

## **WOOL INDUSTRY CONSULTATIVE PANEL (WICP)**

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Venue:** Via Microsoft Teams and AWI, Level 3, 24 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000

The purpose of this forum is to ensure clear, two-way consultation between AWI and organisational representatives, through to growers. The meeting provides an opportunity for the AWI Board to receive and provide feedback on current/important issues and relevant topics from Board meetings.

### **AWI Chairman's and CEO Update**

AWI Chairman and CEO gave the WICP the following updates.

- The wool market at the finer end remains strong with continued positive signs from China.
- Poor demand for composites and broad wool remains a problem. There appear few opportunities on the horizon and hence the market remains soft.
- Sustainability and traceability remain key issues globally.
- Attention will focus on marketing campaigns, making sure they are effective and efficient, given spending allocations.
- Marketing opportunities exist in key emerging markets most notably India, Vietnam and Bangladesh.
- Investment is continuing into Fly Vaccines, Biological Harvesting and Shearer training.

### **Summarised feedback from panel to AWI**

- Recent trips to India and Vietnam suggest that there are big opportunities for Australian wool into these areas.
- The Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) has registered the first oral lice treatment which is about to come to the market.
- The panel requested that an Electronic Identification (EID) fact sheet be included in the June edition of Beyond The Bale and that has been agreed to.
- The group is supportive of alternative methods of wool harvesting including biological de-fleecing.
- Whilst outside of AWI's scope, the phase out of live exports will have a material impact on the wool industry.
- The panel would like to see extension tools associated with the WoolQ platform including any training once established.
- Panel members would benefit from a better understanding of the extension and research development work that is being done so that it can be passed onto members.
- Confidence throughout the industry remains mixed. We need to get the good news stories out to the coal face.
- The return of backpackers is starting to take some of the stress of the shed labour market, however it still has a long way to go.
- Feedback regarding the recently run eco campaign was positive. AWI noted that a follow up to this campaign will occur shortly.
- The panel has concerns around green washing and ensuring that claims of carbon neutrality are supported by science.
- Whilst the current fly vaccine investment has had setbacks, it was noted that this project needs to continue.
- The ongoing shearer and wool handling training courses have been appreciated and appear to be helping the labour shortages.
- Safe Sheds promotion is important, particularly in the context of new WHS legislation in WA.

- The panel discussed the make up and frequency of WICP meetings and will report back to the board with a proposed structure for future meetings.

### **International Intelligence Briefing**

*Jeff Ma – EVP Marketing, Greater China and Developing Markets Asia*

Jeff recently held meetings with key Chinese fashion groups. The takeaway messages were-

- Chinese fashion companies are expanding into overseas markets.
- Brands are seeking high quality textiles.
- Sustainability is increasingly an issue.
- China is preparing for unexpected quarantine, resulting in an increased demand for lounge wear.

*Scott Carmody – Trade Consultant*

Scott recently returned from China with his main comment being that China is focused on a net zero carbon supply chain and their demand for traceability will need to be met. Scott noted that the partnership with China appears strong.

### **AWI Extension Network – Emily King AWI**

Emily provided an overview of details of the AWI Grower Extension Networks. Flystrike is a key part of this including the following programs-

- Its Fly Time – Webinars, fact sheets, tips.
- DemystiFly – Practical information about managing blowfly chemical resistance.
- SimpliFly – One day strategic management workshop for flystrike.
- ClassiFly – One day workshop to improve knowledge around breeding for improved flystrike resistance.
- StrateFly – One day workshop being developed to help growers develop a business plan for moving to non-mulesed Merino enterprise.
- AmpliFly – One on one coaching and support to implement, monitor and improve whole of business plans for preventing and controlling flystrike.

Nick Turner

WICP Independent Chair