Middle East region
- **Altuzarra** – representing the USA.

At last month's final, these five regional winners each showed a new six piece Merino wool collection to a judging panel of industry experts at the official event during Milan Fashion Week.

The finalists also attended face-to-face interviews with the judging panel to present their designs, before showing their six-piece collection – made from a minimum of 80 per cent Merino wool – on the catwalk to an audience of the most influential journalists and 'names' of the fashion world.

Alongside prestigious recognition, the prize was AU\$100,000 and the opportunity to be stocked in the most important retailers around the globe including Harvey Nichols (London), Saks Fifth Avenue (New York), 10 Corso Como (Milan), Joyce (China), David Jones (Sydney), Colette (France) and mytheresa.com (Germany). The winning collection will be available at retail from August 2014.

## THE JUDGES

The judging panel was made up of some of the most important and influential people in fashion, each one a pillar of the global fashion industry, plus representatives from some of the global IWP retail partners:

- **Frida Giannini**, Creative Director, Gucci
- **Franca Sozzani**, Editor-in-Chief of Vogue Italia, L'Uomo Vogue Italia and Vogue.it. Editorial Director of Condé Nast Italia. "Goodwill Ambassador for Fashion 4 Development" for the UN
- **Tim Blanks**, Editor-at-Large Style.com
- **Angelica Cheung**, Editor-at-Large Vogue China
- **Alexa Chung**, Presenter, model and writer
- **Colette Garnsey**, Director of AWI
- **Colin McDowell**, Mentor to the designers
- **Carla Sozzani**, 10 Corso Como, Italy
- **Colleen Sherin**, Saks Fifth Avenue, USA
- **Sarah Andelman**, Colette, France
- **Sophie Clark**, David Jones, Australia
- **Susanne Botschen**, MyTheresa.com, Germany.

More information:

View a video and images from the event at [www.merino.com](http://www.merino.com), [www.woolmarkprize.com](http://www.woolmarkprize.com) and [www.woolmark.com](http://www.woolmark.com)



Each of the five finalists showed a six piece Merino wool collection at the event in Milan in front of an audience of the some of most influential journalists and 'names' of the fashion world. Pictured are the collections of winner Rahul Mishra (left) and Sibling (right).



Judges at the finals event: Sophie Clark, Colleen Sherin, Tim Blanks, Carla Sozzani, Angelica Cheung, Alexa Chung, Frida Giannini, Susanne Botschen, Colette Garnsey, Sarah Andelman.



The winning designs of Rahul Mishra being examined during judging by Alexa Chung and Tim Blanks.

1

1. Rahul Mishra's winning collection displayed progressive graphic hand embroidery with Merino wool yarn on jackets, dresses and pants.



Rahul Mishra  
representing India  
and Middle East



2

2. Rahul Mishra with judge Alexa Chung after receiving his award. The brand's philosophy revolves around integrating the rich heritage of Indian craft with the constantly varying pulse of global fashion. ([www.facebook.com/RahulMishra.in](http://www.facebook.com/RahulMishra.in))

3

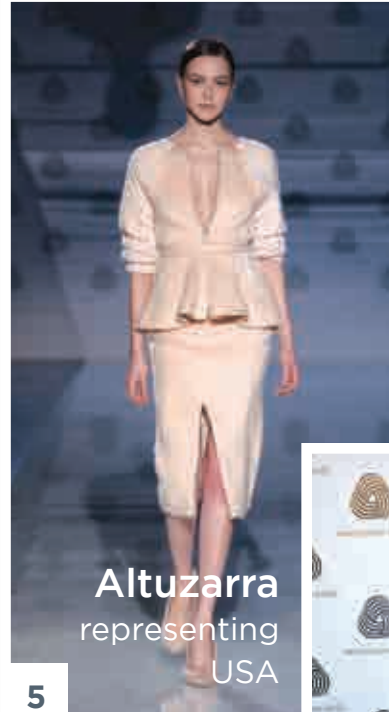
3. The Sibling collection gives knitwear a good old-fashioned shake-up. Their mission statement: let's put the fun into classics.



Sibling  
representing Europe

4

4. Sid Bryan, Joe Bates and Cozette McCreery of UK-based Sibling have strong experience with top name designers. ([www.siblinglondon.com](http://www.siblinglondon.com))



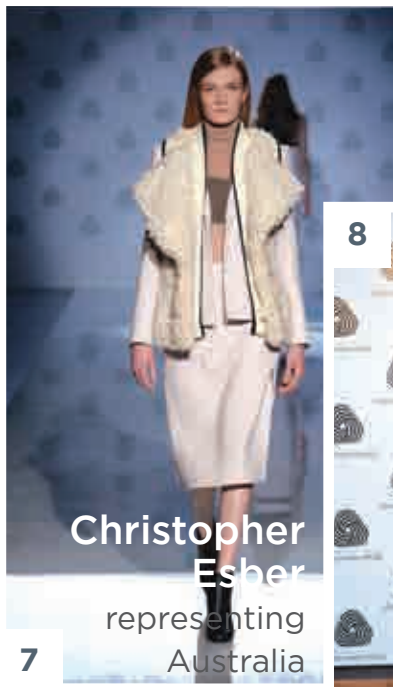
Altuzarra  
representing  
USA

5

6. Altuzarra is a luxury women's ready-to-wear brand launched in 2008 in New York by Joseph Altuzarra. ([www.altuzarra.com](http://www.altuzarra.com))



6



**Christopher Esber**  
representing  
Australia

7

7. Christopher Esber's collection utilises innovative wool product developments in the form of deconstructed suiting.



8

8. Since the brand's inception, the Sydney designer has received strong media support and won several industry accolades. ([www.christopheresber.com.au](http://www.christopheresber.com.au))

# Why AWI invests in leading fashion

To achieve its mission of increasing the global demand for Australian wool, it is vital for AWI to reinforce the presence of Australian Merino wool in the international fashion industry.

The involvement of the world's leading fashion designers with Australian Merino wool is extremely important because of their enormous influence in setting global trends for the mainstream retail brands.

What we see on the world's catwalks this year quickly makes it into the mainstream fashion sector. The broader fashion industry looks to designers for the latest trends. Their work with fabrics like Australian Merino wool has a 'trickle down' effect which cannot be underestimated.

The International Woolmark Prize is the "jewel" in AWI's fashion promotion activities. It is designed to generate long term incremental demand by connecting emerging designers, emerging markets and consumers.

It is an award for the next generation, shifting the focus from glamour to true talent as a way to highlight the beauty of the Merino wool fibre at the hands of the future leaders of the industry.

New demand will come from the creation of increased knowledge of and lifetime loyalty to wool amongst designers, along with the immediate presence of Woolmark-branded Merino wool collections in the top boutiques and retailers across the globe.

This program gives AWI the opportunity to work at three levels in the fashion apparel segment:

- At the jury level, there is the engagement with an alumnus of the world's leading influencers of fashion, all of whom have a shared and stated interest in the development of new talent and new markets.
- At the participant (and winner) levels, AWI imbues them with knowledge of wool fibre at an early stage in the commercial development and works with them to create a connection to wool which will stay with them throughout their careers.
- At a broader global fashion apparel audience level, through the creation of "documentary" style content distributed through digital and broadcast media.



**ffiXXed**  
representing Asia

9

9. ffiXXed's fashion forward capsule collection uses wool in a very modern way.



10

10. ffiXXed is a ready-to-wear fashion label based in Hong Kong initiated by design duo Kain Picken and Fiona Lau. ([www.ffiixed.com](http://www.ffiixed.com))

# Campaign for Wool across the world



The fashion show in the prestigious Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II in Milan was a highlight of 2013's Campaign for Wool events.

## FAST FACTS

- Celebrations of wool continued to unfold across key consumer markets during the northern hemisphere autumn and winter retail seasons.
- The Campaign for Wool was celebrated on an unprecedented global scale in 2013.
- The campaign has been instrumental in driving a new demand for wool internationally.

**2013** saw the completion of the Campaign for Wool's fourth year, as the global initiative continues to encourage manufacturers, retailers and designers to live naturally and choose wool, and in turn educate consumers about the fibre's environmental benefits.

The Campaign for Wool, of which His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales is Patron, is run every year through a sequence of Wool Weeks in the most important key markets of the world through co-branding initiatives and in-store promotions.

The Campaign continues to expand across the world. During 2013, the campaign was celebrated on an unprecedented scale across international consumer markets, generating global editorial coverage worth more than AU\$40 million, up from AU\$24 million in 2012.

The December edition of *Beyond the Bale* outlined some highlight northern hemisphere autumn events in Italy, the UK, the Netherlands, Germany and Japan; and listed below are events in some other countries which capped off another successful year for the Campaign for Wool.



### SPAIN

Spain hosted Campaign for Wool celebrations for its third year. More than 100 retailers and brands threw their support behind the campaign with window decorations, special promotions and in-store activities.



Spain: The window display of one of more than 100 retailers and brands that promoted wool products during Wool Week.

Social media activity engaged more than 10,000 followers and the Campaign for Wool achieved more AU\$3.7 million in PR value.

As in previous years, the Campaign continued to work closely with the city council of Madrid to bring wool-themed events to the streets. For 2013 the high-end commercial centre of Madrid, Barrio de Salamanca, celebrated wool with activities open to the public.

A "Wool Park" was created in central Madrid, where visitors could discover all about wool's natural properties in a timeless garden where all seasons converged to show wool's benefits year around, and where a flock of sheep delighted visitors.

### CHINA

The fashion and education initiative "Wool School", which has already been successfully running in other regions, launched in China in 2013 as part of the country's Campaign for Wool celebrations.



China: Wool School products on models at Super Brand Mall.

The initiative paired some of China's best-known retailers – Anzheng, Decoster, Eachway, ICICLE, JNBY and White Collar – with fashion and textile design students from design institutions across the country.

It introduced the students to the many natural advantages and versatility of wool, and inspired them to create outstanding woollen designs with the guidance of designers from the leading Chinese brands.

The designs of the six student designers were displayed during Wool Week at Super Brand Mall in Shanghai at a special pop-up store. The launch was attended by journalists from renowned fashion and trade media.

### BELGIUM

Antwerp hosted a Fashion Talks seminar as part of a special, one-off Campaign for Wool event.

An esteemed panel including Style.com editor-at-large Tim Blanks, fashion designer Walter van Beirendonck and industry stalwarts Stefan Siegel and Concetta Lanciaux discussed the changing landscape of fashion in front of a 500-strong audience which included Queen Mathilde of Belgium, along with



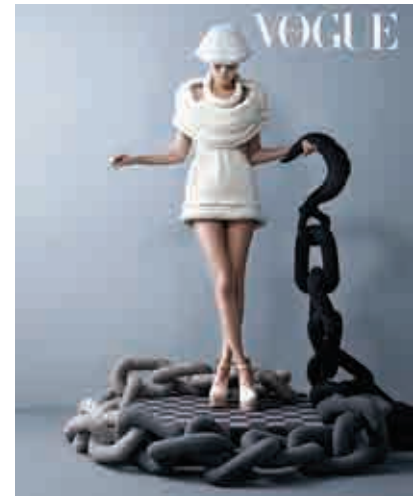
Belgium: Attendees at the Fashion Talks seminar.

Prime Minister Kris Peeters who opened the event.

2012/13 International Woolmark Prize winner Christian Wijnants spoke with journalist Veerle Windels about the positive effect winning the award has had on his career, in particular the commercialisation of his winning collection in leading global retailers such as Harvey Nichols, 10 Corso Como and David Jones.

### KOREA

The travelling Wool Modern exhibition, as part of the global Campaign for Wool, was on display at the Ara Art Centre in Seoul as part of Wool Week Korea.



Korea: An exhibit at the Wool Modern exhibition in Seoul, as featured in Vogue Korea.

The exhibition featured a number of international works as well as specially commissioned pieces from Korean designers showcasing the versatility of wool. It attracted more than 4000 visitors.

Wool Modern Korea included educational talks for fashion students. Designer HwaJin Oh and exhibition curator Charlotte Lurot presented production techniques and processes using wool.

In addition to the Wool Modern exhibition, there was a retail campaign involving collaborations with leading department store Lotte, and fashion brands such as DAKS, Barbour, John Smedley and Wolsey. Lotte presented a wool-themed fashion show in association with DAKS and the Campaign for Wool, highlighting wool's natural, renewable and biodegradable properties. DAKS, DAKS Golf, DAKS Kids, Vivienne Westwood, Burberry, Paul Smith, Cambridge Members and Wolsey also displayed Campaign for Wool message boards in Lotte, celebrating the campaign and encouraging consumers to live naturally and choose wool.

More information:  
[www.campaignforwool.org](http://www.campaignforwool.org)



THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL  
Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales



THE WOOLMARK COMPANY  
SUPPORTS THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL

# Keep warm and carry on - in wool



Australian Merino wool was showcased at Churchill's underground Cabinet War Rooms in January, in a modern interpretation of wool clothes and styles befitting the 1940s.

## FAST FACTS

- Australian Merino wool was showcased at Churchill's underground Cabinet War Rooms in January, in a modern interpretation of wool clothes and styles befitting the 1940s.
- The event was staged by as part of the Autumn/Winter 2014/15 edition of the *London Collections: Men* fashion week.
- As a supporter of *London Collections: Men* since the event's inception, AWI continues to highlight the relevance of Australian Merino wool within menswear.

As the northern hemisphere faced the cold weather conditions befitting winter, AWI was involved in initiatives to remind consumers and the trade of how wool clothing is ideal for keeping them warm – as much today as it has traditionally done throughout history. With some exceptions, Australian wool is now much softer and processed lighter and finer making it even more ideal as a natural fibre for layering up for winter.

No time was as cold as during the winters of London during the 1940s, when there were restrictions on the availability of fuel as well as food. And so, in recognition to those times, AWI collaborated with

Savile Row and St James's in January for an event at Churchill's underground Cabinet War Rooms in a modern interpretation of wool clothes and styles befitting that decade. It delivered an autumn/winter message of the day: to wrap-up, and layer-up in Merino wool, in styles and fabrics that have become the trends for Autumn/Winter 2014/15.

With posters echoing the British government's communications of the period – "Help Britain's Warm Effort – Wear Wool!" – this extremely atmospheric and evocative event was the third instalment of AWI's "The English Gentleman" collaboration with Savile Row, following on from last year's spring/summer event

at Lord's cricket ground. This collaboration seeks to raise awareness of wool's natural performance properties and versatility across the seasons and product categories.

Under the artistic direction of British GQ Creative Fashion Director Jo Levin, "The English Gentleman at the Cabinet War Rooms" was staged as part of the Autumn/Winter 2014/15 edition of the *London Collections: Men* fashion week. The event involved Savile Row tailors using primarily UK weavers' fabrics to present over 80 beautifully crafted Merino wool pieces – suits, separates, knitwear and loungewear – throughout the war rooms on models, actors (including Michael 'Dumbledore' Gambon) and 'friends' of Savile Row.

The event highlighted the way in which Merino yarns, fabrics and garments are embraced by the world's most prestigious tailors and fashion houses, and showcased the craftsmanship and heritage behind their creations. Woolmark licensed weavers and textile merchants from across the UK and Italy supplied over 200 metres of Merino wool fabric to tailors to create the bespoke pieces on display.

AWI Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer Rob Langtry said: "We are reminding people of the importance wool has had before when there were restrictions on heating and electricity in the 1940s – a message also true of today. As the temperature drops we can layer-up in wool and turn the thermostat down to keep warm in the colder months. This display shows the true versatility of Merino wool and its abundance in garment uses, richness in colour, texture and softness." ◀



Posters echoed the British Government's communications of the 1940s

# Designer collaborations at London Collections: Men



Example of AWI e-marketing.

In addition to the partnership with Savile Row at the Cabinet War Rooms, AWI continued its collaborations with some of the best iconic and emerging designers at *London Collections: Men* fashion week – Paul Smith, Richard James, Lou Dalton, Christopher Raeburn and Jonathan Saunders – as a way to highlight the importance and relevance of Merino wool within menswear for the Autumn/Winter season and especially within the British fashion and textile manufacturing industry.

Mr Langtry said, as a supporter of *London Collections: Men* since its inception, AWI continues to expand and develop its activities and partnerships at the event.

"We are very pleased to see *London Collections: Men* continue to grow as a dynamic platform for menswear with an increasingly pervasive influence on global fashion. The involvement of the fashion industry leaders of Britain assures those engaged in menswear of continual improvements in design and presentation and increased visibility for our ingredient: Merino wool."

**Paul Smith** used the event to present his "British Collection", all made from 100 per cent Australian Merino wool, including some lightweight Cool Wool and Travel Suit pieces for the rising number of business travelers to multiple climates across the year.

**Richard James** hosted a star studded catwalk show on Park Lane showcasing exquisite tailoring and a wide variety of Merino wool fabrics across the majority of pieces in his new collection, including lightweight Cool Wool pieces.

**Lou Dalton** used a range of heavier wools for outer wear, mixed with Cool Wool weights for Autumn/Winter, offering a lighter product for the mid-season.

**Christopher Raeburn** for the first time in his collection showcased fully fashioned knitwear – which is all 100 per cent Merino wool. This complemented his outerwear and lightweight pieces, all of which were manufactured by British companies.

**Jonathan Saunders** produced 21 Merino wool garments for his Autumn/Winter collection, including launching a collaboration with Lyle & Scott knitwear, and using an innovation normally retained for the car industry that bonds two Merino fabrics together.

The England cricket team might have got hit for six during their recent Ashes tour, but that hasn't stopped the UK's appetite for the "gentleman's game".

Following on from the "The English Gentleman at Lord's" event in June last year, British GQ has produced a 10-page feature on the event in its February 2014 edition (the northern hemisphere Spring consumer issue) which complements the extensive coverage that British GQ gave the event at the time the event was held for the trade.

The different range of outfits on show in the heritage rooms and terraces of Lord's Pavilion, showcases Merino wool's extensive versatility from summer sports jackets to cricket sweaters, taking in blazers, lightweight suits and flannel waistcoats with trousers. The tailored collection represented a powerful combination of beautiful materials – principally Merino wool in fine lightweight Cool Wool fabrics – and unparalleled artisanship.

## British GQ: Style beyond the boundary



Part of the 10-page spread that featured in the February 2014 edition of British GQ.

