

Please see below the updated biographies of the 5 AWI director candidates for election at the upcoming AGM:

### **Neil Jackson**

Neil is a third-generation farmer with 38-years hands-on experience. He runs his operation, Sunny Valley Farms, with his wife Sandy, son Sam and several employees.

In the 30-years since taking full-time control of the farm, Neil's physical hard work; risk management; and willingness to employ skilled-specific consultants has enabled significant growth. Specifically, the farm has increased fourfold in area owned and fivefold in production. Sunny Valley is now one of the larger family-owned wool farms in the Great Southern of Western Australia. A broad acre cropping program complements this.

The Jackson family has enjoyed an outstanding reputation as fine wool growers for over a century. Neil continues to find enormous satisfaction producing hundreds of bales of quality wool each year. As a result, Neil is acutely aware of the on-farm challenges woolgrowers face hence his nomination to the AWI board. Neil sees the following concerns of particular importance:

- Shearer shortages and the adoption of an alternative or complementary wool harvesting techniques.
- Investment in industry and digital technologies, and innovations to ensure continued passion for wool growing from the emerging farming generation.
- Fiscal responsibility and how the levy reduction, coupled with a decline in wool price, places pressure on the board to ensure spending delivers tangible benefits to wool growers.
- Championing the brand. Effective marketing resulting in wool as a fibre of preference across all age groups.

Neil has served on a variety of industry bodies:

- WoolQ Consultative Committee 2016-2017
- Inaugural Ministerial appointee – Industry Management Committee for the application of the Biosecurity in Agriculture Management Act -Sheep & Goat Representative 2010-2011
- AWI Welfare Tour 2014 - woolgrower representative
- President Merino WA 2005-2006
- Chair of World Merino Conference 2006
- Ovine Johnes Disease Management Committee WA 2006-2007.

Neil is an open communicator who values strong relationships and advocates for wool growers. His business reflects strong fiscally responsible practices which has been complemented by his completion of the Australian Institute of Company Directors course.

### **Steve McGuire**

Steve McGuire is a fifth generation woolgrower farming at Kojonup in the Great Southern region of Western Australia. He has been involved with the WAFarmers Livestock Council for the last 8 years which saw him appointed to the board of WoolProducers Australia in 2017 until his term ended in 2023.

Steve's time on the board of WoolProducers Australia with directors from all wool growing states has seen him gain a broad understanding of the wool industry not just in the production side but also downstream in testing, broking, transport and processing. This was further enhanced with a tour with Scanlans' Wool to China in 2017.

He has always had a passion for research and innovation, he strongly believes in always searching for better ways of operating. That the future of the wool industry is dependent on becoming more productive to allow it to ride out the inevitable market fluctuations and to compete with other fibres and land use demands such as cropping and meat.

Steve has noticed the significant number of young women and men entering the sheep industry and wants to ensure that they see a future in producing the fantastic fibre that is wool. Australian Wool Innovation faces a number of challenges in future and requires a board that is in itself innovative and prepared to show the leadership required to address those challenges. He feels that he has the experience, skills and character to assist the board in this endeavour.

### **George Millington**

George Millington, a dynamic leader in the Australian sheep and wool industry, brings a wealth of experience and a vision for its sustainable and profitable future. As the Director and owner of Collinsville Stud Merinos for the last nine years, he has overseen its re energisation into a thriving enterprise, unifying the iconic Merino studs of Collinsville and East Bungaree. The business now supplies 2200 rams a year throughout Australia.

A member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, George's commitment to corporate governance underscores his dedication to effective leadership. His business experience extends beyond wool, including successful ventures in fast-moving consumer goods and logistics, imparting a unique perspective on running and growing businesses.

Prior to owning Collinsville and East Bungaree, George gained a Bachelor of Economics and worked in the finance industry. He was then involved in the coffee industry where he built and expanded a wholesale coffee importation and roasting business (Monjava Coffee). After building the business substantially, it was sold to San Remo Pasta. George then purchased a logistics company (APD Parcel Delivery) and is still involved in the management of this company today.

