

# Beyond the bale

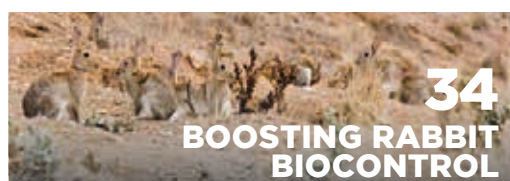
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PROFIT FROM WOOL INNOVATION

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## INTERNATIONAL WOOLMARK PRIZE WINNER VISITS THE SOURCE





# Beyond thebale

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## FRONT COVER

2015 International Woolmark Prize womenswear winner **Marcia Patmos**, of design label **M.PATMOS**, on her visit to Australia in October to see for herself the source of Merino wool and launch her winning collection, now available at David Jones. PHOTO: Dominic Loneragan. See page 4.



Australian Wool  
Innovation Limited



**4 IWP WINNER  
VISITS THE FARM**



**32 CHOOSING  
AND USING DRENCHES**

## OFF-FARM

**4 IWP winner visits the farm**

**6 Textile innovations at IWP**

**7 Stephanie Field home grown talent**

**8 Campaign for Wool**

**12 Perfect women's wool pants**

**13 Promoting wool in Turkey**

**14 World record Merino bale**

**15 Tailor made experience down under**

**16 GQ magazine promotes wool**

**18 Neulana luxury wool fabric launch**

**19 Woolrich Merino outerwear**

**20 Hong Kong fashion students to Australia**

**21 Wool4School winner**

**22 Education highlights**

**24 Fibre of Football**

**26 Bluey Merino's super soft fibres**

**27 Wool's fire resistant properties**

## ON-FARM

**28 Young Farming Champions**

**31 Low cost cervical AI**

**32 Choosing and using drenches**

**34 Boosting rabbit biocontrol**

**36 Coordination for wild dog control**

**38 Elmore Field Days: results**

**41 Cover combs in the heat of action**

**42 Shearing and wool handling champs**

**43 Courses creating job ready shed staff**

**44 Lifetime Ewe Management**

**46 Nuffield scholar Jack England**

**47 Horizon scholar Royce Pitchford**

**48 Funding strategies for young producers**

**49 Succession planning**

**50 Native shelterbelts**

**51 2016 IWTO Congress in Sydney**

**52 Market Intelligence**

**54 Market insights from Peter Ackroyd**

**55 Readers' photos**

## AWI INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

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■ Marketing    ■ Global Business Services

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# WOOLGROWERS

## VOTE TO RETAIN 2% LEVY

### WoolPoll 2015

Australian woolgrowers have voted to maintain the two per cent levy on wool sales to fund research, development and marketing of the natural fibre.

CEO Stuart McCullough thanked woolgrowers for participating and showing faith in AWI to continue its work to increase the profitability of growing wool.

"We take the responsibility of investing woolgrowers' levies very seriously, so we are heartened the level of support for the 2% levy rate increased this year. WoolPoll is a transparent and fair way for woolgrowers to decide our future funding and the opportunity to vote zero is an option the AWI Board is pleased must always be offered.

### AWI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: A STRONG YEAR IN 2015 AND A NEW DIRECTOR

At its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 20 November, AWI reported on a year of strong results for woolgrowers across research, development and marketing.

Addressing the meeting and via a webcast, AWI CEO Stuart McCullough highlighted the efforts to lift demand for Australian wool through ongoing marketing initiatives and new fabric innovations, protecting the national flock from issues such as wild dog predation and increasing productivity through programs such as Lifetime Ewe Management.

"We appreciate that wool prices must lift to keep and attract more woolgrowers," he said. "The retail, brand and manufacturing partners joining our marketing programs are

"We will continue to measure the performance of all aspects of AWI, but we must explore new and innovative ways to make wool-growing easier and more profitable. We must also educate more designers and brands to use wool and in turn more consumers around the world to wear wool."

Mr McCullough acknowledged the efforts of the WoolPoll Panel and its Chairman Will Roberts in encouraging participation and ensuring the voting process was conducted in compliance with the regulations.