# Vogue: Keep your cool

## FAST FACTS

- The February edition of British Vogue has published a sixteen-page feature promoting lightweight Cool Wool apparel for the warmer seasons, selecting menswear pieces to complement the womenswear promotion.
- AWI has been collaborating with leading designers to help them develop Cool Wool apparel collections and they will now be available in-store for consumers to purchase across the Spring/Summer 2014 season.
- The designers, including Alexander Wang, Vivienne Westwood and Burberry, present their modern interpretations of Cool Wool fabrics for this Vogue feature.

“Light as a feather and soft to the touch, there’s only one way to feel fresh during the summer months – with Cool Wool.”

So runs the lead statement in the 16-page feature of British Vogue’s February Catwalk edition – the first issue of the year for the Spring/Summer 2014 season and a reference guide to the warmer months for followers of fashion.

The lightweight, commercially available garments that are featured have been created by some of the top British and

international designers and brands including JW Anderson, Burberry, Martin Grant, Roksanda Ilincic, Richard James, JJS Lee, Richard Nicoll, Pringle, Roland Mouret, Jil Sander, Jonathan Saunders, Alexander Wang and Vivienne Westwood.

This promotion takes AWI’s collaborations with designers to the next vital stage, from product through to consumer promotion: “Fashion designers have long been in the loop regarding Cool Wool’s potential – follow their lead this season and acquire a trophy piece,” Vogue advises its readers.

Shot by popular London photographer Mel Bles, the Cool Wool garments embody a modern contemporary styling with a ‘Cool’ urban attitude. Mixing womens and mens styles and modeled by Querelle Jansen and Louis Steyaert, they are a demonstration of Merino wool’s versatile textures and colours.

“With Cool Wool there’s no compromise: its natural elasticity and absorbent composition creates crease-free and colour-friendly fabrics. Perfect for summer evenings,” runs Vogue. “Wrap it,

belt it, drape it, wear it: favourite staples have year-round appeal. Take your signature pieces through the seasons.”

A snappy, contemporary video

featuring music by award winning musician Bob Bradley with Sarah Wassall supports the consumer campaign. And as the weather in Britain (finally!) moves into spring, the designer garments will be showcased in retail windows.

AWI will also be using these images in other international

editions of Vogue and GQ.

The International Wool Secretariat’s (IWS) Cool Wool program, launched nearly 30 years ago, sought to change the perception of wool from being only a heavy, warm thermal product. In many ways the campaign used up until the late-90s was very successful. However, the new Cool Wool campaign takes the concept even further for the 21st century with even lighter weight Merino fabrics and yarns, ensuring that Merino is an ideal fibre to wear all year-round.

More information:  
[www.merino.com/coolwool](http://www.merino.com/coolwool)

“SOFTLY SOFTLY:  
ENVELOP  
YOURSELF IN  
LUXURIOUS LAYERS  
OF COOL WOOL  
TO EMANATE AN  
EASY YEAR-ROUND  
COMFORT.”

BRITISH VOGUE



Pages from the February edition of British Vogue promoting Cool Wool.

# Wool gets contemporary

## FAST FACTS

- AWI has launched a new program – “Contemporary Fashion” – to help increase the amount of wool worn by modern urban consumers.
- As part of the program, AWI has collaborated with internationally renowned fashion designer Timothy Everest to create an innovative collection made from wool-based fabrics.
- Both the new AWI program and Everest’s collection made their debut at last month’s Liberty Fairs trade show in the USA.

The global apparel industry has experienced a trend towards casualisation, largely due to busy lifestyles, less formal workplaces and consumers’ increasing desire for individualism. Consumers are looking for products that can easily adapt and change with their everyday needs.

AWI has responded to this trend by developing a new “Contemporary Fashion” program to help increase the market share of wool worn by this emerging segment of consumers.

AWI Contemporary Fashion category manager Kelly McAvoy said the program aims to create a platform that openly shares technical expertise and invites forward-thinking creative minds and progressive brands to work together and experiment with the potential of Merino wool.

“We want to highlight wool as a fibre for the everyday. Merino wool is well-placed to resonate with the lifestyle choices of today’s contemporary generation – often placing greater expectations on the eco-credentials, integrity and authenticity in the products they buy,” she said.

“By modernising the rich heritage of wool, connecting the fibre with contemporary culture and demystifying preconceptions of wool, AWI addresses the global casual trend and has found a niche opportunity to bring wool to the street.”

As one of its first initiatives, the AWI program collaborated with internationally renowned fashion designer Timothy Everest to design a new 11-piece collection

– titled Hemisphere – that takes wool out of its usual comfort zone and places it firmly at the centre of a modern, urban lifestyle.

“The collaboration with AWI had us looking at creating a collection from wool and getting people to be a little bit surprised about what you could do with wool and how you can actually wear it,” Everest said.

“We wanted the collection to be internationally casual. It’s for people who are living the urban life; they might be jumping on a bike, on the tube, could be on a plane. It’s clothes for real people living a real life.

“Wool’s carving out a whole new future for itself. Exciting new innovations and a fresh approach make it the perfect lifestyle choice for today’s international casual crowd.”

AWI and Everest launched the wool-based Hemisphere collection at the influential Liberty Fairs trade show in the USA.

“Liberty Fairs for me was a huge success, with brands and retailers given a unique insight into how wool can be a contemporary and viable choice for their collections and customers,” Everest said.

“In having shown attendees the fibre within a finished fashion-forward collection, it made it easier for visitors to see and understand first-hand how contemporary wool can be not to mention its many applications.

“The response was really exciting, with many of those who visited the exhibition stand thoroughly inspired about what wool could potentially offer them. Many of those in attendance were keen to connect

further with AWI to see how they could also directly benefit from both a sourcing and support aspect. I was overall very impressed with the calibre of visitors to the event, ranging from a global press core to leading retailers and brands.”

More information:

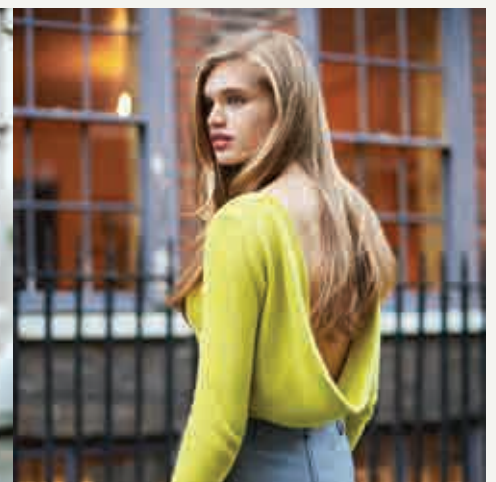
[www.merino.com/contemporary](http://www.merino.com/contemporary)



Internationally renowned fashion designer Timothy Everest during a visit to Australia.



Timothy Everest at the launch of his Hemisphere collection at the Liberty Fairs trade show.



Items from Timothy Everest’s urban, wool-based collection, Hemisphere.

# Russians rushing to wool

## FAST FACTS

- Representatives from Russian textile companies visited Australia in December to see where Australian Merino wool is grown.
- Russia used to be the biggest single buyer of Australian wool, but this trade stopped after the collapse of the USSR.
- Resuming trade with Russia will ensure there are additional markets for Australian wool.

**B**efore the USSR formally collapsed at the end of 1991, it was the largest buyer of Australian wool and bought up to 30 per cent of Australia's wool clip. But the crash of the political powerhouse saw its wool trade with Australia all but stop until 2011, when AWI launched its 'To Russia with wool' project.



CEO of Russia's iconic manufacturer and brand Pavolove Posad, Konstantin Konevego, has a go at shearing.



Admiring Merino rams are Igor Salomakhim, AWI's representative in Russia; Konstantin Konevego, Pavolove Posad; Vladimir Maksimau, Ilych Wool Belarus; Konstantin Razumeev, Moscow State Textile University.

Since then, AWI estimates that more than one million kilograms of Australian wool has been exported to Russia. And with the extremely cold weather that has recently blanketed much of the northern hemisphere, it has never been a better time to turn to wool.

Russia's relationship with the Australian wool industry was further strengthened in December when Russian textile interests came to Australia to see for themselves where Merino wool is grown. Representatives from woollen mills, scourers, weavers and fibre experts travelled at their own expense to woolgrowing properties in NSW and Victoria.

They travelled firstly to the south west slopes and tablelands of NSW to Angus and Allan Coles' property, 'Glencoe', Boroowa before visiting the property of AWI Chairman Wal Merriman at Boroowa. The tour then travelled to Victoria and met with WoolProducers Australia president Geoff Fiskin on his wool property 'Lal Lal' near Ballarat before meeting with some Australian wool exporters and brokers in Melbourne, and visiting the Australian Wool Testing Authority and a wool auction.

The return of Russian interest is significant given the large potential the former Russian states have for processing and consuming the natural fibre.

In 2011 AWI Chairman Wal Merriman and General Manager Product Development

and Commercialisation Jimmy Jackson travelled to Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine and met with current and former woollen mills and textile experts. Relationships with three topmakers and dozens of Russian manufacturers, designers, retailers and brands have now been established and in September 2013 Bryansk Worsted Mill became the first Russian Woolmark and Wool Blend licensee.

"We think this is just the tip of the iceberg," AWI Chairman Wal Merriman said. "This is the start of a resurgence of the wool industry in Russia both in wool processing and consumption. It has the three trigger points of cold climate, increasing wealth and a large population. They already wear wool, they know the product."

During the past two decades when wool trade between Australia and Russia ceased, Russia looked to domestically produced wool as well as broader wool from Argentina. But having seen the superior Australian product, Russian companies are keen to source fine Australian wool once again.

Konstantin Konevego, CEO of Russia's iconic manufacturer and brand Pavolove Posad, said, "I had heard from AWI that Australia produced the finest wool in the world but I had to come and see it for myself and as they say in Russia: seeing is believing".

### FAST FACTS

- The woollen interiors sector remains strong despite ongoing challenging global economic conditions, according to Woolmark licensees at the influential Heimtextil trade show.
- AWI co-hosted the Wool Arena with Woolmark licensees at the trade show, during which licensees enjoyed good interest for their products.
- There was also strong interest in The Wool Lab Interiors trend guide that was showcased by AWI for the first time at Heimtextil.

Wool of a broader micron took centre stage at this year's influential Heimtextil trade show, with AWI and its partners presenting the latest in wool products for the interiors sector, including bedding, carpets and furnishings.

Held in Frankfurt, Germany, Heimtextil is the biggest international trade show for home and contract textiles – this year's show attracted more than 67,000 visitors from 133 countries along with 2718 exhibitors.

As in previous years, AWI co-hosted the Wool Arena – a focal point for the industry to promote the fibre at the show – highlighting the superior natural benefits of wool. It was a place for suppliers, buyers, designers and retailers to meet and discuss new, innovative products and technologies. Along with AWI, Woolmark licensees Jaspa Herington, H. Dawson, Bönning + Sommer, Baur Vliesstoffe and Lano Carpets joined the Wool Arena, presenting their latest wool offerings.

# Interest grows in wool interiors

AWI also showcased The Wool Lab Interiors – the guide to the best wool textiles and the most interesting and innovative applications of wool in the furnishing and interior textile sectors. The guide is the result of international research carried out by AWI to select the newest products from the world's best companies. It aims to increase the demand for broader micron and crossbred wool.

Woolmark licensee H. Dawson has been a regular exhibitor at Heimtextil, and believes that the woollen interiors sector remains strong despite the ongoing challenging economic conditions.

"The growing demand and drive towards natural, sustainable and eco-friendly products was ever more evident this year, with the revamped Wool Arena generating more interest, and attracting more visitors than we have found at previous exhibitions," H. Dawson wool trader Genady Fedotov said.

"Along with AWI and its partners, we were able to showcase a variety of products and innovations, from the fibre to finished product – or the sheep to shop journey – including the new Wool Lab Interiors, which put on display some of the major trends within the wool industry.

Overall we feel the Wool Arena is becoming a bigger success story every year, and this was reflected in the comments made to us by our visitors."

Product Manager at Baur Vliesstoffe, Matthias Boehme, commented, "The rejuvenated wool area received widespread

attention from potential clients. Quilt manufacturers, mattress producers and also interior design manufacturers and distributors all discovered our stand area."

Secretary General of the International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO), Elisabeth van Delden, said through the participation of AWI and IWTO, the wool industry had a highly visible representation at Heimtextil spreading the message to use wool and creating a first contact for further business opportunities for the industry.

"People I have talked to were happy with the outcome of the fair," she said. "There was especially a high interest of new potential customers looking for wool products as an additional premium range. The Wool Lab Interiors trend books were a stopper for people passing by and an excellent starting point for further discussions with potential designers and brands to use wool."

AWI category manager for Interiors, Ingrid Oomen, echoed these sentiments, saying the Wool Arena was the epicentre for all things wool at the trade show, and it was great to see such healthy interest in natural fibres.

"Wool is definitely a popular fibre in this sector, and showcasing The Wool Lab Interiors was beneficial in ensuring interest remains strong," Ms Oomen said.

"Aside from showing The Wool Lab at our booth, we also hosted a special workshop, detailing each of the guide's trends and connecting visitors with suppliers. Companies were able to order fabric samples from the guide during the trade show and we have many more requests from buyers and the media to follow up on.

"Shows such as Heimtextil are the perfect way for AWI to showcase not only the variety and versatility of wool, but also ensure the fibre stays relevant to the industry's needs."

More information:  
[www.woolmark.com/interiors](http://www.woolmark.com/interiors)



The Wool Arena at the influential Heimtextil trade show promoting wool in the interiors sector.

# Woolmark says G'DAY USA



Cate Blanchett and Geoffrey Rush on the red carpet at the G'DAY USA gala event in Los Angeles. Photo: Wireimage

## FAST FACTS

- To promote the Woolmark brand and Australian wool to American consumer and business audiences, AWI sponsored two highlight events during this year's G'DAY USA celebrations.
- The co-founders of the Australian Fashion Foundation, which is supported by AWI, were honoured at a black tie gala event in New York for their "dedication to the Australian fashion industry".
- AWI works with designers, textile brands and retailers in the USA to increase the demand for Australian Merino wool.

The USA rolled out the red carpet in January to a star-studded guest list of celebrities and business leaders during the annual G'DAY USA program of events - and AWI was there to make sure that the Woolmark brand and Australian wool was in full view to US consumer and business audiences.

North America remains a lucrative market for the Australian wool industry, and so AWI took the opportunity to

become a gold sponsor of widely publicised gala events in Los Angeles and New York, enjoying Woolmark brand promotion across traditional TV and print media as well digital and social media.

Australian celebrities and actors including Geoffrey Rush, Cate Blanchett, Paul Hogan, Naomi Watts, Mel Gibson, Simon Baker, Richard Wilkins, Delta Goodrem, Anthony LaPaglia, Curtis Stone and Jackie Weaver, plus American friends of Australia including John Travolta, walked the red carpet in front of the world's paparazzi and against a backdrop of The Woolmark Company and other sponsor logos.

As part of the G'DAY USA black tie gala event in New York, the co-founders of the Australian Fashion Foundation (AFF), Malcolm Carfrae and Julie Anne Quay, were honoured for their "dedication to the Australian fashion industry". AWI supports the AFF by sponsoring an internship program run by the AFF through which two young Australians are able to pursue their career in fashion during six-month's valuable work experience in either the USA or Europe.

Mr Carfrae has long been a supporter of Australian wool, throwing his support behind AWI's International Woolmark

Prize and sitting on its judging panel, as well as flying wool's flag at G'DAY USA as he stepped out in a Merino wool suit.

Australian journalist and the Chief Executive of News Corp Robert Thomson was also honoured at the New York event. Dressed in a Paul Smith-designed wool suit, Mr Thomson was honoured for his "outstanding corporate achievement".

AWI country manager for the Americas, Michelle Lee, said G'DAY USA was a fabulous way to network with key industry stakeholders and promote the Woolmark brand within the American market.

"The past year has seen a number of key partnerships emerge from the USA, including collaborations with leading designers such as Alexander Wang and Narciso Rodriguez," Ms Lee said.

"AWI will continue to work with both leading and emerging designers, retailers and textile brands, maintaining relationships with key industry players and further promoting the natural benefits of Australian Merino wool." ◀

More information: [www.australia-week.com](http://www.australia-week.com)



John Travolta at the G'DAY USA gala event in Los Angeles.



The co-founders of the Australian Fashion Foundation Julie Anne Quay and Malcolm Carfrae received awards at a G'DAY USA event in New York for their "dedication to the Australian fashion industry".



# India warms to wool

## FAST FACTS

- Australian Merino wool has been promoted as the fibre of choice in three of India's largest shopping malls.
- Joining forces with the retailers Raymond Group and Monte Carlo, Australian Merino wool was also promoted on the retailers' Facebook pages and engaged more than 50,000 users each day of the campaign.
- A media round table was also held to discuss the increase of Australian Merino wool in the Indian fashion apparel industry.

A celebration of Australian Merino wool has been enjoyed in Indian shopping malls, as consumers were invited to fall in love with the natural, renewable and biodegradable fibre.

As part of AWI's *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* fibre advocacy campaign, three of the biggest shopping malls in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR) promoted Merino wool as the premium, luxury fibre of choice, making a connection between how the fibre feels to touch, and how it makes the wearer feel.



AWI has been promoting wool apparel in Indian shopping malls.

In association with the Raymond Group, Monte Carlo, bespoke Savile Row tailor and contemporary menswear label Richard James, and 2013/14 International Woolmark Prize winner Rahul Mishra, the on-ground campaign highlighted the versatility of wool and the fibre's trans-seasonal benefits, aiming to drive consumer awareness and increase the demand for Merino wool.

AWI promoted Merino wool and its attributes via the Facebook pages of both Monte Carlo and Raymond. Monte Carlo recorded 10,000 new Facebook fans, with engaged users increasing from 306 per day to 24,000 per day and the daily reach increased from an average of 4500 to 480,000 per day. The Raymond Group experienced similar success, gaining 32,700 new Facebook fans and an increase in engaged users from 15,100 per day to 29,000 users. The daily reach also went from 539,279 to 2,023,784.

AWI's consumer-facing website [www.merino.com](http://www.merino.com) also enjoyed a 20 per cent increase in click-throughs from Facebook compared with the two weeks before the campaign.

Throughout the malls a unique experience zone was set-up by AWI capturing the natural beauty of the

Australian landscape. A video showcasing the entire wool production pipeline was also played, educating consumers about the farm to fashion journey.