With a lived experience as a wool grower via his hands on involvement with Collinsville , George recognises the timeless value of wool as a natural and renewable fibre as well as the many challenges faced by growers across the country. His goals include elevating the market value of wool and ensuring a sustainable industry for generations to come.

George's commitment to bridging tradition and innovation, alongside his expertise, strategic insights and business experience, position him as an advocate for woolgrowers on the Australian Wool Innovation Board of Directors - offering a fresh perspective gained from outside the wool industry to help guide it into a prosperous and sustainable era.

### **Edward Storey**

Edward Storey and his family are multi-generational wool growers across NSW and Victoria. He is an experienced businessman, graduated with an Economics degree from Sydney University, is a

graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and an experienced company director. He is the managing partner of a family wool growing enterprise at Yass on the Southern Tablelands of NSW of approximately 12,000 DSE.

Edward is also the Chairman of Futter Park, a large mixed enterprise farm between Cootamundra and Harden in southern NSW. Futter Park runs over 20,000 largely merino sheep integrated with large beef and cropping enterprises. It is a charitable trust that provides scholarships and distributions for senior school education in Sydney. This is an honorary position.

He recently concluded a 4 year term as President of WoolProducers Australia. He was an AWEX director and Chair of the Audit, Risk and Finance committee and an AWTA Ltd director, for four years. He was a founding Director of the Sheep Sustainability Framework. He has trained up to National Management level in the event of an EAD outbreak, including presenting to the Chinese wool processing sector at the Nanjing Wool Market in 2019.

He oversaw the development of Trust in Australian Wool, a project collating all the outstanding health, welfare and bio-security practices and our traceability and quality systems in the Australian wool industry for our wool customers. He has a record of bringing people and organisations together to collaborate and achieve positive outcomes, particularly the organisations in the wool industry to achieve more efficient use of your levies.

He has done all this while managing and working his family farm 'Werong'

Edward will bring over 20 years of community, philanthropic and agribusiness leadership to the AWI Board and a passion for growing the world's most sustainable fibre. He has a strong record of delivering industry good outcomes for wool growers and believes passionately in efficient and effective spending of your levy money to deliver real value in R&D and Marketing.

### **Emma Weston**

Emma Weston is the CEO and Co Founder of AgriDigital, Australia's leading digital grain supply chain and inventory management platform. Over the past 15 years Emma has been a founder and worked in non-executive and executive capacities in multiple agribusinesses; including two successful sales and exits to date (Agfarm and Clear Grain Exchange). At AgriDigital she is directly responsible for company and product strategy, stakeholder and investor relations, and has led the company from its days as a start up to having over 19,000 users today. Over 25% of Australia's annual grain production is transacted using AgriDigital and a total of A\$13.5 billion of grain has been bought, sold and paid for via its platform.

Emma holds a Masters in Business Administration from the Australian Graduate School of Management, as well as a Bachelor of Laws, awarded with Honours, and a Bachelor of Arts. She is a trained executive coach and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Emma has held several board roles including as Deputy Chair of both Fintech Australia and Blockchain Australia, and was appointed by the Commonwealth Government as a founding director of Digital Skills Organisation Ltd (now Future Skills Organisation Ltd). She continues to be a member of the National Farmers' Federation Farm Data Code Working Group and Grain Trade Australia's Information Technology Advisory Committee. A passionate and knowledgeable contributor to the digital and technology communities in Australia and overseas, Emma's leadership has been

recognised with numerous awards including most recently the Percy Foundation 2023 NSW ICT Entrepreneur of the Year.

Emma lives and works from her family's mixed farming enterprise of approximately 500ha in Warren, New South Wales, and is motivated personally and through her professional career to ensure that rural communities are sustainable, that agriculture is a valued career choice, and to build connection between consumers and their food and fibre.