#### SUMMARY OF WOOLPOLL RESULTS

WOOLPOLL YEAR	% of votes returned	% of votes for 2% and above	% of votes for below 2%
2003	54.59	63.10	36.93
2006	51.57	69.50	30.49
2009	53.70	73.13	26.87
2012	60.94	60.34	39.65
2015	50.68	67.86	32.14

Figures might not add due to rounding.

As in previous Polls, eligible levy payers were invited to select their preferred levy option from 0%, 1%, 2%, 2.5% and 3%.

WoolPoll follows strict guidelines set out in the WoolPoll Regulations as an independent, democratic process. The results have been certified by the Returning Officer from Link Market Services Limited.

The result was announced at the AWI Annual General Meeting on 20 November. **B**

increasing as reflected in increasing revenue from Woolmark licenses. We will continue to find innovative fabrics using wool and seek new ways to exchange wool via the Wool Selling Systems Review."

AWI Chairman Wal Merriman reported to the AGM how his Board continues to set the strategic direction of the company. He acknowledged the long service of director Brian van Rooyen who had chosen not to re-stand for election, serving as a director of AWI since 2002.

#### DIRECTOR ELECTIONS

The AWI Constitution stipulates at least a third of the Board, currently made up of seven members, must retire their positions every two years. In 2015, the incumbent AWI directors to retire were Wal Merriman, Brian van Rooyen and David Webster. Messrs Merriman and Webster chose to re-stand for election. A nomination was received from Jock Laurie, a past President of the NSW Farmers' Association and the National Farmers' Federation.

The AWI Board Nomination Committee has assessed the skills of the candidates as required under the Statutory Funding Agreement with the Federal Government. The Nomination Committee delivered its

report to the AWI Board and the report was appended to the Notice of Annual General Meeting as part of the AWI shareholder voting pack.

At the AGM, Messrs Merriman, Webster and Laurie were duly elected to the AWI Board. The new Board met immediately following the AGM and re-elected Wal Merriman as Chairman. **B**

#### VIEW A RECORDING OF THE AGM

The 2015 AWI AGM was broadcast live via webcast on 20 November.

As well as being broadcast live, the 2015 broadcast is available to be viewed on demand (for 12 months following the AGM) via the AWI website at [www.wool.com/2015AGM](http://www.wool.com/2015AGM)

The webcasting initiative by AWI enabled those AWI shareholders that were unable to attend the AGM in person to view the AGM proceedings. AWI shareholders also had the opportunity to submit questions online to the AWI Chairman and CEO to be answered at the AGM.







2014/15 International Woolmark Prize womenswear winner **Marcia Patmos** and woolgrower **Carina Doran** at 'Ahgunyah', NSW.  
PHOTO: Dominic Loneragan

# WINNING

## WOOL COLLECTION LAUNCHED ON FARM

**2015 International Woolmark Prize womenswear winner Marcia Patmos**, of design label M.PATMOS, visited Australia in October to see for herself the source of Merino wool and launch her winning collection, now available at **David Jones**.

**T**his year's International Woolmark Prize womenswear winner, US designer Marcia Patmos, travelled a long way from her New York home to launch her award-winning Merino wool collection at the place where the natural fibre is produced: on a woolgrowing property.

Visiting Australia for the first time, Patmos joined female woolgrowers from the Goulburn region in NSW for the Australian exclusive launch of her nomadic-luxe wool collection at woolgrower Carina Doran's family property, 'Ahgunyah'. Carina, a fifth generation

woolgrower, runs 12,000 Merino sheep alongside her parents Angus and Sally McLean and Carina's husband Andrew.

"Coming to 'Ahgunyah' to see the natural beauty of where Australian Merino wool is produced and meeting Carina and her family has allowed me to explore the many faces of wool," said Patmos. "From being grown on grass, water and sunshine right through to being turned into luxury apparel, I feel so lucky to be involved in this industry.

"Merino wool is a perfect match for a travel-focused wardrobe for so many reasons – this premium fibre is super soft and lightweight, wrinkle free, temperature regulating, is UV resistant, odour resistant and can be worn for up to two weeks without washing."