AWI acting country manager for India Alex Lai said the fibre advocacy campaign throughout Indian malls was the ideal way to target consumers and promote leading retailers and brands.

"Wool is a premium fibre, and products made from wool should have consumers' full confidence," he said. "We want Indian consumers to understand wool's full potential and become aware of the fibre's versatility. We want Indian consumers to feel the true luxury of the fibre and also know the benefits of the Woolmark brand."

AWI also organised a media roundtable on 26 November with its key partners in India, once again including the Raymond Group, Monte Carlo and Rahul Mishra. Twenty journalists from leading publications attended to hear about increasing the inception of Merino wool in the Indian apparel industry.

India is the second largest importer of Australian wool – importing 20.9 million kilograms in 2012/13 – second only to China, and is set to increase the amount of wool it imports thanks to partnerships with Raymond and Monte Carlo.





# Snow business like wool business!

Matt Graham of Australia competes in the Men's Moguls Finals at the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics. Matt, along with many of his Australian team mates, wear Woolmark-certified base layers made from Australian Merino wool. PHOTO: Getty Images.

## FAST FACTS

- AWI showcased its latest innovations in the sports and outdoor market at this year's influential ISPO trade show in Germany.
- There has been an increase in interest in Merino wool, from base-layers to outerwear, and across a variety of sports of varying intensity levels.
- Australian snow brand XTM reported success at the show and was noticing a positive change in consumer perception in regards to wool.

were:

- Wool wadding for ski jackets
- Woven fabrics for trousers and hiking shirts in 100 per cent Merino wool
- Seamless Merino wool garments
- New fabric developments in jersey; and
- Wovens from AWI's MerinoPerform™ partners.

According to AWI's Sports and Outdoors category manager, Lars Ulvesund, there has been a revived interest in seamless knitwear and it appears everyone is looking for Merino wool.

"More and more brands are keen

to have a consistent story to tell when selling outdoor apparel," Mr Ulvesund said. "Brands want to sell Merino wool base-layers, and then continue to tell the story of wool and its benefits with both mid and outer layers.

"The 2014 ISPO show was our best one yet; not only did we form new relationships with brands looking to introduce Merino wool into their ranges, but more importantly, many of the 'early adopters' - the brands having already worked with Merino for a number of seasons - are looking to extend their current Merino wool ranges and are increasingly turning to new, innovative

**A**WI continues to bolster Merino fibre's presence in the sports and outdoor market, collaborating with leading manufacturers and brands to promote the natural benefits of wool as a performance fibre.

The latest Merino wool innovations in the this market were on show in January at the influential ISPO trade show in Munich, and AWI was there again to showcase the latest commercial developments under its MerinoPerform™ banner to the 80,000 visitors from 110 countries.

The standout developments presented



AWI presented the latest innovations in Merino wool as a performance fibre at the recent ISPO trade exhibition.

technologies.

"We are seeing an increase in blends with other fibres, which can add functionality like compression, or increase resistance and strength in apparel for intense sports such as rock climbing. We are also finding innovative ways to print on fabrics – a trend which is ever more attractive in cycling apparel.

"We met with our key target global brands across activities such as yoga and low-impact sports right through to intense sports such as mountaineering and rock climbing. Having Pete Veider from the Bergrettung Tirol mountain rescue service at our stand as an ambassador talking about his personal experiences with Merino wool was also a great endorsement for the fibre and he spoke with various representatives from local and international media."

Australian snow and outdoor brand XTM knows all too well the natural benefits of Merino wool and produces a range of Woolmark-certified base-layers made from 100 per cent Australian Merino wool. The brand has also sponsored a number of athletes in the Australian Winter Olympics team, dressing them in Merino wool base-layers, whilst the entire team stepped out in Sochi in XTM Merino wool blend socks.

For brands such as XTM, trade shows like ISPO are vital in not only showing their products to an international audience of buyers and retailers, but also act as a platform to promote the sports benefits of wool.

"This is the second time that XTM has exhibited at ISPO and the change in perception of, and interest in wool, is exceptional," said XTM General Manager Paul Manders.

"It was really pleasing to receive so many comments about the softness of the wool and many consumers cannot believe how luxurious it feels next to the skin. The interest in our product was even more enhanced as it was Australian Merino and carried the Woolmark logo – which added to the credibility of the product.

"For us, being Australian and all, it feels good to be part of this. In addition, it fits in very well with our launch of the new Merino collection and we are of course very proud of having equipped several Olympic ski athletes with their Merino garments."

More information:  
[www.woolmark.com/sports](http://www.woolmark.com/sports)  
[www.xtm.com.au](http://www.xtm.com.au)



AWI CEO Stuart McCullough and Nanshan Group President Mr Song Jianmin in front of two OPTIM™ machines at the Wool Development Centre.

## New Wool Development Centre in China

### FAST FACTS

- A Wool Development Centre has opened in China to act as a training base to foster professional talent in the wool textile industry.
- The centre has been co-founded by AWI and one of China's leading wool textile enterprises: The Nanshan Group.
- The centre aims to further drive innovation and research to help create a wide variety of modern products for a growing market for Merino wool.

A new Wool Development Centre (WDC) officially opened in October in Yantai, Shandong Province, to develop innovative high value-added woven products made from Australian Merino wool. It has been co-founded by AWI and by one of China's leading wool textile enterprises: The Nanshan Group, in a bid to help drive the expansion of the Chinese woollen textile industry.

The primary function of the WDC is to undergo product development in a more cost effective manner, focusing on woven fabrics. The WDC will also act as a significant training

base to foster professional talent in the wool textile industry, working closely with the nearby university and students studying wool manufacturing.

Nanshan Group President Mr Song Jianmin, Nanshan Group General Manager Mr Song Riyou, AWI CEO Stuart McCullough and AWI Global Product Development and Commercialisation Manager Jimmy Jackson attended the opening ceremony, along with China Wool Textile Association Chair Ms Peng Yanli.

Nanshan Group General Manager Song Riyou said: "As one of the major partners for AWI in the Chinese market, Nanshan is intent on becoming a global organisation upholding the best practices in governance. Therefore, we co-founded the WDC which integrates key resources for the wool industry to the benefit of the operations and development of both parties.

"We are honoured by this opportunity to work with AWI in the establishment of the WDC, and look forward to further promoting technology innovation and development of the wool industry."

Mr Jackson added how AWI was glad to be partnering with the Nanshan Group to co-found the WDC.

"It will be an important R&D and training base for AWI," Mr Jackson said. "With the support of research and development of the WDC, the natural benefits and properties of Merino wool will reach a wider audience and the WDC will deliver more innovative Merino wool products to consumers."

# The Woolmark brand's golden anniversary

50 CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS



Since its launch in 1964, the Woolmark logo has become one of the world's most well-known and respected logos. AWI continues to use it to promote Australian wool through all of its global marketing campaigns.

## FAST FACTS

- 2014 marks the 50th anniversary of the world-famous Woolmark brand.
- Since the now iconic Woolmark logo was first designed in 1964, it has been applied to more than five billion products worldwide.
- The logo's enduring appeal continues to deliver significant returns to Australian woolgrowers through its use in AWI's global marketing campaigns as well as the Woolmark Licensing Program.

The world famous Woolmark brand – owned by Australian woolgrowers – is this year celebrating its golden anniversary.

“For 50 years the brand has built its reputation as being one of the world's leading textile fibre brands, and its enduring appeal continues to deliver significant returns to Australian woolgrowers,” AWI Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer Rob Langtry says.

“The value of the Woolmark brand is well established and highly regarded across the world in the apparel, interior textiles and home laundry sectors. Since the creation of the original logo in 1964, more than five billion products have carried the Woolmark logo as a symbol of fibre content and quality assurance.

“As well as being essential to the Woolmark Licensing Program, the Woolmark logo is pivotal to most of the marketing that AWI undertakes. The *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* fibre advocacy campaign, and the Cool Wool and Woolmark Gold campaigns all include the Woolmark logo on their advertising collateral. The Campaign for Wool uses a stylised green Woolmark logo to reinforce the 'eco' credentials of wool, and the International Woolmark Prize has attracted phenomenal interest from the international fashion communities and media.”

So what was the origin of the iconic Woolmark symbol?

The rise of synthetic fibres in the post-war period posed a major threat to the

global wool industry, and so in 1963, on behalf of the International Wool Secretariat, a global design competition was launched to create a graphic logo or mark which would represent the universal appeal and quality of wool. This was the driving force behind the Woolmark brand and in 1964 the Woolmark symbol was born.

“The logo's strength is in its simplicity: five black bands criss-crossing to form a skein of wool which perfectly represents the softness, elegance and modernity of the fibre. It is one of very few long-running logos that still feels contemporary despite not having been altered since its creation,” Mr Langtry says.

It is believed the iconic logo was created by an Italian graphic artist called Francesco Saroglia. Mysteriously however, Francesco Saroglia seems to have disappeared without a trace since winning the design competition. There are no books featuring his other works, no records of any exhibitions, no web pages pulling up information on this elusive designer.

But while Saroglia's actual existence might have failed to withstand the test of time, the logo officially credited to him continues to attract critical acclaim. In 2011 the UK's leading magazine for visual communication *Creative Review* voted the Woolmark symbol as the top logo of all time. Last year, a survey conducted by USA graphic design journal *GDUSA* voted the logo as the 11th favourite logo from the past half century.

“As the Woolmark brand enjoys its 50th anniversary during 2014, AWI is concentrating on new challenges, such as the necessity to educate the younger generation of consumers, the growth of emerging economies and the impact of the digital technologies,” Mr Langtry adds.

“The core values of the brand – quality, innovation and respect of the environment – are very much aligned to the needs and desires of contemporary consumers, looking for a new idea of luxury which is both more authentic and eco-conscious. Our global network will continue to manage these core values, supporting Australian woolgrowers who own the brand and the company, long into the future.” ◀

More information: [www.woolmark.com](http://www.woolmark.com)

# Promoting Australian wool

## FAST FACTS

- AWI's Key Account Manager (KAMs) around the world, work on behalf of Australian woolgrowers, to build and maintain relationships with significant industry stakeholders and inspire them to work with Australian wool.
- Birgit Gahlen from AWI's office in Biella, Italy has been selected as the 2013 KAM of the Year.
- She has excelled at developing direct business relationships with global brands, retailers, textile manufacturers and fashion designers.

**E**stablishing and maintaining strong and healthy relationships with Woolmark licensees and other important textile partners is vital for AWI in its promotion of Australian wool to global markets.

To this end, AWI has Key Account Managers (KAMs) in each of its offices around the world – all strategically located in 15 countries across key markets in Asia, Europe and the Americas.

Birgit Gahlen from AWI's office in Biella, Italy has been selected by AWI's senior management as 2013 KAM of the Year, based on an assessment of each KAM's performance and leadership qualities.

*Beyond the Bale* caught up with Birgit to find out what she loves most about her job and Australian wool.

## How long have you worked in the wool industry?

I have been working for The Woolmark Company for 20 years and have been a Key Account Manager for the past two years. I'm very proud and honoured to work for AWI, and Australian woolgrowers, and receive the KAM of Year award because the company has great staff worldwide, experts who know their business, and all of them, like me, love the fibre – which makes it easy to transmit the fantastic and unique properties of Australian Merino wool.



AWI's Key Account Manager of the Year Birgit Gahlen (left) showcasing The Wool Lab to prospect trade partners.

From the start of my career, I felt very lucky to be working with Merino wool; I'm so passionate about this natural fibre that I am constantly promoting its properties to even my friends, and my children love Merino wool too.

## What do you enjoy about your current role?

I think that working for AWI is a unique opportunity; I don't know any other company in textiles and fashion where the work is so varied. We have the opportunity to work across so many sectors of the industry to promote Australian Merino wool, to educate and to stimulate the entire pipeline. We start with the spinners, weavers and knitters to get Merino wool into their collections, and then we show the fantastic yarns and fabrics to brands, retailers, designers and knitters.

I love inspiring companies and people to work with Australian Merino wool – introducing them to the fibre, assisting in sourcing what they need, educating them about the fibre's natural benefits, and developing their collections or line of work. I enjoy the versatility of Merino wool which I can recommend to use for babies, athletes, interior textiles, in fashion, in summer, in winter. Most of all I enjoy being part of such a fantastic global team which works with passion and dedication year round.

## Why are KAMs such an integral part of AWI?

KAMs work very closely with the

consumers of Merino wool, on behalf of Australian woolgrowers. We create and build relationships with our partners and we give them constant support and information on Australian Merino wool. We are also constantly building new relationships, even outside of the Merino wool community.

A key part of our role is to resolve problems consumers or brands may have, and relay product know-how and sourcing facilities to stakeholders. We can find solutions and offer ideas and support and we act as direct representatives for the global authority of Merino wool.

## What major project are you currently working on?

The most important project I am currently working on is The Wool Lab trend guide to wool. I have been involved with this tool from the beginning and I have seen it grow into a very valuable and respected resource for the fashion and textile industry. I participate in its preparation, development and presentation – at one-on-one meetings and at the world's biggest trade shows.

The Wool Lab has given us so many possibilities to inspire and educate, and it is a real sourcing tool for Australian Merino wool. In the past we had difficulties getting appointments with the main players in the industry, but The Wool Lab has allowed us to build strong relationships with the most important textile and fashion companies and brands. Better still, now the main players are contacting us to learn more about Australian wool.

# Woolgrowers diversify income



Peter Hayward and Andrew Morphett at the Anlaby shearing shed (above); Anlaby classic woollen throw (right).



## FAST FACTS

- Andrew Morphett and Peter Hayward, who own the historic 'Anlaby' near Kapunda in South Australia, have diversified its income by producing woollen products made from wool grown on the property.
- Their business is an example of a growing number of growers cum retailers that are selling products made from Australian wool via the internet and through selected Australian retailers.
- They have also diversified their income by going into tourism, taking advantage of the property's unique part in the country's rich rural heritage.

Anlaby near Kapunda in the Mid North of South Australia is rolling sheep country and home to one of the oldest continuously operating Merino studs in Australia and the oldest in the state.

It maintains a genetic line that started 175 years ago in 1839 when 5000 sheep owned by Mr F. H. Dutton were driven overland from the Colony of New South Wales to South Australia in an epic droving venture that lasted from May to December. The first shipment of wool to be sold in London from South Australia included wool from Anlaby.

In 2004 Andrew Morphett and Peter Hayward took over the ownership of Anlaby and in 2006 purchased the woolshed and stud, both of which had

been subdivided off in the 1970s.

Mr Morphett says, "We sold the wool from our first shearing into the wool market and were dismayed to see how undervalued this fantastic product is. We decided then to stop treating our wool as a commodity. We would produce a range of quality woollen products that would showcase the amazing properties and heritage of this Australian icon.

"We would only use wool grown on the property and we would have the wool processed and the products made entirely in Australia.

"We started with the production of a fringed bed-throw, and have subsequently expanded the range to include a ladies wrap, a cot blanket and bassinet blanket; each bound in pure silk satin.

"We do not dye the wool so in response to requests for some added colour, we have recently introduced a range of throws edged in William Morris embroidered silk and cotton fabric.

"We are aiming to produce classic products that will remain in style and be able to be handed down from one generation to the next.

"With the emergence of the internet and e-commerce, we realised that we didn't need bricks and mortar stores to sell our products - we could sell them online, which has the advantages of reduced overheads, an expanded geographical reach, a broader potential customer base, and we're open 24 hours a day. All our products are available through our online shop on the Anlaby website."

The Anlaby product range is also available at the Purely Merino stores in the international terminals (airside) of Sydney and Melbourne airports.

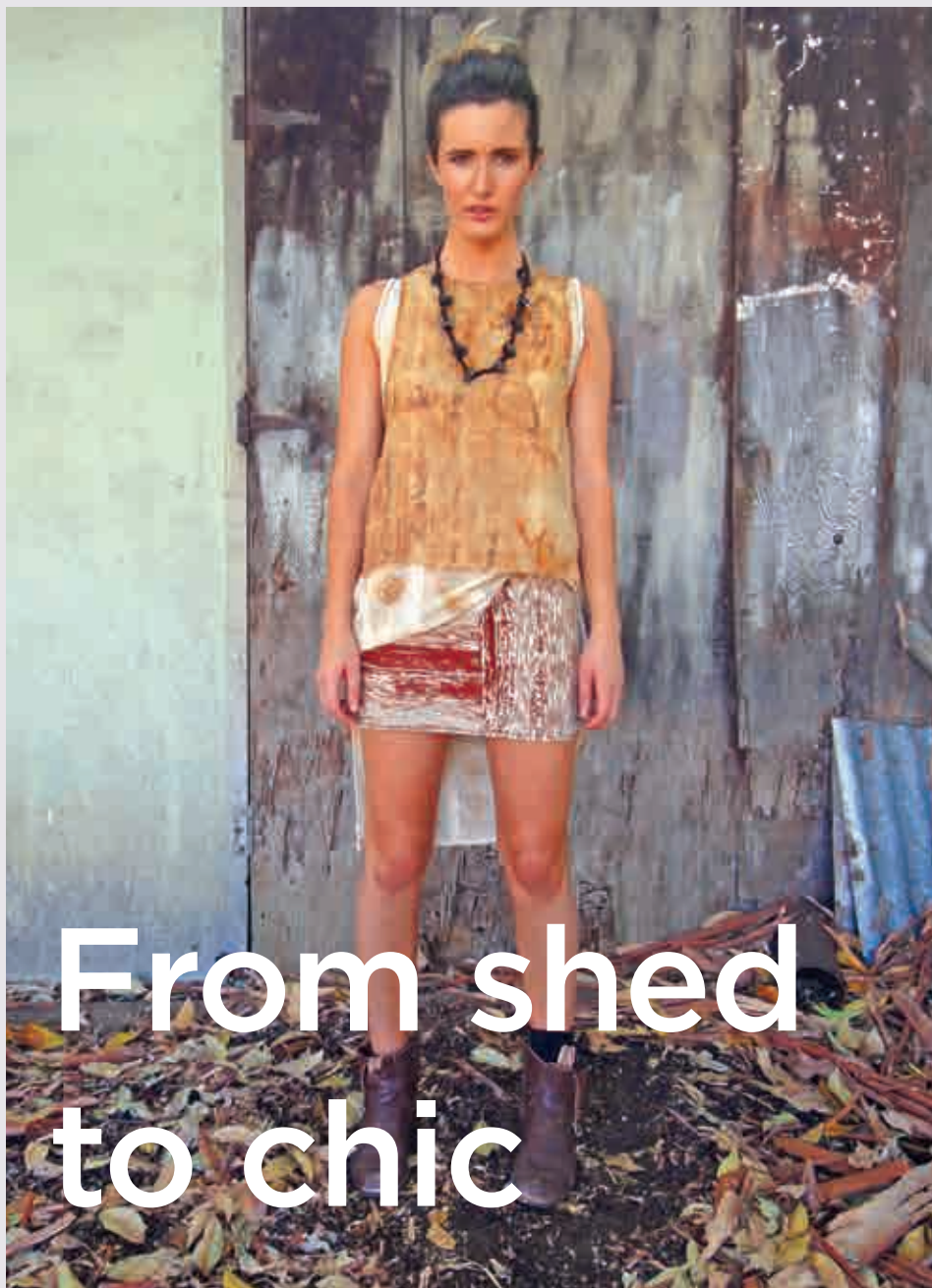
Mr Morphett and Mr Hayward are also taking advantage of Anlaby's historic buildings, setting and heritage by diversifying into the hosting of weddings and other functions on the property. They also provide group tours of the property and Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

"Anlaby resembles a historic Victorian village rather than a farm, with its collection of cottages and houses built around "the quadrangle" - the village square - for the 70 staff including butlers, maids, 12 gardeners, coachmen, kennel masters and farm workers and their families that used to live and work here," Mr Morphett says.

"The property was built on the sale of Merino wool back when the whole country was being built on the sheep's back. The sheer size of the historic Anlaby woolshed - it had 32 stands - says a lot about those days. In its heyday about 70,000 sheep were shorn here each year. They were shearing for nine months."

To mark the 175th anniversary of the establishment of Anlaby, there will be a gala performance of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* in the property's quadrangle on 12 April. The opera will be performed by Co-Opera, a professional touring opera company with a 20 year history of performing in regional and urban Australia. ◀

**More information:** Andrew Morphett, (08) 8566 2465, [www.anlaby.com.au](http://www.anlaby.com.au)



# From shed to chic

Fashion designer Cordelia Gibbs modelling designs from her A Life in Wool collection: Weatherboard jacquard knit skirt, sheer wool imprint singlet, sheer wool stain singlet, accessorised with leather and cog shearing hardware neckpiece.

## FAST FACTS

- Young fashion designer Cordelia Gibbs' debut collection A Life in Wool is inspired by Australian woolgrowers and their shearing sheds.
- The collection was designed predominantly from wool, using a range of technologies and wool fabrics.
- Ms Gibbs was brought up on her parents' Merino stud in the regional town of Beverley in Western Australia and has carried her passion for wool and woolgrowing through into her fashion designs.

The shearing shed might seem a world away from the glamour of the fashion catwalk, but recently graduated fashion designer Cordelia Gibbs has brought both settings together in her debut collection A Life in Wool.

Brought up on her parents' woolgrowing property in the regional town of Beverley, Western Australia, her family background in wool has carried through into her designs.

"My designs in this collection are an encapsulation of the character of the shearing shed," she says. "In a nation that rides on the sheep's back, the shearing shed is an iconic representation of Australia's journey. The garments are

inspired by the architecture, the work clothes and the human values of the shed to create a level of sensibility towards and celebration of the culture of the Australian wool producer."

The 20-piece collection for both men and women is made, of course, mainly from wool. She has investigated the use of the fibre in her collection by using different wool fabrics, wool felting, and Whole Garment Technology® knitting which is a way of digitally producing seamless knitted garments.

She also spent time scavenging the family farm for metal objects which she uses to hand dye fabrics through the process of rusting as well as using hardware from shearing gear to accessorise her collection.

Ms Gibbs showed her collection at the Curtin University Fashion Graduate Show in December along with 20 other graduating designers. At the show, Ms Gibbs won both the Sericin Silk Design Award and the Fashion HUB Knitwear Design Award.

While farming and fashion might sometimes seem poles apart, Ms Gibbs understands only too well the connection between woolgrowers and fashion designers.

"I find in many cases designers don't understand the importance, the history and the lifestyle of wool production. And on the flip side, many farmers don't understand where their product goes. It can be a huge difference in understanding in what is ultimately the same industry," she says.

"So coming from a sheep farming background and now being a fashion designer, I sometimes feel as if I am between two extremes. But the thing that intrigues me more than anything, is the unmistakable link farming and fashion have to one another - the production of fibre for clothes.

"I have decided to try to bridge this gap, by looking at a number of key signifiers from the farm, and translating them into contemporary fashion."

Ms Gibbs has a passion for the natural aspects and benefits of wool, and aims to use wool long into her career. In 2014 she is studying honours at Curtin University and she says she will definitely be focused on the use of wool in fashion. Cordelia will be showcasing her collection to woolgrowers this year at Wagin Woolorama, Dowerin Field Day and Newdegate Field Day.

**More information:** Cordelia Gibbs, [cjgibbs@live.com.au](mailto:cjgibbs@live.com.au)  
[www.panacheinfashion.blogspot.com.au](http://www.panacheinfashion.blogspot.com.au)

# Wool4Skool® dresses up

THE WOOLMARK COMPANY  
CELEBRATES



WOOL4SKOOL®  
Student Design Competition



## FAST FACTS

- The Year 10 winner of the 2013 Wool4Skool® competition Sophie Aylward has had her design brought to life by leading Australian fashion designer Jonathan Ward.
- Sophie, Jonathan and the winning dress found themselves smiling in front of the camera for *Girlfriend* magazine, with a double page feature printed in the magazine's January edition.
- Registrations for the 2014 competition are now open, which has the theme '50 years of fashion'.

For many young Australians interested in fashion, a magazine photoshoot of their designs is a pipe dream. Add to the mix the opportunity to meet one of Australia's most recognised fashion designers - who has created a real garment from one of your design sketches - and this is what budding young fashion designers merely dream of.

But this dream came true for Sophie Aylward, the 16-year-old Kinross Wolaroi School student who was the Year 10 winner of AWI's 2013 Wool4Skool® competition. Part of Sophie's prize was to meet R.M. Williams designer Jonathan Ward, and see how he had brought her winning sketch to life as it was elegantly modelled for a photoshoot featured in *Girlfriend* magazine's January edition.

"This prize has been amazing; it was so wonderful to come down here and see Grace in my dress," Sophie said. "I was speechless to see how my drawings on the page had been made into a real dress like that - it looks amazing and I'm so happy with it. It was pretty exciting when I saw it in the pages of *Girlfriend*."

Sophie was one of the 1100 school students who entered the Wool4Skool® competition in 2013, where students were challenged with the task of designing an





The Wool4Skool® feature in January's *Girlfriend* magazine.

outfit fit for a royal and made from more than 80 per cent wool. Sophie chose the Duchess of Cambridge, basing the sketch around "the love of Will and Kate" and designing a dress for the Duchess to wear on her wedding anniversary. The design incorporated a stunning mix of wool lace, wool crepe and wool devoré.

"We did a lot of work on wool and its properties and the different ways of how you can use it, so I learned a lot," Sophie said. "I didn't know wool could be so versatile."

Sophie's sophisticated design wowed the judging panel: her mood boards,

creative statement and final sketch were well thought out and showed a high level of maturity, with Ward describing it as "world class".

"When I first saw Sophie's design I was really blown away... it had this lovely rhythm

from her first three designs to her final design," he said. "It showed experience and thought."

Sophie's teacher at Kinross, Megan Coombes, explained how Kinross Woleroi School got involved in the program: "Kinross entered Wool4Skool® for the first time last year after a student saw the competition advertised in the *Girlfriend* magazine. We ran it as the first unit for Stage 5, year 10 class. The students entered as a class with each of them designing for a member of the royal family which ranged from the Queen, Prince Harry to the classic beauties like Kate and Zara.

"The benefits of the competition for us as a department included the information, lesson plans and resources supplied to the school upon entering the competition. The fact the students weren't required to make the garment enabled them to design without restraint, which in turn led to a stronger creative process taking place. The students in turn had a more intimate learning experience with the fibre which they might not have necessarily had without the competition.

"We will be doing it again this year and are looking forward to the new and exciting brief."

The Wool4Skool® program is another initiative developed by AWI as part of its education portfolio which continues to reconnect new generations of Australians with our country's most famous fibre. ◀

More information: [www.wool4skool.com](http://www.wool4skool.com)



WOOL4SKOOL®  
Student Design Competition

## How to get involved in Wool4Skool® 2014

and help educate the next generation about the benefits of Australian Merino wool

To coincide with the 50 year anniversary of the Woolmark logo, the 2014 Wool4Skool® theme is the past 50 years of fashion. Students are being asked to design an outfit – made from at least 80 per cent Merino wool – inspired by the 1960s, 70s, 80s, 90s or current era. More than 5000 student registrations from across Australia have already been received. Registrations close on 31 May 2014.

### WOOLGROWERS AND PARENTS

Contact your local high school and encourage them to get involved in the Wool4Skool® program. Information for schools and teachers is available at [www.wool4skool.com](http://www.wool4skool.com)

### YEAR 7-11 TEACHERS

Simply register your school and year groups at [www.wool4skool.com](http://www.wool4skool.com) to receive a free Merino wool fabric pack and resource kit for the classroom. Registration closes 31 May 2014.

### YEAR 7-11 STUDENTS

Learn more about the competition at [www.wool4skool.com](http://www.wool4skool.com) and then talk to your teacher about getting your year group involved. Submissions close: Years 7 & 8: 17 July 2014; Years 9 & 10: 24 July 2014; Year 11 & teachers: 31 July 2014.



# Livestock revolution in marginal cropping country

John Ferrier (right), with his son David, on his property in the Mallee region of Victoria: "Sheep and cropping go hand in hand from both a production and financial perspective."

## FAST FACTS

- Cropping thought leaders predict a resurgence of sheep as a risk management strategy in low rainfall zone areas due to the high input costs of cropping and the risks of variable seasonal conditions.
- The many croppers looking at sheep again can help build their livestock and wool knowledge through AWI state extension networks such as the AWI-funded BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB groups in Victoria.
- While introducing livestock would involve on-farm infrastructure costs for producers, the transition can be made easier through the use of new technology.

Veteran Birchip Cropping Group (BCG) agronomist Harm van Rees believes a livestock revolution is beginning in marginal cropping country.

"I'm not convinced that 100 per cent crop is the right thing to do in a highly variable climate. The total reliance on herbicides is just not sustainable, not to mention the significant risk advantage a sheep enterprise offers farmers in country like the Mallee, with less than 400mm annual rainfall," he said.

The comment has great resonance even within the BCG as it comes from a man who has spent a lifetime trialling crops and rotations, herbicides and nutrients; much of it with one of the most progressive farming groups in the country.

"Cropping has come a very long way in the past two decades but I have to say I think there is a livestock revolution underway in some areas where rainfall is highly variable and rotations are limited

to wheat, barley and canola. I know there are also those who have moved into hay production particularly in WA but that doesn't suit everyone either as you have to be close to markets."

While input costs for all agricultural pursuits have risen, Harm says some croppers are now spending \$300-400/ha in the Victorian Mallee, an environment known for its severe droughts. He says it is here where the financial sustainability of such enterprises is highly questionable.

To satisfy a latent interest in sheep, BCG currently has four AWI-funded BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB groups and last year held a dedicated sheep management field day to highlight innovations such as automatic weighing and drafting technology.

BCG Livestock Co-ordinator Dannielle McMillan agreed there were many croppers looking at sheep again but the

development was incremental.

"A lot of the infrastructure needed for sheep such as fencing, yards and sheds has been allowed to run down and presents a significant challenge," she said. "Younger farmers who have never run sheep are still reluctant to move towards livestock as it requires a big commitment and a change of thinking and management but repeated dry finishes are making people think twice."

Acting BCG CEO Caroline Welsh said there was a great opportunity to cross-fertilise ideas from one industry to another.

"Croppers have demonstrated a great capacity to adopt new technology with air seeding and satellite mapping just two obvious examples," she said. "For these farmers to bring sheep back into 400ha paddocks may require the advent of virtual fences and satellite management which are just aren't there yet but it doesn't take too much imagination to see it could happen."

## SHEEP PUT SECURITY INTO THE NO-TILL TILL

The no-till revolution that began in the 1980s saw sheep leave cropping properties as they allegedly caused compaction, but don't tell BCG acting chair John Ferrier.

A lover of big framed Riverina-type Merinos, there was never a chance John's flock was leaving the gentle rolling plains his family has farmed for well over a century 25km north of Birchip.

"There is no way the sheep are compacting this soil, it's a loamy clay and as far as I'm concerned having sheep and cropping go hand in hand from both a production and financial perspective," he said. "From cleaning up stubbles and summer weeds to delivering a fleece and a lamb every year I enjoy having sheep and thankfully so does my son David."

In recent years the livestock operation has been enhanced by the advent of the Wimmera-Mallee pipeline, bringing permanent high quality water to an often parched landscape.

"The pipeline has been truly remarkable. We used to get one flow of water in summer to fill dams using a channel system that was highly inefficient. To have pressurised water to troughs from hundreds of kilometres away is an engineering triumph and it's allowed us to run sheep more easily and develop wetland areas for conservation."

With drought years in 2002, 2004 and 2006 wiping out large portions of cropping incomes across the Mallee it was sheep that offered precious income to those that kept the faith.



David Ferrier; BCG acting chair John Ferrier; BCG CEO Caroline Welsh; BCG Livestock Co-ordinator Dannielle McMillan; BCG agronomist Harm van Rees.

"I'm not saying they're a goldmine by any means but having sheep has been very good to us over many years. Yes, they have to fit into the cropping program. Sheep do involve more work than cropping but anything worthwhile requires work."

As an example of the next generation of Ferriers that now run the property, John's son David may not share the same level of passion for Merinos as his father but certainly wants them to stay.

"There is a definite place for sheep here. It isn't easy work especially during the summer when water points need checking and so on but sheep help manage the risk, without doubt and you know you will always

get a wool clip and you can't always say that for a crop, we know that all too well."

The Wimmera-Mallee pipeline may not have led to a rush to get back into sheep in the area but it has led to a lot of farmers developing opportunity feedlots as an add-on business, according to John.

"The benefit of the feedlot is being able to work out your profit margin so easily. You know the buy-in price, the opportunity cost of the grain and you can lock in a price to work towards so it presents a good opportunity."

More information: [www.bcg.org.au](http://www.bcg.org.au)



David Ferrier with a trough that is permanently filled with high quality water transported by the Wimmera-Mallee pressurised pipeline.



A remnant of an original dingo fence from the 1880s running from South Australia to Victoria. There hasn't been a dingo seen in the area in many decades which shows that it has been possible to push them back in the past.



# Ensay wild dog success brings sheep back

Phil Mudge has reintroduced Merino sheep onto his property after wild dog control success near Ensay, Victoria.

## FAST FACTS

- Farmer Phil Mudge has been able to reintroduce Merino sheep onto his property at Ensay, Victoria following the introduction of a successful wild dog control campaign in the area.
- A coordinated baiting program, in combination with trapping, shooting and electric fences, by local landholders and government wild dog controllers has proven effective at reducing wild dog attacks around Ensay.
- AWI has assisted with funding for a community baiting coordinator, wild dog baits, trap kits and the BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB network that has a group in the Ensay area.

Free wild dog baits and community-wide baiting aided by AWI and the Victorian Department of Environment Primary Industries' (DEPI) staff are returning sheep and hope to parts of Gippsland.

AWI's Community Wild Dog Control Initiative through which local groups applied for funding to assist with their baiting program is helping sheep return to the Ensay

area, just a few years after marauding packs virtually made wool and lamb production unprofitable on some farms.

Sheep numbers in the area might never return to the levels before Ovine Johne's Disease (OJD) forced destocking and the swing to beef cut flocks. But wild dog control achieved through an integrated community baiting, trapping and hunting campaign with electric fencing on farms is giving determined producers like Phil and Ros Mudge, Jim Gray and Craig Lloyd the confidence to try wool and lamb production again.

## Phil and Ros Mudge

The Mudges had been growing wool on their 128 hectare property 'Merrildale' since 1962, with virtually no problems with dogs until the past six years.

"It has been a family property for three generations with the first wool sent away in 1898," Phil said.

At its peak, the current holding ran up to 600 sheep, with the Mudges working off-farm to supplement their income. But increasing dog attacks gradually cut their flock down and they decided to agist cattle from a neighbouring beef producer three years ago.

"After every lambing the dogs would move in and you would end up with no progeny whatsoever and the sheep numbers gradually decreased," he said.

The Mudges' flock of 350 ewes was whittled down to 120 by the dogs before they gave up and sold the remnants about three years ago, leaving only 12 sheep on the property. Their land is only about one kilometre from the nearest state forest, but over the years the dogs had destroyed the flocks of neighbours, until finally the wild dogs moved in and were living on the farm.

But Phil said two to three annual baiting programs assisted by funding from AWI over the past three years - in late summer/early autumn and in spring - had proven to be very successful.

"AWI stepped in and started supporting us. We are at the stage now where I am quite confident we can put sheep back on again."

Phil said the turning point in wild dog control around Ensay came when AWI provided funding for baits and a community coordinator, a new DEPI dogman started in the area and a community baiting program began.

"Baiting was then widespread across the whole community and not just individuals doing it on an ad hoc basis.

AWI helped make it a community effort – it was the catalyst that got the whole thing going. But it was also a combination of the dogmen, being able to bait on public land, hunters coming up and electric fencing.”

The Mudges landed their 371 Merino ewes in November last year, to be joined to rams in February.

“Hopefully theirs will be the first lambs we will get to survive for about six years.”

Phil said he liked the idea of being a woolgrower again, though he also had some beef cattle on to help eat the abundant pasture available. But other district farmers are lifting their sheep numbers after the decline in dog attacks.

“Everyone in the area is certainly showing a lot more confidence in sheep again now.”

### Jim and Sue Gray

The Mudges’ neighbour Jim Gray started farming his wife Sue’s parents’ 400 hectare property in 1995 with 1500 sheep.

“But just after that the dogs moved in and over a period of five to six years we probably lost 300 to 400 sheep,” Jim said. “The dogs were completely in charge of this area.”

They replaced their Merinos with first cross ewes and kept them within a 120 hectare area protected with electric fencing.