Patmos has used a mixture of 100 per cent superfine Merino wool of 15.5 micron and 100 per cent extrafine mercerised Merino wool of 19.5 micron for the range that includes a convertible coat and expedition trousers.



International Woolmark Prize retail partner David Jones set up a pop-up shop in the wool shed to enable the local female woolgrowers who attended to be amongst the first in the world to take home their own M.PATMOS Woolmark-certified garment.

"I love seeing the final product, I don't know enough about that end of the supply chain so it was really interesting to talk to Marcia and find out how it all works," Carina said.

Woolgrower Rocky Henderson of 'Grogansworth', Bowning, said, "I believe the collection designed by Marcia Patmos encapsulates the ideal travel wardrobe, but is also practical for many occasions. The coat, which particularly took my eye, is suitable from casual to formal wear, and best of all, the collection suits women of all ages, shapes and sizes! I love it!"

David Jones will stock the collection in Sydney's Elizabeth Street store and people across the country also have the opportunity to buy items online at [www.davidjones.com.au](http://www.davidjones.com.au).

Group Executive of Merchandise at David Jones, Donna Player, said, "A talented and deserving recipient, we are delighted to exclusively stock the winning capsule collection by M. PATMOS. The sophistication of the collection will

resonate well with David Jones' fashion savvy customer."

AWI CEO Stuart McCullough reiterated the importance of the International Woolmark Prize.

"It continues to raise the profile of Australian Merino wool by championing the fibre as the premier ingredient for luxury apparel. By connecting Marcia with the source of the fibre, we are able to highlight the important link between the Australian wool industry and the global fashion industry," he said.

"The International Woolmark Prize is the pinnacle of AWI's fashion promotion activities. It generates long-term incremental demand by connecting emerging designers, emerging markets and consumers with Australian Merino wool."

Globally, the winning collections are being stocked in the world's most important boutiques, including Harvey Nichols (London), Saks Fifth Avenue (New York), Colette (Paris), 10 Corso Como (Milan, Beijing, Shanghai), JOYCE (Hong Kong) and Isetan Shinjuku (Tokyo) as well as online at [mytheresa.com](http://mytheresa.com) and [matchesfashion.com](http://matchesfashion.com). **E**

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



Woolgrower **Rocky Henderson** (left) and other guests examining the winning International Woolmark Prize collection – made using Merino wool – at the pop-up shop which was set up in the wool shed at 'Ahgunyah'.



**Marcia Patmos**, with a model wearing one of her winning designs, after being presented with the 2015 International Woolmark Prize for womenswear by **Victoria Beckham** at the **awards ceremony in Beijing in March 2015**.



**Marcia Patmos**, at the joint launch of the award winning collections of **M.PATMOS** and **Public School** (the 2015 International Woolmark Prize winners for menswear) at London's **Harvey Nichols** in **September 2015**. Pictured on stage from the left are Harvey Nichols Group Buying Fashion Director, **Anita Barr**; **Marcia Patmos**; Public School designers **Maxwell Osborne** and **Dao-Yi Chow**; and fashion journalist **Colin McDowell**. The buying public in Australia can purchase the Public School collection in David Jones' Bourke Street store in Melbourne.



**Marcia Patmos** (second right) with three farming generations at 'Ahgunyah'. Pictured are **Carina Doran** (far left) with her mother **Sally McLean** (far right) and grandmother **Mary Prell** (second left). In 1905 Charles Ernest Prell settled and began pioneering the land using superphosphate and clover to boost the land's carrying capacity for wool production. Today Mr Prell's great granddaughter, Sally McLean and her husband Angus, their daughter Carina and her husband Andrew Doran run 12,000 adult Merinos. Mary Prell and her husband Tony still live on the farm.

# THE FUTURE MATERIALISES

Innovative designs, experimental thinking, and cutting-edge wool craft come together annually for the **International Woolmark Prize**.

As part of its annual International Woolmark Prize fashion competition, AWI brings together design talent from around the world to reimagine the possibilities of Merino wool while encouraging remarkable results.

While a directional and modern design that has the potential to generate media and retail support are key criteria for the awards, so is a demonstrable expertise with fabric and textile innovation.