“That went reasonably well for a little while, but anytime the fence went out, for floods or anything else, they seemed to know and then came in. I would lose 15 to 20 lambs a night,” he said.

“You didn’t sleep too well at night. It was such a hopeless feeling because you just don’t know where they are going to strike or when.”

The Grays were down to about 200 first cross ewes before they joined the community baiting program about five years ago and he has just ordered another 100 ewes.

“I think our success, the fact that we can get more sheep and let them out from behind the electric wire and spread them out, is solely because of the big poisoning campaign with everybody in. Last year was the first time in 12 years I could put the sheep outside the electric fence for lambing and not have any lambs killed.

“I haven’t heard a dog for over 12 months and I think every night you would walk out and hear dogs howling before that.”

Jim said being able to run more sheep on district farms could help lift profitability enough to attract and hold young people in the area.

“You can make a lot more money from an area of land with sheep than you can with cattle, you always have been able to. Sheep could make it much more attractive to maintain a younger member of the family here.”

### Coordination vital

The Ensay BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB Wild Dog Group was formed in 2012 to help get sheep back into the area and co-ordinator Craig Lloyd said of the 18 producer-members, most were mainly beef farmers. But several were getting back into sheep – “testing the water” with some Merinos or prime lamb mothers.

“In the past few years there has been a bit more confidence around,” Craig said.

He had to destock his Merinos because of OJD in the 1990s and restocked with first cross ewes, but electrified fencing around about 110 hectares of his 400 hectare property to keep out dogs, wombats and kangaroos.

“Baiting has been a big part of it, but it is not everything.”

AWI-funded community wild dog

control co-ordinator Brian Dowley at Bairnsdale said the success of the wild dog control around Ensay was due to the co-ordinated effort of landholders working co-operatively with government wild dog controllers, integrated control measures (baiting, trapping, shooting and electric fencing), AWI support of on-ground action and BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB group establishment to discuss sheep production and dog management in a positive and friendly environment. AWI-funded trap kits have also enabled landholders to undertake trapping on their land.

Brian said there has been a dramatic change in landholder attitudes and well-being.

“They can now focus on other issues that affect their production. Dogs are seen as just another management activity – not the only one.”

But Brian said the success around Ensay has been hard-earned.

“The challenge now is to maintain the effort when things are going well. It really proves that landholders working together can really make a difference.”

## AWI COMMUNITY WILD DOG CONTROL INITIATIVE - FUNDING AVAILABLE

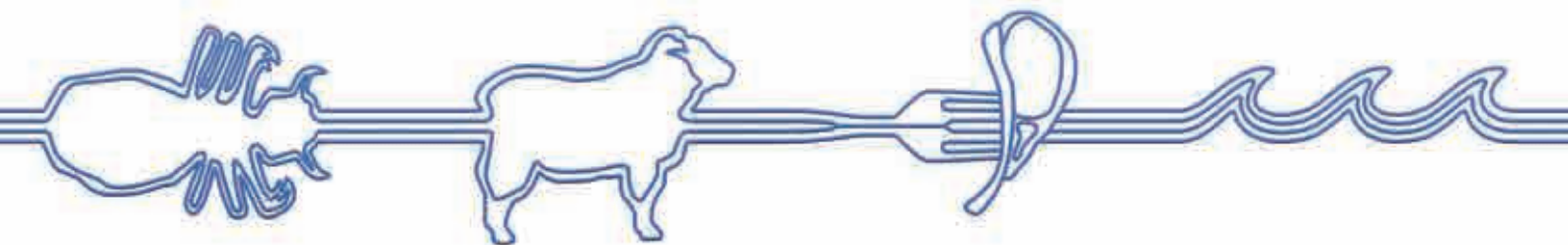
Funding is available to groups under AWI’s ‘Community Wild Dog Control Initiative’. Applications are open to new groups as well as those groups that have previously received funding from AWI. If you would like to apply, please complete the Community Wild Dog Control Initiative application form available at [www.wool.com/pestanimals](http://www.wool.com/pestanimals) and submit it along with a map and project budget to [wilddogs@wool.com](mailto:wilddogs@wool.com). If you need clarification or assistance please contact Taran Blyth at AWI on (02) 8295 3164.



Phil Mudge’s son Carey, left, with neighbour Jim Gray look at some electric fencing on the Mudges’ property.



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# Donkeys as guardian animals



'Princess Fiona' standing guard over some of Bruce and Angela McLeish's 4000 sheep on their 8000 acre property in southern Queensland. PHOTO: David Martinelli / Newspix.

## FAST FACTS

- Donkeys that have been bonded at a young age with sheep can be used as guardian animals to help protect sheep flocks from wild dog attacks.
- They can be effective in complementing other wild dog control methods, but they are not a 'silver bullet' substitute.
- Woolgrowers Bruce and Angela McLeish from Queensland have been using guardian donkeys for the past six years to help reduce losses from wild dogs.

While there is no quick-fix solution to the problem of wild dog attacks on livestock across Australia's agricultural areas, a combination of control methods including baiting, trapping, fencing and shooting – underpinned by collaboration with local landholders – can be very effective in reducing attacks.

Another control method that has recently been generating interest amongst woolgrowers is the use of donkeys as guardian animals to protect flocks, in a similar manner that guardian dogs such as Maremmas have been used.

Bruce and Angela McLeish, who are commercial sheep and wool producers at 'Warahgai' near Karara in the Darling

Downs region of Queensland, have been using donkeys as guardian animals for the past six years, and Mr McLeish recounted their experiences at the Inglewood 'Predator Control Field Day' organised by AgForce and supported by AWI's Leading Sheep state network.

"I had heard of 'guard donkeys' being used in Canada for protecting cattle and sheep from coyotes and wolves," Mr McLeish explained. "When I logged onto the internet and typed in 'guard donkeys', I found to my surprise numerous sites and stories about guard donkeys, and hence the commencement of a donkey program on 'Warahgai'."

The McLeishes originally purchased four donkeys and then set about breeding them and bonding their offspring with their sheep – they now have about 20 donkeys.

"Since introducing donkeys, our losses from wild dogs have reduced. The donkeys live with the mob and come to the front of the mob when anything approaches, and they'll bite and kick the wild dogs. Donkeys won't eradicate all wild dogs, but they are a good tool that we use in combination with other techniques.

"In our opinion the main advantages of using donkeys instead of other guard animals are that they can handle more than one dog. They are very hardy animals; they graze the same as sheep; there is less risk if using 1080 on the property; and the donkeys don't have

to be shorn or drenched, although they might need their hooves trimmed in soft country. They stay in their paddocks and are good on fences too, and they live for 20-40 years."

Mr McLeish says donkeys have to be bonded with sheep when the donkeys are weaning from their mothers at approximately ten months of age.

"It's essential to use weaner donkeys to bond with the sheep. We've attempted to bond mature donkeys with sheep but our aged donkeys have had no success in repelling wild dogs.

"We keep the donkey weaner in the yard with sheep for a couple of weeks and then transfer them into a small paddock. If they are bonded only with white lambs though, the donkey might subsequently chase and kill any coloured lambs.

"We use one donkey per 500 sheep on flat country and one per 300 sheep on undulating country. This works for us, but we haven't tried other scenarios. The main point is that we have one donkey per sheep camp."

Mr McLeish notes there can be some challenges with mustering sheep that have guardian donkeys.

"The donkeys travel at the lead of the mob and they sometimes try and block the mob. But once moving, they generally travel in the centre of the mob.

"The donkeys appear to know our sheep dogs, but both donkeys and sheep dogs are 'wary' of each other. The donkeys work through the yards okay – just don't put too much pressure on them in small yards."

Mr McLeish advises to generally treat the donkeys like a horse, and be very wary of the back end, especially jacks, as they like to kick out at people and sheep dogs if close enough in the yards. You have to be especially careful if there are children in the yards.

"We've been happy with the results of using donkeys," Mr McLeish concludes. "But the main problem for sheep producers can actually be sourcing and purchasing donkeys, as there aren't many around." ◀

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More information: View an hour-long webinar at [www.leadingssheep.com.au/category/sheep-info/predators](http://www.leadingssheep.com.au/category/sheep-info/predators) in which Bruce McLeish, along with producer Andrew Martin from 'Toolmaree' near Tambo and researcher David Jenkins from Charles Sturt University, recount their experiences and answer questions about their use of donkeys.

# Rotational grazing in the

## FAST FACTS

- Rotational grazing has provided woolgrowers Angus and Kelly Whyte in western NSW with benefits that their previous set stocking system could not, including better pasture utilisation and landscape management, improved productivity, and more than halving the labour costs of checking water.
- They have installed water points in “cell centres” to reduce the amount of infrastructure and ongoing labour needed for maintenance.
- The success of this innovation rests on a good rate of water flow to the trough and adopting low stress stock handling techniques.



Angus Whyte with his wife Kelly and son Mitchell at 'Wyndham' on the Anabranch River in western NSW.

Angus Whyte is a fourth generation farmer who runs 5000 Merinos and 300 beef cattle on his property 'Wyndham', 85km north of Wentworth on the Anabranch River in western NSW, along with his wife Kelly and son Mitchell.

Receiving an average rainfall of 260mm, Wyndham is a 12,500ha property that was run under a set stocking system, so checking spread-out water points was labour intensive and a significant cost. The Whytes also believed that set stocking was detrimental to their environment and carrying capacity.

“Our annual costs for checking water here under a set stock system might be \$40,000-\$50,000 per year; that’s a big number to play with and that’s on a fairly small number of stock,” Angus explained. “We were unhappy with the amount of money we were making, we were working long hours, and our landscape was really degraded in our eyes.”

Therefore in 2001, Angus and Kelly implemented a rotational grazing system on Wyndham and increased paddock numbers from 8 large paddocks to 33 smaller ones. To reduce the infrastructure required and also save labour, they have installed cell centres – water points which multiple paddocks have access to, but only one paddock at a time.

“We didn’t go straight into cell centres, we went into dividing our paddocks up then rotating our stock around. Now we’re at a stage where we’re really happy to do cell centres – they are an effective use of water.”

## CELL CENTRES

Four adjoining paddocks are watered by a trough at a single point: the cell centre. All four paddocks have access to the troughs within the cell centre.

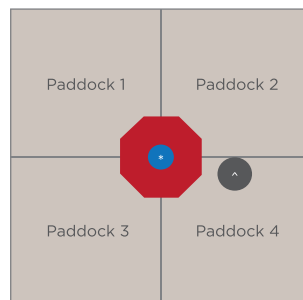


Diagram of four paddocks leading into a cell centre with a trough\* and water storage tank^.

Using electric tape and spring handles, the paddocks not being used are sectioned off. Only the paddocks which are being used have access to the water.

By opening the tape gate to an adjoining paddock, stock can be mustered through the cell centre to the next paddock. The tape gate to the previous paddock is then secured once they have all moved through.

Stock can easily be moved into the next paddock via the cell centre, even when they have lambs or calves at foot. This also means the rotational grazing system is not compromised through lambing.

With a good rate of water flow into

the trough, it reduces stress on stock, allowing stocking rates to be increased in the good seasons.

“We don’t need to clean our troughs,” Angus said. “The stock are in each paddock for about a week, so are using the trough for about four weeks. The rest of the time these troughs are empty with water turned off. Mother Nature comes and cleans it out with the sunlight baking the algae, so there’s no cleaning, no maintenance on these troughs.”

• View the “Cell Centre Watering Point” case study on the Bestprac website at [www.bestprac.info](http://www.bestprac.info)

## LOW STRESS STOCK HANDLING

Implementing the rotational grazing system required increases to mob size with stock shifted more frequently between paddocks than a traditional set stocking system. Moving larger mobs of sheep, and containing both sheep and cattle within three wire fencing became problematic at Wyndham.

This led Angus and Kelly to investigate and implement low stress livestock handling techniques on their property.

“In hindsight there is no doubt that our stock weren’t ready to be put together in large mobs in a rotational grazing system. It was only after we did a low stress stock handling school that we were able to work with them and teach them how to behave as a mob in larger stock densities and be



# pastoral zone



Cell centre watering point for rotational grazing on Angus Whyte's NSW pastoral property.



Electric tape and spring handles are used as gates in the cell centre.

comfortable to come in and water.

"If we hadn't gone through that we couldn't have then have taken the next step to put in smaller cell centres because that would have been far too much pressure and we would have lost far too much productivity."

• View the "Low Stress Stock Handling" case study on the Bestprac website at [www.bestprac.info](http://www.bestprac.info)

## PASTURE UTILISATION

Since the change to rotational grazing, benefits have included better pasture utilisation and landscape management, improved productivity, and a reduction in labour requirements. This is a system that Angus's land and livestock consultant Nic Kentish endorses, and he encourages other businesses in the pastoral zone to consider.

"Most places that you would come across could have a fence put up the middle of every paddock, so double the number of paddocks," Nic says. "So if you have 10 paddocks to start with, you're grazing one and resting nine. Cut them all in half, you're grazing one and resting nineteen. And cut all them in half, you're grazing one and resting 39. This results in the plants having far longer rest and that's what the sensitive plants around here want.

"Right now at Wyndham there's a distance from the water trough to the back of the paddock of just two kilometres on average so that's pretty ideal. But if you have country where the sheep have to

travel a long way from water to get good grazing, and back again to the water, then they're not going to put on much weight – you can imagine how much energy they're burning up in walking.

"Plus when you've got country of which one quarter never seems to get a grazing because it's just too far to go without water, well it's a waste of country.

"What we really want to get away from is big spikes and big troughs in the nutrient cycle of the year of the animal; we like to take those big troughs into gentle oscillations. So the sheep go into a paddock, spend a week in a paddock, get the best out of the start of the week, and at the end of the week that's enough, and we move the sheep onto the next one. So there are 52 little bumps over the year – that's not going to be a problem in tensile strength of wool.

"And of course the other good thing I like about the new system here at Wyndham is that there's so few places that you have to check on 12,500ha, which reduces labour costs."

Angus concludes that implementing water points in cell centres has reduced the infrastructure required and more than halved labour costs of checking water.

"To put it simply, for us it's been a major time saver and made us more money in our business. It's a fantastic tool to deliver that," he says. ◀

**More information: For the full case studies, video and a recording of a webinar of Angus and Nic telling their**

experience, visit the Bestprac website at [www.bestprac.info](http://www.bestprac.info)  
[www.wyndhamstation.com.au](http://www.wyndhamstation.com.au)  
[www.nickentish.com.au](http://www.nickentish.com.au)  
[www.lss.net.au](http://www.lss.net.au)

## ACCELERATING PASTORAL ZONE INNOVATION



Following the success of the 2009 *Australian Pastoral Property Innovation Manual*, AWI and its extension network for pastoral wool producers, Bestprac, continue to promote innovation uptake across the pastoral regions of Australia through the launch of the first outputs of the Accelerating Rangeland Innovation project.

The project profiles innovations to reduce time, save on costs and generally make life easier. Woolgrowers who are seeking new ideas to implement in their business can now access this series of innovations used on other pastoral properties.

These innovations have been published as profiles, business cases and videos available on the Bestprac website [www.bestprac.info](http://www.bestprac.info)

If you have a pastoral innovation to share, contact Taryn Mangelsdorf, Rural Directions Pty Ltd, on 08 8841 4500 or [bestprac@ruraldirections.com](mailto:bestprac@ruraldirections.com)

# Taking the strain out of sheep handling

## FAST FACTS

- Equipment designed to take the hard work out of sheep handling and husbandry practices is available on the market.
- The floors of the race-like machines have dividing bars that are hydraulically raised to bring the sheep to a comfortable working height.
- The sheep become passive and immobilised allowing operators to perform husbandry practices with minimal strain and risk of injury.

Woolgrowing has always been a physically tough livelihood, but with an aging farming population and labour shortages, wool producers are having to look for new ways to reduce the strain of sheep work.

Sheep handling and husbandry – all necessary tasks for woolgrowers – can be some of the most physically demanding jobs, and can be a struggle for even the most experienced and strongest of workers. With this in mind, woolgrowers might want to consider looking at equipment on the market to help them.

The Sheep Bulk Handler produced by ProWay Livestock Equipment ([www.proway.com.au](http://www.proway.com.au), 1300 655 383) is an award winning system. It won the new release award at Wagin Woolorama in 2013, and 1st prize in the 2012 Sheepvention Inventions Award.

The key feature of the system is a “grated floor” of the race section that can be raised hydraulically by the operator after groups of 20-30 sheep have been ushered into the race. As the dividing bars of the floor are lifted, all the sheep are suspended on their underside and raised to the waist

height of the operator.

The sheep become passive as they are caught as a group, in a natural position, enabling workers to drench, vaccinate, capsule, back-line, jet and tag without having to struggle with the sheep. As with shearing, if sheep are properly held, they become submissive.

Director of ProWay Livestock Equipment, Joe Hoban, says the sheep are ideally positioned and held for a majority of routine husbandry operations.

“This allows for the use of less skilled operators to treat sheep while also opening husbandry practices to workers or family members who might find traditional race handling too demanding.

“Ninety per cent of sheep husbandry has typically been wrestling with the sheep, not drenching or ear tagging. But with the Bulk Handler, the sheep passively sit there – they are unable to ‘tunnel’ and bury their heads as they have no grounding to make use of their leg and back muscles.

“Operators are also far less likely to miss recalcitrant animals, giving them the peace of mind that every sheep has received the correct dose and has had the treatment applied correctly.

“Throughput levels are very high, as handling and filling times are very quick. The sheep handler can be easily used by one operator as it fills easily, and all sheep are accessible from both sides so it can also be very effectively used by

two or more operators.”

Woolgrower Wes Polkinghorne from Berrimal, Victoria recently installed a 10 metre sheep bulk handler.

“Sheep handling has become a pleasurable experience,” he says. “We’ve had 12,000 sheep including Merino ewes, wethers, rams and newly weaned lambs passing



**The ProWay Sheep Bulk Handler lifts the sheep off the ground where they naturally become passive, enabling operators to perform husbandry practices with minimal strain.**

through the handler in a three week period. The management practises performed on these sheep were back-lining, drenching, injecting, ear tagging, mouthing and classing – all done with remarkable ease.

“Sheep husbandry is no longer a chore but a pleasurable process where tasks can be performed with precision of application in a safe environment with little stress on the livestock and the operator.”

Another company that produces a similar race-like machine to take the strain out of handling is Holland Stocklift ([www.hollandstocklift.com.au](http://www.hollandstocklift.com.au), 08 8595 7303).

# MORE “KA-CHING” FROM CRUTCHING

## FAST FACTS

- The CrutchMaster from Perkinz eliminates the catch and drag, and the bending over traditionally involved with crutching.
- Perkinz claims the system has the potential to significantly increase throughput compared to over-the-board crutching, and work out cheaper per head.
- To full-crutch and wig a Merino ewe, Perkinz says a competent operator would do around 500 to 800 per day.

**T**raditional crutching can be an arduous and time-consuming task. So imagine if the catch and drag, and bending over the sheep could be eliminated. That's what Wayne Perkins contemplated a few years ago when he developed the award-winning CrutchMaster crutching unit.

With the CrutchMaster, the ewes or lambs walk up a race onto the crutching unit at the operator's chest height from where the sheep are simply pulled/rolled over by the operator on to a waist-high board on which the animal is subdued while the crutching is performed. The operator then simply drops the spring-loaded board to quickly and safely release the animal under the crutching unit to exit before pulling out the next.

Mr Perkins, now the product development manager at EB Engineering Solutions that manufactures the CrutchMaster, says there are many benefits of the system for woolgrowers and their workers, but the overarching principle behind the system is its usability and simplicity.

“The workers love this system because it's easy to use and less physically demanding – there is no bending or lifting required, the sheep are restrained quickly and easily, and the sheep's position gives good blow placement,” he says.

“Woolgrowers love it because it not only makes crutching easier, but it also



The CrutchMaster aims to make crutching easier and quicker.

has the potential to increase throughput compared to over-the-board crutching, and works out cheaper per head. It's a fast system – it's like having someone dragging out for you. You can also crutch ewes, hoggets and lambs together without drafting which can save a lot of time. And because it requires less skill and strength to operate than traditional crutching, it could also be used by other farm staff that might not normally do crutching.”

Tallies depend on both the sheep and the operator, but Mr Perkins says the top tally dagging lambs is 2571 in a day and ewes is 1450 per day. To full-crutch and wig a Merino ewe, he says a competent operator would do about 500 to 800 per day.

Mr Perkins says the equipment has a simple and robust construction, built by professional engineers.

“We have a strong design focus and

work very closely with both existing and future users to make sure our product is reliable, simple to use so our customer can achieve maximum benefit.

“It's very versatile too – the units have a modular design meaning that they can inter-connect with each other, they are light to tow, very maneuverable and easy to set-up. In fact, any of the units can be set up in ten minutes or less. We have units that can also be used as a static, in-built system.”

Mr Perkins says fully-adjustable neck restraints and leg restraints on the board are designed to allow operators to do the full range of crutching types on both lambs and ewes: dagging, ring crutch, full crutch, half belly crutch, full belly crutch, flanks, front socks and eye wigs.”

More information:

Wayne Perkins, 1800 750 584,  
[www.perkinz.com.au](http://www.perkinz.com.au)



# BORN TO SHEAR: JASON WINGFIELD

Jason Wingfield winning the 2013 Australian machine shearing title at Warrnambool in October 2013. PHOTO: Flick Wingfield.

## FAST FACTS

- With a family background in shearing, National Shearing Champion Jason Wingfield began in the industry at an early age and now owns and runs a large shearing contracting business.
- The Victorian has traveled the world shearing and will represent Australia in this year's World Shearing Championships to be held in Ireland in May.
- AWI invests in the recruitment, up-skilling and retention of professional shearers and woolhandlers so the Australian wool clip can be harvested in a timely manner, with costs kept to minimum and clip quality improved.

Ask 2013 Australian National Shearing Champion Jason Wingfield when he began shearing and he isn't exactly sure as he was essentially born into the industry.

"It's in my DNA I suppose, Dad was a shearer in WA before we moved to

Victoria. As long as I can remember I have been in sheds. As a very young boy I remember pretending to shear the dog and things like that until I was old enough to finally have a go myself," Jason says.

After leaving school and a short time in a wool store in Geelong, Jason began his shearing career in earnest, largely self-taught before entering shearing contests in the early 1990s.

"Those competitions are very important in your younger days and for me it was where I met Peter and Stan Artridge and they were a great help and from there I started in a few sheds around Avoca and Lexton where we were."

Jason travelled to New Zealand each year for many years. These trips were another eye-opener as it is where he learnt a slightly different technique which increased not only his knowledge but also his desire to be the best.

His enormous natural talent was showing through. By 1997, at 21, Jason was in the Victorian shearing team and has been part of the team virtually every year since.

"I've not been in the team three

times, two of them by choice. But to be representing your state or your country in what you do, you have to be constantly working on your game. Like any professional sports person you can't be casual."

2013 was the second occasion that Jason has won the National Shearing Championships. The first time was in 2009. These wins, amongst others, have seen him travel the world to compete for Australia. He has won numerous trips to New Zealand and competed in Norway and Wales in the World Championships. His next trip will be to Ireland in May as part of the Australian team competing in the World Championships (see opposite).

Jason, alongside his wife Nicole (Diddi) now own and run "Baldwin Shearing" where they employ up to 50 shearers and shedhands. Mark Baldwin encouraged the move and has been of great help in the transition from shearer to businessman. It has been a natural progression for the gun shearer who still enjoys the opportunity to join one of his own teams. Jason works consistently in the sheds, his natural competitive nature means he loves to shear the sheep the

best he can and he loves to shear the most! He enjoys keeping the rest of the gang going hard.

Baldwin Shearing currently has 13 trainee staff. Jason tries to encourage development and learning within the industry. He thanks Deniliquin-based shearing instructor Brian Sullivan for his "straight up and forthright" shearing advice and admits the support shearers have these days is much better.

"The sheep these days are much bigger than even 10 years ago and so it's great to see so much training and

encouragement through shearing events around the country. Back 10-15 years ago there was very little so it's good to see an improvement because we need it to keep people doing what is a very hard job.

"With children it's harder to get away and I enjoy being at home. We have teams out 1000km from Tocumwal including Lightning Ridge and Broken Hill where we often have big gangs working on some famous stations for up to six weeks at a time."

Jason and Nicole are now responsible for a sizeable part of the national flock

being shorn and as professionals they take a lot of pride in the service they offer woolgrowers, both big and small. To this end Jason says keeping the working environment in good shape helps attract the best shearers.

"We handle the annual harvest for woolgrowers and therefore a very large part of their income. It's our duty to get the greatest return for them and when the shed and facilities are up to scratch that makes it easy. Often the people that find it hard to get shearers have the worst sheds, put it that way."

## AUSTRALIAN SHEARING AND WOOLHANDLING TEAM



An Australian machine and blade shearing and woolhandling team will be competing at the 16th Golden Shears World Sheep Shearing and Woolhandling Championships that will take place in the town of Gorey, County Wexford, Ireland from 17-25 May 2014. The top names from an anticipated 35 other nations including New Zealand, the UK and South Africa will compete for the coveted Golden Shears title. More than 30,000 spectators are expected, with a family-orientated festival of food, crafts, fashion and entertainment to run in tandem with the main shearing competitions.

An Australian machine shearing and woolhandling team has also recently competed in New Zealand's prestigious "Golden Shears" annual event held in Masterton from 27 February to 1 March.

- **Jason Wingfield** (Vic), 2013 Australian machine shearing champion - to Ireland and New Zealand.
- **Shannon Warnest** (SA), 2013 Australian machine shearing runner up - to Ireland and New Zealand.
- **Daniel McIntyre** (NSW), 3rd in 2013 Australian machine shearing championships - to New Zealand.
- **John Dalla** (SA), 2013 Australian blade shearing champion - to Ireland.
- **Ken French** (Vic), 2013 Australian blade shearing runner up - to Ireland.
- **Sarah Moran** (Vic), 2013 Australian woolhandling champion - to Ireland and New Zealand.

- **Mel Morris** (Tas), 2013 Australian woolhandling runner up - to Ireland and New Zealand.
- **Steph Brooker-Jones**, Chairperson SSSA, Golden Shears World Council Delegate.
- **Greg Byrnes** (NSW), Golden Shears World Council Delegate.
- **Wally Humphrys** (SA), Team manager in Ireland.
- **Roger Mifsud** (Vic), Team manager in New Zealand.
- **Winston Flood** (Tas), Shearing judge - to Ireland and New Zealand.
- **Craig Rowsell** (SA), Woolhandling judge - to Ireland.

- **Paul McCormick** (Vic), Woolhandling judge - to New Zealand.

AWI is providing funds for the Australian team's travel, accommodation and uniforms for the World Championships in Ireland. This support of the national team complements AWI support for shearing competitions at local and state levels, with the main aims being to promote excellence within the shearing industry, and to encourage young people to join the industry.

More information: Sports Shear Australia Association (SSAA) is on Facebook.  
[www.goldenshearsireland.com](http://www.goldenshearsireland.com)  
[www.goldenshears.co.nz](http://www.goldenshears.co.nz)



Australian shearing and woolhandling team members, who were selected at the SSAA 2013 Australian Championships. BACK: Jason Wingfield, Shannon Warnest, Daniel McIntyre, John Dalla, Ken French, Sarah Moran, Mel Morris, Greg Byrnes, Steph Brooker-Jones. FRONT: Roger Mifsud, Craig Rowsell, Wally Humphrys.

# Professional shed conditions



Omeo shearing contractor Trevor King with a safety switch in a wool shed.

## FAST FACTS

- East Gippsland shearing contractor Trevor King strongly believes in reducing the health and safety risks of his staff.
- Trevor's sheds have many safety innovations and he does not tolerate workers taking drugs.
- If the industry wants to attract and retain professional shearers and wool handlers it needs to ensure there are professional shed conditions in which to work.

Omeo shearing contractor Trevor King's strong stance on health and safety in sheds has shearers and wool handlers keen to work for him, and woolgrowers keen to use his services.

Trevor, 57, has been focussed on the safety of his workers throughout his 41

years shearing. His contract business started in 1992 and his son Tom, 23, and daughter Shelley, 20, are also shearers.

Trevor enlisted the help a few years ago of former shearer and now ergonomist Michael Lawrence to audit the safety of his sheds after meeting him at a Shearing Contractors' Association of Australia conference.

"Then it became a competition among all the farmers to have the best shed for me," Trevor said.

This led to safety switches being installed in the sheds, so anybody could turn all the shearing machines off if a shearer lost control of a handpiece.

"No rouseabout has to get hurt

stopping an out-of-control handpiece."

Also all his sheds have safety switches on the wool presses, to save the presser from getting an arm caught or even killed by a descending ram. Other innovations that have improved safety and work

function are chains to hold overhead back supports, mesh wool bin sides and sloping batten floors in catching pens.

Nearly all Trevor's farmers crutch their sheep before shearing and he provides bags for

rubbish, a well-equipped first aid box plus extra smoko gear such as biscuits, noodles and mugs.

"In return I get good service from all my staff."

Any gear used on the board is washed and disinfected before the next

**"PEOPLE SHOULD COME AND SEE HOW SIMPLE IT IS TO MAKE A SHED SAFE FOR EVERYBODY."**

TREVOR KING

shed. The board is washed if the farmer requests it, Trevor said.

He also tries to get his shearers and staff that smoke to do so outside the shed and does his best to keep baling twine out of the shed to help clip quality.

Many of the safety changes made in Trevor's sheds were subsidised with the support of the industry, Michael Lawrence and the Australian Workers Union. Trevor would like to see similar subsidies continue for workers' safety and to keep Workcover premiums down.

"People should come and see how simple it is to make a shed safe for everybody."

He encourages shearing instructors to come to his shed when they can, has helped run shearing shed safety courses and is one of the few contractors in the region to provide health checks in his sheds for his workers.

Trevor also has a firm stand against drugs in the industry, which he says are pretty common in the industry - mainly marijuana and speed - with users believing they helped them shear more sheep.

"But it just knocks their bodies about," Trevor said.

He is concerned that shearers using drugs could be shortening their working lifespan and are also less safety conscious in the shed.

"I saw a shearer on drugs put his finger through the guard of a fan and knock the top off his finger. That's something you would do if you were *too* relaxed and not thinking."

Trevor has tried to enforce a zero drug tolerance workplace procedural contract that also covered dogs in the shed, rifles and alcohol consumption, but had to compromise to get shearers.

"I'm still very hard on it and I have sometimes had a spare stand in a shed because I have taken that stance. I tell them that if anything they do interferes with my time they are up the track.

"The duty of care comes back to the contractor and the farmer has entrusted me with their livelihood - their sheep."

Trevor said mothers often asked him to take their kids on work experience because of his anti-drug stance and a local school principal has also sent students out to work with him.

"If I can work with the principal of that school and we can turn a kid's life around for just one day it is great." ◀

More information: [www.wool.com/shedsafety](http://www.wool.com/shedsafety)



New technology is being used as a learning aid for shearer training.

#### FAST FACTS

- iPad tablets utilised by AWI shearer trainers are helping new and experienced shearers improve their technique and consequently the quality of woolgrowers' clip.
- The new technology is a simple, effective and economical way for shearer trainers to communicate to shearers.
- The result is shearers make technique and efficiency gains more quickly, resulting in higher quality and faster shearing.

From tennis to triathlon, cricket to canoeing, video has proven for many years to be an effective learning tool for athletes to improve their technique.

And today, with new technology making video recording tools so portable and cost effective, novice and experienced shearers are now learning the benefits of the medium.

AWI has provided iPad tablets to several of its shearer trainers to record footage of their shearers in action. The footage is then reviewed by the shearer with the trainer to analyse areas in which the shearer could improve their technique.

The shearer can view the footage during the training to make real-time improvements to their technique, or at a later time as a follow up for the shearer to review and work on.

"Pictures are worth a thousand words, in all training, and it's exactly the same with shearer training," AWI Shearing Industry Training Development Coordinator Jim Murray says.

"A shearer can be so focused on their job that they don't necessarily appreciate that there might be a weakness in their technique. But when they see it on the

screen, it can be a bit of a wake-up moment for them. That's where the iPads have been invaluable."

While recording video footage for shearer training has been around since the 1980s, its use was limited due to the bulky equipment and difficulty with viewing and editing.

"The new technology is great for both the trainer and the shearer. The iPads are very lightweight, flexible, and easy to operate. The trainer can easily get footage from in front of the shearer, behind them and from the side - and then highlight on the screen the problem areas that need attention.

We can even freeze-frame the footage and play it in slow motion, which can be very useful.

"We find that shearers make most use of the footage there and then at the session in which it was recorded, but there is also the option for us to send the footage with our comments via email to the shearer to review later.

"The common areas that we find shearers can improve is their foot positioning, the entry points, their grip on the handpiece, and tearing the back leg out of the fleece when they're putting the first big shot in on the hind leg.

"But half the battle for shearers relates to how the sheep is being held. Reviewing the film can quickly show the shearers where they're losing control of the animal. If we can simply improve how the sheep is balanced then the sheep will be calm and the shearer is able to use his free hand to make bigger flatter surfaces on which to use the comb, which results in less second cuts, less skin cuts and less time on the board - which is better for everyone. As we say in the sheds, a 'happy sheep makes a happy shearer'." ◀

# AWI support for shearing and woolhandling

**A**WI provides free training for novice, improver and professional shearers and wool handlers through its regional coaching program.

Provided by registered training organisations, the training focuses on shearers and wool handlers in the shed, particularly on increasing their productivity and skill development.

Find out more about the AWI shearer and woolhandler skills development program and government-funded training initiatives by contacting AWI's preferred training provider in your state.

AWI also supports local, state and national shearing and woolhandling competitions to promote excellence and professionalism within the Australian shearing industry and encourage young people to join the industry.

If you're planning a local or regional shearing and woolhandling competition based on Sports Shear Australia criteria,

| STATE | TRAINING PROVIDER                                  | CONTACT                        |
|-------|--|--------------------------------|
| NSW   | TAFE NSW – Western Institute                       | Richard Ingham, 1300 666 292   |
|       | TAFE NSW – Riverina Institute                      | Graeme Anderson, 1800 441 244  |
|       | TAFE NSW – New England                             | Pauline Smith, 02 6773 7110    |
| QLD   | Australian Agricultural College Corporation (AACC) | Carolyn Doyle, 1800 888 710    |
|       | TECTRA   | Gavin Rowland, 0427 432 5450   |
| SA    | TAFE SA  | Bob Reid, 08 8303 7822         |
| TAS   | Primary Employers Tasmania (PET)                   | Keith Rice, 03 6343 2244       |
| VIC   | SCAA Shearer Woolhandler Training Inc              | Darren Templeton, 0427 435 244 |
|       | RIST – Rural Industries Skills Training            | Louise Cameron, 03 5573 0943   |
| WA    | CY O'Connor College of TAFE (Northern Region)      | Stephen Madson, 08 9881 9000   |
|       | Great Southern TAFE (Lower Southern Region)        | Peter Young, 08 9892 7551      |

you may be eligible for support from AWI. Contact Ian Evans at AWI on 0427 773 005 or [ian.evans@wool.com](mailto:ian.evans@wool.com) to find out more

about what support might be available for your event. For further information visit [www.wool.com/harvesting](http://www.wool.com/harvesting)

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## CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION

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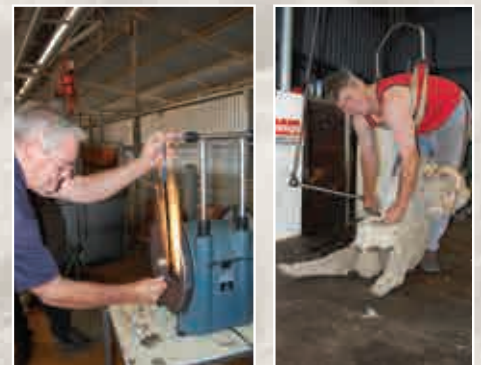
*The event will include indoor and outdoor exhibits, and specialist/expert guest speakers and discussions:*

- Machinery, plant and equipment demonstrations
- Wool quality and preparation
- Shed safety and design
- Mental health issues - "Keeping Sane® in a Blue Singlet" - plus information on depression, drugs and alcohol, and bullying
- Sheep handling and animal welfare developments
- Wool classing/baling and weight
- Equipment suppliers and manufacturers
- Employment awards developments/ rates/safety
- Panel discussion - covering a broad range of 'hot topics'
- Chemical safety
- Animal health and welfare
- Ram sedation
- Health, nutrition and alternative joint therapies
- Plant/cool room/amenities block demonstrations
- Show bag and prizes
- Industry dinner with surprise guests and entertainment

For bookings and further information contact Vikki Gates on 0427 552 225, [wasia@inet.net.au](mailto:wasia@inet.net.au) or fax 08 9262 3428. Early Bird and Member discounts will apply.



WA SHEARING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (INC)





# Fibre measurement – get to know your operator

Fibre measurement – a key component of woolgrowers' selection and breeding programs.

## FAST FACTS

- A review of the old On-Farm Fibre Measurement (OFFM) quality assurance (QA) program has concluded that a relaunched QA program is not justified in terms of industry need or cost.
- Woolgrowers can ensure they are getting the best value from their investment in fibre measurement by regular enquiry and clear communication with their service provider.
- Existing third party accreditation systems are available to service operators and can be used to provide confidence to woolgrowers.

For many woolgrowers, fibre measurement is a key part of their selection and breeding program. Either by measuring individual fleece traits (such as fibre diameter) on-farm, or by sending samples to a laboratory for measurement, woolgrowers rely heavily on the businesses that provide fibre measurement services to deliver them precise and accurate results on which to base selection decisions within their flock.

Commencing in 2004, AWI funded a program that was designed to assist fibre measurement service providers meet a range of QA standards that would help them provide results to woolgrowers that could be used with confidence. Whilst successful during its operation, the OFFM-QA program was discontinued in 2007 due to falling levy income and the view that accreditation of the private sector was not the role of AWI.

## FIBRE MEASUREMENT REVIEW

In 2013, with rising levy income and requests from the industry, AWI conducted a further review of the fibre measurement industry, including views on the need and likely success of a new OFFM-QA program.

The review was carried out by Ben Swain of BCS Agribusiness, an independent consultant experienced with both the previous OFFM-QA program and a regular user of fibre measurement services. He concluded that a relaunched OFFM-QA program could not be justified in terms of industry need or cost, and that funding by AWI of a QA program could not be warranted. AWI has agreed with the recommendations of the review.

The review found no major or significantly negative consequences resulting from poor quality fibre measurement data during the absence of a QA program during the past five years.

"It would be reasonable to conclude that the risk of such consequences occurring in the future is small, if the current commercial environment was allowed to continue unheeded by industry regulation," Ben said. Some service providers have been using other QA schemes to promote their businesses.

## KNOW YOUR OPERATOR

The review also acknowledged that woolgrowers need to be made more aware that the old QA scheme has ceased. Woolgrowers need to ensure they are getting the best value from their investment in fibre measurement by discussing QA and regular clear communication with their service provider.

"You need to be comfortable in asking for answers to the questions that affect the outcome of the results you are provided with," Ben said. "For example, ask your

service provider if they calibrate their instrument and how it is carried out. Ask to see them calibrate their instrument either on-farm or via a laboratory visit."

Other questions that should be asked include, what internal QA procedures is the service provider following and are these procedures documented? Are all staff adequately trained and knowledgeable when it comes to operating the instrument? Ask to see evidence of both.

"If you are not happy with the responses provided, use the services of a business that can adequately answer these questions."

## THIRD PARTY ACCREDITATION

Ben says that woolgrowers should be aware of the third party accreditation systems that are already available to fibre measurement service providers.

"INTERWOOLLABS is a thorough and robust system that provides assurances of instrument calibration and measurement of fibre diameter on scoured samples," Ben said. "Whilst it does not provide a perfect accreditation system for the on farm fibre measurement industry, service providers accredited under INTERWOOLLABS are displaying their commitment to quality assurance and woolgrowers should be encouraged to seek out service providers that are accredited under this, or similar systems.

"You know better than anyone else what your results should look like. After taking into account seasonal conditions or a change in genetics, if you are suspicious of the results, talk to your service provider and if necessary a retest should be requested." ◀

More information: Contact your fibre measurement service provider.

# Vaccinating ewes and lambs

## FAST FACTS

- Clostridial diseases (tetanus, blackleg, black disease, malignant oedema and pulpy kidney) can be prevented by implementing a vaccination program prior to lambing.
- So with autumn lambing approaching, woolgrowers should consider if the pre-disposing conditions for the development of clostridial diseases exist, and adopt prevention strategies.
- The *Healthy and Contented Sheep* module from the *Making More From Sheep* manual provides advice on a range of health and welfare issues regarding sheep flocks.

With autumn lambing not far away, now is a good time for woolgrowers to look at their prevention plans against clostridial diseases: tetanus, blackleg, black disease, malignant oedema and pulpy kidney.

The widespread adoption of preventative vaccination has reduced sheep losses associated with these diseases. However, they remain a major threat to animal health, welfare and consequently farm profitability if an appropriate prevention plan is not implemented.

Preventative vaccination is the only viable means of control. Eradication of clostridial diseases is not possible, and treatment is expensive and usually not successful. The conditions when these diseases are likely to occur are:

- Tetanus: penetrating wounds including marking wounds
- Blackleg: muscle bruising, growing animals
- Black disease: liver fluke infestation
- Malignant oedema: wounds
- Pulpy kidney: lush pasture, heavy grain feeding, change of feed.

If these conditions exist, adopt management strategies to prevent the diseases.

With all clostridial disease consider the local risk based on previous local district history and property history.

Intensification is likely to increase risk of clostridial diseases such as blackleg and pulpy kidney.

In outbreaks of pulpy kidney, removing stock from lush pasture, or cutting back on supplementary grain feeding, will often stop deaths.

Vaccinating ewes and lambs is another way that woolgrowers care for the welfare of their flock. The *Healthy and Contented Sheep* module from the *Making More From Sheep* manual provides the following vaccination strategies.

- For maximum protection of young lambs, vaccinate ewes 2-6 weeks before lambing.
- For the protection of lambs, vaccinate at marking and give a booster 4-8 weeks later (weaning).
- For older stock, an annual booster should be given, timed before high-risk periods or more frequently in high-risk situations, such as grain feeding in drought or grazing high-quality fodder crops.
- For new stock, implement vaccination procedures as for normal stock. If the history of vaccination is known, implement the flock program. If the vaccination history is not known, give an initial dose, then a booster 4-8 weeks later.

Note that one dose does not provide any protection.

Several companies sell vaccine as either 3-in-1 (pulpy kidney, tetanus, cheesy gland) or 5-in-1 (pulpy kidney, tetanus, black disease, blackleg, malignant oedema) or

6-in-1 (clostridial diseases and cheesy gland). Vaccines are also available in combination with vitamin B12 and trace elements such as selenium but should only be used when cobalt or selenium are deficient.

Cheesy gland vaccine is incorporated in the clostridial vaccine, either as 3-in-1 or 6-in-1. Initially two doses are required to provide protection, and then an annual booster is necessary to maintain it. Infection from cheesy gland is most commonly through shearing cuts, so it is good husbandry to avoid dipping recently shorn sheep until shearing cuts are healed.

The *Healthy and Contented Sheep* module from the *Making More From Sheep* manual presents an effective approach for woolgrowers to manage a full range of health and welfare issues of their flock, including worms, flies and lice. The module aims to give producers confidence that sheep parasites and diseases can be managed in a cost-effective manner to maximise enterprise profitability. *Making More From Sheep* is a joint initiative of AWI and MLA.

More information:

[www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au](http://www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au)

*Making More From Sheep*

A joint  
initiative of



Australian Wool  
Innovation Limited



MEAT & LIVESTOCK AUSTRALIA



Many vets recommend that a clostridial vaccination program should always be a part of the annual animal health regime as the cost is very low compared to the risk.

# R&D into low cost, non-surgical cervical AI

**A** new project headed by Dr Simon de Graaf of the University of Sydney seeks to improve the function of frozen ram semen so that it can be effectively used in low cost, non-surgical, cervical artificial insemination (AI) programs.

Cervical AI is a cheaper, less invasive and simpler alternative to the current industry practice of veterinary administered laparoscopic AI, but the existing AI practice is a necessity due to the inability of frozen-thawed sperm to move through the ewe's cervix and fertilise available eggs in the upper tract.

Currently when frozen semen is used in cervical AI programs it results in a conception rate of 20 per cent as opposed to 70 per cent for cervical AI with either fresh semen, or laparoscopic AI with frozen semen. This project

aims to solve this problem by investigating the changes which occur to ram sperm during freezing and thawing, how such changes reduce the progress of sperm through the female reproductive tract and novel methods to overcome these issues and promote sperm transport through the cervix.

The anticipated return to levy payers from this research will come through much improved conception rates with lower cost cervical AI and increased use of high merit rams by both stud and some commercial breeders. Results from this project may also provide for more consistent results from laparoscopic AI.

More information:  
[simon.degraaf@sydney.edu.au](mailto:simon.degraaf@sydney.edu.au)



Dr Simon de Graaf of the University of Sydney has begun conducting R&D into low cost, non-surgical cervical artificial insemination using frozen semen.

## FREE publications for woolgrowers



### VISUAL CLASSING MERINO SHEEP

The objective of sheep classing is to identify and retain those sheep in a flock that will improve flock returns both now and in the future through more productive progeny. This new 16-page AWI publication provides a list of classing traits, with the preferred characteristic and economic importance

of those traits. It also includes issues to consider prior to visually classing sheep, and an overview of combining visual and objective assessments.

### BREECH STRIKE GENETICS

AWI is funding trials conducted by the Department of Agriculture and Food WA (DAFWA) at Mt Barker, WA and CSIRO at Armidale, NSW into the indicator traits for breech flystrike resistance in winter rainfall environments and summer rainfall environments respectively. Each of the trials produces a regular Breech Strike Genetics newsletter (approximately 8-10 pages) that reports on the activities and outcomes of the Mt Barker and Armidale selection lines.



More information: These publications are available to download from the AWI website at [www.wool.com/publications](http://www.wool.com/publications) or on request as free hard copy versions from the AWI Helpline on 1800 070 099.

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Web: [www.cgbsservices.com.au](http://www.cgbsservices.com.au)

# Release of 'elite' saltbush

## FAST FACTS

- Western Australian farmers have been quick to access a limited research release of an “elite” line of old man saltbush.
- The elite varieties have been bred to withstand high saline conditions and be more palatable for livestock than the traditional saltbush varieties.
- The development of the elite varieties builds on research carried out by CSIRO, SARDI, NSW Department of Primary Industries and WA Department of Parks and Wildlife, with funding by the Future Farm Industries CRC and the AWI-co-funded Land, Water & Wool project.



CSIRO's Dr Hayley Norman (right) with Dustin McCreery from Chatfield's Nursery with the new elite saltbush stems that were on sale. PHOTO: Future Farm Industries CRC.

Western Australian farmers wanting to boost productivity on marginal land have been quick to access an elite line of old man saltbush developed by research funded from the Future Farm Industries Cooperative Research Centre (CRC).

The old man saltbush limited research release, available from Chatfield's Nursery in Tammin, Western Australia, follows the improvement project which has expanded shrub use through the selection of new cultivars with improved biomass production, nutritional value and palatability for livestock.

Using a combination of sheep preference and traditional agronomic and laboratory measurements, the research team has assessed thousands of saltbush plants on sites across WA, SA and NSW, and chosen four to continue testing with on-farm trials. These plants were propagated in limited numbers by Chatfield's Nursery and (at time of writing) were as good as sold out for this season.

CRC CEO Peter Zurzolo said the research release was an exciting step for the old man saltbush project, led by CSIRO's Dr Hayley Norman.

“As a component of the CRC's Enrich farming system program, Hayley and her team have significantly improved the relative palatability, nutritive value and productivity of old man saltbush. We're confident the elite line will be an important part of any mixed farming system in Australia, and especially those looking to make use of marginal or

salt-affected land,” Mr Zurzolo said.

“The success of the research allowed the CRC to arrange with Chatfield's Nursery to sell a limited research release of vegetatively propagated material to farmers and landholders in WA who are interested in trialling the plant on their land, while still working with researchers who will continue to collect and evaluate data.”

Mr Zurzolo said the CRC chose this commercial option because of the significant interest and support from WA farmers and landholders.

“The CRC and CSIRO will continue to work with Chatfield's Nursery, as they are an important part of this research study – in particular, to examine ways to reduce the cost of plants and improve survival during establishment.”

Farmers or landholders must complete a Material Transfer Agreement that outlines the obligations when buying saltbush through the research release. ◀

More information: Dustin McCreery, Chatfield's Nursery 0427 371 075.

## ELITE SALTBUSSH TRIALS

For the past 10 years, woolgrowers Tony and Simon York from Tammin in Western Australia's central wheatbelt have hosted a series of Land, Water & Wool, and Future Farm Industries CRC saltbush experiments, run by Dr Hayley Norman from CSIRO. 20,000 seedlings of old man saltbush varieties, collected from its native habitat were planted on their property in 2006 (one of three trial sites across Australia), and after six years, 12 elite varieties were chosen for extensive testing prior to the commercial release of the first cultivars.

Tony is excited about the results of the trial, saying the new elite lines had the potential to revolutionise the pastoral industry in Australia. “When we ran the livestock in the trial plots, there would be some elite varieties that the sheep would strip bare, and some, right next to them, that the sheep wouldn't touch,” Tony said. “Visually, the plants look different, and are certainly more attractive, than the saltbush of 20 or 30 years ago.”



Woolgrower Tony York in an elite saltbush trial plot on his property in Western Australia's central wheatbelt.

# LambEx set to be a Grandslamb

## FAST FACTS

- Woolgrowers and sheep producers are invited to the two day LambEx sheep and lamb industry event in Adelaide at the beginning of July.
- As well as an opportunity to hear outstanding speakers, including researchers and farmers of note, there is also an extensive trade exhibition.
- AWI is involved in the event to promote the role of Merinos within lamb enterprises.

enterprises. It is also important for lamb producers to see the value of Merinos contributing to the rebuilding of the national flock.

AWI is sponsoring the Grandslamb dinner on the Thursday evening.

LambEx is being held on Thursday 10 and Friday 11 July at the Adelaide Showground, with a Mt Lofty NRM pre-conference farm tour being held on Wednesday 9 July. The event's major sponsors are the South Australia Sheep Advisory Group, MLA, Primary Industries and Regions SA, JBS

and Thomas Foods International.

More information: The program and registration form will be available at [www.lambex.com.au](http://www.lambex.com.au) in early March. Fees apply to attend. For farmers: \$440 including GST if paid by 1 June; \$550 including of GST after 1 June.



Australian woolgrowers and the Australian sheep and lamb industry are invited to attend LambEx 2014, a two day conference being held in July at the Adelaide Showground, plus a one-day pre-conference farm tour. The event will feature outstanding speakers, an extensive trade exhibition, quality entertainment and an opportunity to communicate with all sectors of the lamb supply chain.

Following on from the launch of the inaugural LambEx in Perth in 2010 and the second running of the event in Bendigo in 2012, the industry will once again gather together producers, processors, researchers, wholesalers, exporters and key service providers, to celebrate all things lamb.

"After attending LambEx 2012, the thought-provoking information presented challenged us to make changes in our business," says woolgrower Jane Kellock from Farrell Flat in South Australia, who is on the organising committee for LambEx 2014. "I felt it was essential that all South Australian producers attend and they will have the opportunity in 2014."

The enthusiasm is shared by fellow LambEx committee member and woolgrower Tom Ashby from Gulnare in South Australia: "The event is a unique opportunity for the sheep and wool industry in general to come together to showcase new technology and markets. It is a pleasure to be part of the initiative."

By being involved in LambEx, AWI has the opportunity to promote the role of Merinos within lamb enterprises and influence sheep producers who might not normally associate with Merino or wool

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# Fostering Australia's future wool leaders

Daniel Rogers (Telangatuk East, Vic), Nicola Turner (Broken Hill, NSW), Fiona Warwick (Cradock, SA), Jessica Horstman (Northampton, WA) and Thomas Pengilly (Esperance, WA) at the Breeding Leadership Course.

## FAST FACTS

- AWI held a five-day professional development course for young woolgrowers in February.
- The 22 participants in the Breeding Leadership course are the next generation of leaders within the wool industry.
- At the course, the participants discussed marketing, leading and managing people, corporate governance, succession planning, time management and strategic planning.

Jillaroos, overseers, stud masters and wool agents were amongst the 22 participants at last month's professional development course known as Breeding Leadership.

The AWI event, held every two years, involves participants from every state who are trained in areas such as people management, corporate governance, strategic planning and time management.

More than 100 young Australians have now attended the course which fosters the future leaders of the wool industry.

Thomas Pengilly from Esperance, WA who completed this year's Breeding Leadership said, "This course has given us the opportunity to access great information

and mentors to unlock our potential. This will further our growth and increase what we can offer to the wool industry into the future."

Many previous participants now hold leadership positions within business and industry.

Dan Korff, Board member of Future Farmers Network and Stud Sheep Overseer at Hazeldean Merino Stud in NSW, who completed the course in 2012, said, "Breeding Leadership was a terrific opportunity at the beginning of my career to be able to network, learn and share experiences with a really good group of like-minded industry people. Elements of the course have been very helpful with both strategic thinking and day to day management."

Held at Clare in South Australia, the week's events involved a mix of both classroom and field-work with excursions to wool processing facilities, stud and commercial operations as well as an exposure to a variety of non-woolgrowing enterprises.

Speaking to the attendees and current industry leaders at this year's event, AWI CEO Stuart McCullough said how he relished the diversity and passion within the wool industry.

"The wool industry can be anything for you. From becoming a highly successful woolgrower, shearer, agent or exporter

to a processor of wool, manufacturer of garments, a world-famous designer to a leading researcher; the wool industry has it all for you," Mr McCullough said.

Breeding Leadership is held in conjunction with South Australian based consultancy Rural Directions together with sponsorship by ANZ Agribusiness and Future Farmers Network.

## ATTENDEES

|                  |                 |     |
|------------------|-----------------|-----|
| SCOTT DIXON      | CARRATHOOL      | NSW |
| MURRAY JACKSON   | ANDO            | NSW |
| SAM MCPHEE       | CROOKWELL       | NSW |
| MICK PEDEN       | GOULBURN        | NSW |
| BRETT SMITH      | WALGETT         | NSW |
| TOM TOURLE       | DUBBO           | NSW |
| NICOLA TURNER    | BROKEN HILL     | NSW |
| BOB BROWN        | BOLLON          | QLD |
| LAUREN CROTHERS  | DIRRANBANDI     | QLD |
| ALLY DUSKE       | ELBOW VALLEY    | QLD |
| JAYDEN HARRIS    | MITCHELL        | SA  |
| ROBERT POCKOCK   | LAMEROO         | SA  |
| FIONA WARWICK    | CRADOCK         | SA  |
| FRANK ARCHER     | CRESSY          | TAS |
| EMMA BOON        | KEMPTON         | TAS |
| CATH AGAR        | PENSHURST       | VIC |
| SIMON RIDDLE     | VIOLET TOWN     | VIC |
| DANIEL ROGERS    | TELANGATUK EAST | VIC |
| SAM WAN          | ALTONA GATE     | VIC |
| JESSICA HORSTMAN | NORTHAMPTON     | WA  |
| THOMAS PENGILLY  | ESPERANCE       | WA  |
| STEPHEN KEATLEY  | GNOWANGERUP     | WA  |

# GOT PASSION? WE WANT YOU!

## FAST FACTS

- Applications are open to young Australians for selection as Young Farming Champions representing the wool industry.
- Young Farming Champions share their passion for agriculture with urban students and show there is a bright and prosperous future in the industry.
- Sammi Townsend was selected as a Young Farming Champion in 2012 with sponsorship from AWI, and she has been encouraging young people to explore careers in the wool industry.

**A**re you a young woolgrower or following a career pathway in wool and love what you do? Are you interested in learning how to inspire other young people to enter the wool industry?

Expressions of interest are still open to become a 2014 Art4Agriculture Young Farming Champion – a program supported by AWI and organisations in other sectors of the Australian farming industry.

The program aims to create an Australia-wide network of enthusiastic young professionals to promote Australian agriculture as a dynamic, innovative, rewarding and vibrant industry. As a Young Farming Champion sponsored by AWI, you would actively engage with school students, spreading your passion for wool, bridging the rural-urban divide, and inspiring the next generation of world class Australian farmers.

As a Young Farming Champion you would become equipped with unique insights into all aspects of the agricultural supply chain as well as consumer attitudes and trends. You would then be able to feed this knowledge back to your peers to help them respond to emerging issues as well as assist others to also develop meaningful relationships with urban consumers.

Young Farming Champions are selected by their industry body to be ambassadors for that sector of farming.

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

## 2012 YOUNG FARMING CHAMPION: SAMMI TOWNSEND

Sammi Townsend from Lyndhurst in Central West NSW became a Young Farming Champion in 2012 representing the wool industry. She is currently studying Agricultural Business Management at Charles Sturt University in Orange, and is passionate about encouraging young people to explore careers in agriculture.

“As a Young Farming Champion I have been able to head into schools and tell the story of one of Australia’s oldest and greatest industries: wool,” Sammi proudly says.

“From the Art4Agriculture program, I’ve learnt interview techniques, a number of media skills, and vocal coaching. Taking on this role helped give me a lot of confidence and it has also broadened my knowledge about my own industry.

“I have found that being a Young Farming Champion has also helped me at University. I was elected President of the

Ag Club at Uni and it is a role I never would have had the confidence to take on without the opportunities I have been given through Art4Agriculture.

“I have been privileged as a young wool ambassador with AWI and Art4Agriculture and most certainly have been able to broaden my networks and establish many connections beyond my own agricultural community thanks to their support.”

As a Young Farming Champion, Sammi also had the opportunity to meet HRH The Prince of Wales at the Campaign for Wool’s “Farm to Fashion” event held at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney, during the Prince’s visit to Australia in November 2012.

“Not only did I shake hands with the Prince, but I also took great pleasure in chatting to him about what the Art4Agriculture program is about. It was a wonderful opportunity to sum up our key messages and inform him of the great things happening in our industry at the moment.” ◀



Young Farming Champion Sammi Townsend has a broad interest in woolgrowing – here she is on a farmer’s property in Inner Mongolia in July during an agricultural study tour with her university course.

# Wool scholarships creating opportunities

## FAST FACTS

- The wool industry's next generation is being offered scholarships to help them in their studies.
- The University of New England offers a comprehensive range of sheep and wool units.
- The Australian Wool Education Trust directly funds delivery of the units and provides financial support to students from any university to attend.
- As part of scholarship obligations, recipients have to complete work experience each year within the sheep industry.



Nicola Turner from Broken Hill has been financially supported during her studies at the University of New England with a scholarship from the Australian Wool Education Trust.

Nicola Turner is a young woman from the land with a real passion for the wool industry.

She was raised on her family-owned and operated grazing property near Broken Hill, NSW running Merino sheep, cattle and goats.

Nicola explains, "I attended boarding school in Adelaide for my secondary education but before I went away it was a struggle for Mum to keep me in the school room as I was always off helping Dad with any sheep work that was on, and during boarding school holidays I was always keen to get home and help out."

When Nicola left school, she worked for two years before going to university.

"Having two years off after school gave me time to mature and helped me determine that I wanted to pursue a university degree involving agriculture and in particular, the sheep industry. I am currently completing my final year of a Bachelor of Animal Science, majoring in Livestock Production at the University of New England (UNE)."

Nicola has been financially supported during her degree with an Australian Wool Education Trust (AWET) scholarship of \$6000 per year. As part of her scholarship obligations, Nicola had to complete work experience each

year within the sheep industry.

"I have completed a range of sheep industry work experience in both wool and meat production. This included working with the Australian Wool Testing Authority in Melbourne, attending wool sales, competing in the Intercollege Meat Judging Competition as well as on farm experience on both stud and commercial properties," Nicola says.

"I also participated in last year's inaugural National Merino Challenge run by AWI which was a great opportunity to practice skills I had learnt but also to meet many other young people interested in the sheep and wool industry. This was such a fantastic experience and I highly recommend it to anyone interested in sheep."

UNE is the only university in Australia offering specialised studies in sheep and wool science.

Five specialised units are offered at UNE: Sheep Production, Wool Biology and Measurement, Wool Marketing and Clip Preparation, Wool Processing, and Fundamentals of Sheep and Wool Production.

All of the sheep and wool units are offered externally, so Nicola had the opportunity to meet students from ten different universities across Australia also studying the units when they attended

intensive schools.

Now nearing the end of her university studies, Nicola is thinking of the future – for both her and the wool industry.

"I am looking forward to studying the Sheep Production unit in my final year and I hope it will help develop my knowledge and skills as I am most interested in the production of wool," Nicola explains.

"In the future, I would like to be involved with research into wool and sheep production. I then want to use this knowledge to not only help myself, but others, to breed highly productive sheep and run them in an efficient and environmentally sustainable way.

"I also hope to be involved in educating other young people about the Australian wool industry and promoting it, as I feel it is a very important part of our country's history, present and future." ◀

**More information:** Are you a keen student ready to begin or currently studying agricultural/rural/animal science or agribusiness across Australia with an interest in the sheep and wool industry? If so, contact UNE on [studywool@une.edu.au](mailto:studywool@une.edu.au) for scholarship and wool unit information or visit [www.une.edu.au/wooleducation](http://www.une.edu.au/wooleducation)



# Pete the Sheep - the musical!

A brand-new 50-minute musical *Pete the Sheep* - performed by Monkey Baa Theatre Company and based on Jackie French and Bruce Whatley's quirky and quintessentially Australian picture book - will premiere in Sydney for a month from 29 March. It will then tour across every state of Australia to 54 rural, regional and metropolitan venues, from Geraldton in the west to Armidale in the east, until November.

This truly timeless 'Ocker' tale will delight young people aged from 4 to 9 and their families.

*Pete the Sheep* will be imaginatively told by actors playing shearers, dogs and sheep. The tale delves into the quirks of rural life, and explores the challenges and rewards of being an individual.

The audience meets Shaun, the new



Cast members of *Pete the Sheep* getting inspired for the nationwide tour. PHOTO: blueprintstudios.com.au

sheep shearer in 'Shaggy Gully'. Since shearing is such hard work, all the other shearers have sheep dogs to help them, but not Shaun. He has Pete, a sheep-sheep. The other shearers in the shed are not happy with Shaun and his sheep-sheep. Following rejection by the shearers and their dogs, Shaun and Pete set up their own

Shearing Salon in town where they are inundated with woolly clients, who delight in Shaun's styling prowess.

AWI is supporting Monkey Baa Theatre Company's production by supplying fun educational posters and wool for the children to touch and look at. AWI will also be providing a shearing demonstration (with real sheep!) outside the theatre in Sydney on 31 March.

More information: For dates and venues visit [www.monkeybaa.com.au](http://www.monkeybaa.com.au) or phone 02 8624 9340. Exclusive to *Beyond the Bale* readers, Monkey Baa Theatre Company is offering a \$5 discount on its \$25 per person tickets to its Sydney season (at Lend Lease Darling Quarter Theatre in Darling Harbour) when booked online - insert promo code **woollypete**

**...A TRULY AUSSIE TALE - DELIGHTFUL, FUNNY, ICONIC, WARM AND HILARIOUSLY OCKER, FROM THE LINGO TO THE NAMES TO THE SHEARERS' BLUE SINGLETS...**

KIDS BOOK REVIEW 2011

## AWI state networks

Producers learning from producers



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/region:

| AWI STATE NETWORK       | COORDINATOR     | PHONE        | E-MAIL   |
|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| Bestprac (Pastoral)     | Pene Keynes     | 08 8841 4500 | <a href="mailto:bestpac@ruraldirections.com">bestpac@ruraldirections.com</a>             |
| BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB (Vic) | Lyndon Kubeil   | 03 5761 1649 | <a href="mailto:lyndon.kubeil@dpi.vic.gov.au">lyndon.kubeil@dpi.vic.gov.au</a>           |
| Leading Sheep (Qld)     | Nicole Sallur   | 07 4654 4220 | <a href="mailto:nicole.sallur@daff.qld.gov.au">nicole.sallur@daff.qld.gov.au</a>         |
| Sheep Connect NSW       | Shelly Anderson | 02 6391 3954 | <a href="mailto:sheep.connect@industry.nsw.gov.au">sheep.connect@industry.nsw.gov.au</a> |
| Sheep Connect SA        | Ian McFarland   | 08 8226 0428 | <a href="mailto:ian.mcfarland@sa.gov.au">ian.mcfarland@sa.gov.au</a>                     |
| Sheep Connect TAS       | James Tyson     | 0409 006 774 | <a href="mailto:james.tyson@utas.edu.au">james.tyson@utas.edu.au</a>                     |
| The Sheep's Back (WA)   | Andrew Ritchie  | 08 9736 1055 | <a href="mailto:andrew@iconag.com.au">andrew@iconag.com.au</a>                           |



# Market Intelligence

Welcome to our first *Beyond the Bale* market intelligence report.

These will become a regular feature and, given the quarterly frequency of the magazine, we will review the year-to-date and look forward over the coming months.

## THE YEAR IN REVIEW

So far, 2013/14 has been a year of contrasting fortunes for Australia's woolgrowers.

**Drought conditions** have intensified in many areas of Eastern Australia, with severe rainfall deficits developing over the past 16 months across Queensland, central-northern NSW, and north-eastern South Australia. While recent general rain has helped, the reality is that in many wool-growing areas, sheep are carrying drought-affected wool, which is now flowing into the wool selling system in increasing volumes. An insight can be gained from AWTA wool test data, where year-to-date volumes tested in the 19.6-24.5 micron range has fallen by 15% y-o-y, whereas volumes finer than 19.6 have increased by 13%.

The **price** story has been a mixed bag as well – cardings and coarser types have performed extremely well, whereas the finer fleece market has been much softer. For the period to the end of January 2014, the EMI has averaged above \$10.80, which while still historically strong at the 79 percentile level for the period since the demise of the wool stockpile in late 2001, it has been weaker in USD terms.

Looking at our key **international markets**:

- The US economy, the world's largest with US\$11.4 trillion spent on consumer products and services last year, has continued its recovery path – with 2.3% growth for the last quarter, and 1.8% growth y-o-y for spend on clothing.
- China, our largest wool trade partner, grew its economy by 7.3%, with clothing expenditure up 12.9%, textile and garment exports up 11.4% y-o-y, and wool imports for the January–November 2013 period up 16% overall (imports from Australia up 8%).
- The Eurozone, however, remains stuck in a low growth pattern, with some notable economies starting to grow (eg the UK grew by 2.4%).

## THE OUTLOOK

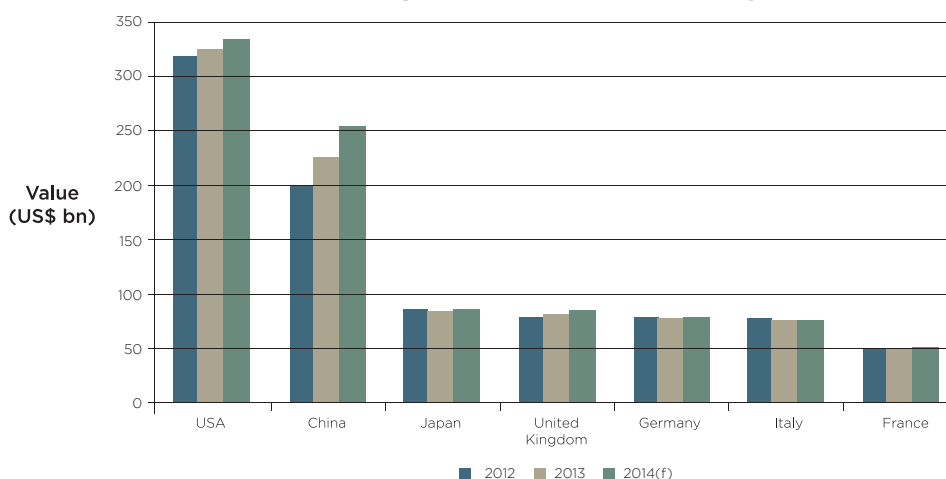
Looking ahead locally:

- **Supply will be tight** – our projections are for drought-induced tightening of supply – with 2013/14 greasy production potentially finishing the year close to 340 m kgs (down from 352 m kgs for 2012/13). MLA's latest forecast for 2014/15 opening sheep numbers is for a 72 million head flock, which due to the very close correlation between opening numbers and wool production, suggests greasy production could remain around 340 m kgs.

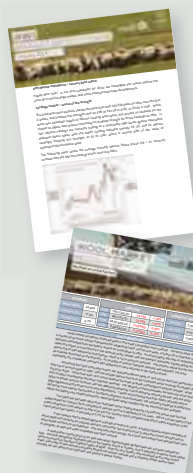
- After 12 months of dramatic fluctuations which have impacted on those involved in the wool export trade, the AU:US dollar **exchange rate** should have a more stable 12 months, with slowing softening to end the year around 84 cents.

Internationally, **2014 should be a better year for wool** – with total clothing market demand (consumer spend on clothing) expected to increase in all our major end-user markets; the most notable growths will occur in the USA (2.8% or US\$9 billion) and China (2.8% or US\$29 billion). ◀

## Consumer expenditure on clothing



\*All numeric data in this report was sourced from Euromonitor International (Feb 2014). The quarterly data was seasonally adjusted and the yearly data used fixed 2013 US exchange rates.



## AWI'S BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

AWI provides weekly market reports and monthly electronic newsletters, which can be subscribed to by sending through your email address to [marketintelligence@wool.com.au](mailto:marketintelligence@wool.com.au) 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.

# Readers' photos!

**HAVE YOU GOT ANY INTERESTING PHOTOS THAT YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH OTHER READERS OF *BEYOND THE BALE*?**

**W**e are always keen to see and hear what people working with Australian wool are up to. If you want to share any photos with us, please email the image and a brief description to the editor of *Beyond the Bale* Richard Smith at richard.smith@wool.com. The photos could portray any feature, be it humorous or poignant, informative or provoking, gritty or beautiful.

We can't promise that we'll print every photo, but we'd love to see them. Here are a few that we have recently received from readers.



## ANOTHER GENERATION IN WOOL

David Joyce sent in this photo of his son Phoenix pictured amongst the most recent clip. Phoenix is the grandson of William 'Joe' Joyce of Winton, Victoria who, at the age of 80 years, is still running his property and growing Merino wool, as he has done his entire working life, on the same property originally settled by his Irish immigrant grandparents back in the 1850s.



## CRUTCHING AT BOYAGARRING

Christine Schilling of Beverley WA sent in this photo of her 11 year old son Daniel crutching a mob of 50 orange/green tag ewes. They weighed a good 50kgs and he dragged and crutched one sheep to about every four or five of his Dad's. Daniel slept very well that night and then got off the schoolbus the next day and did some more!



## PRACTICING SHEARING ON TEDDY!

Spike and Kirsty Wall of 'St Hilary', Bukkulla, north of Inverell NSW sent in a video of their children Charlie, George, and twins Ben and Alice doing a unique outdoor shearing show for their visiting relatives from Sydney! Pictured in this screenshot from the video are Alice, Charlie and George - with plenty of freshly "shorn" teddies!



## GOING STRONG AT 87

Gaynor Marchant of Karoonda, South Australia, sent in this photo of her father-in-law Russell Marchant from Wynarka. He has shorn all his life. He is 87 and still picks up a hand piece. Do you know anyone with more years' experience?

# Unique formula CLiKZiN. Short on withholds, strong on blowfly protection.

**Superior Potency:**

>10 times more potent  
than cyromazine against  
*Lucilia cuprina*<sup>1</sup>

**Superior Efficacy:**

Superior to cyromazine  
Spray-On when preventing  
flystrike in sheep.<sup>2</sup>



**Superior Flexibility:**

Can be applied from 3 weeks  
after shearing up until  
1 month before shearing.

CLiKZiN® Spray-On provides effective short term protection against blowfly strike (up to 11 weeks) for sheep of all breeds.

With a short 7 day meat withholding period and 21 day ESI, CLiKZiN is ideally suited for protecting sheep intended for slaughter and lambs following marking, with minimum on farm disruption.

Short 1 month wool WHP allows for increased market flexibility and for use late in the season.



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1. Schmid, HR: Insect Growth Regulators for Blowfly Control. Proceedings of the World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology, Copenhagen. Aug 15th – 19th 1999. 2. Rolfe, P: CLiKZiN, a new formulation of dicyclanil for the control of blowfly strike on sheep. Proceedings of the 8th International Sheep Veterinary Congress, Rotorua. Feb 18th – 22nd 2013. CLiKZiN® contains dicyclanil.

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