All the finalists that won the six 2015/16 regional finals (Asia; Australia; the British Isles; Europe; India, Pakistan and Middle East; and the USA) excelled in this regard and their final collections are eagerly awaited.

The six menswear regional winners will compete in Florence, Italy, on 13 January 2016 at the Pitti Uomo trade show – arguably the world's most important platform for men's design. The six womenswear regional winners will compete in the finals being

held during fashion week in New York in February.

Showcased below are examples of innovations that the six menswear finalists have already incorporated in their International Woolmark Prize collections. The finalists have certainly set the bar high for creativity and innovation, each incorporating into their unique designs an evolution of Merino wool. **B**

## COLOUR FELTING



FINALIST  
**AGI & SAM**  
BRITISH ISLES

A process of applying colour yarn directly to cloth using needles to blend two materials into one.

## WATER & DIRT REPELLENCY



FINALIST  
**JONATHAN CHRISTOPHER**  
THE NETHERLANDS

100% Merino wool and wool denim are specially treated to repel water and dirt.

## HAND DYEING



FINALIST  
**SUKET DHIR**  
INDIA

Different techniques of dyeing Merino wool fibres to create subtle gradations of unique shades of blue.

## TEFLON COATING



FINALIST  
**P. JOHNSON**  
AUSTRALIA

Merino wool was specially treated with a Teflon coating for additional water repellency.

## NEEDLE PUNCHING



FINALIST  
**MUNSOO KWON**  
SOUTH KOREA

Two wool fabrics are combined and blended smoothly together using a needle punching technique.

## PATTERN WEAVING



FINALIST  
**SIKI IM**  
USA

Specially woven Merino wool made to alter the directional lines of pinstripe fabric.



# STEPHANIE FIELD

## SHOWCASING A HOME-GROWN FIBRE

20-year-old **Stephanie Field's** life as an international model can seem a world away from the farm she grew up on near **Jugiong** in NSW, but she never forgets her roots and is always especially pleased to show off apparel made from **Australian Merino wool**.

**F**or Stephanie Field, working on her family's farm Benangaroo Station just outside of the small town of Jugiong, NSW, was part of her everyday life. Daughter of Michael Field, a fourth generation grazier and guardian of large-scale Australian wool producer T.A. Field Estates, Stephanie grew up kayaking on the Murrumbidgee River, picnicking under the Cootamundra wattle, racing through the Canola crops and sliding down shoots in the shearing shed.

Yet for the past 18 months the 20-year-old has swapped her bluey for couture and has captured the fashion world's imagination with her gorgeous face and graceful figure. Last year she burst onto the modeling scene, walking the Paris Fashion Week runway for two of the world's biggest fashion houses, Valentino and Celine. Since then, Stephanie has travelled almost non-stop, modelling in places like Ibiza, Beijing and, most recently, for Dolce & Gabbana's prestigious alta moda collection at Domenico Dolce's private villa in Portofino.

Despite her globetrotting, Stephanie is wholeheartedly committed to promoting Australian Merino wool and Australian design on the world stage. Last year she worked with Sydney-based fashion designer and International Woolmark Prize alumnus Christopher Esber on her outfit for the L'Uomo Vogue event in Sydney.

"He created this strapless, pale pink wool dress. It felt like home being able to wear it. I'm part of both of the processes," she says of her on-farm work and modeling career. "I help out on the farm and then I go and wear the clothes on shoots or in fashion shows."

Recently, AWI's in-house videography team travelled to Benangaroo Station as part of its web series The Source, inviting viewers into Stephanie's world and exploring how she juggles life on the farm with life on the runway.

"Experiencing places that I never thought that I'd go to, working with amazing people and clients, I just really appreciate that not



Stephanie with her parents examining a Merino wool fleece in their wool shed.



Stephanie with the **Christopher Esber**-designed wool dress at last year's L'Uomo Vogue event in Sydney. PHOTO: Lucas Dawson.

everyone gets the opportunities that I get. It's everyone's dream to be able to work and travel the world at the same time and I guess I'm kind of living that dream at the moment," she marvels.

A primary school with just nine students set Stephanie up for an education that now includes studies in interior design and plans for a degree in psychology. She wants to find ways through her psychology degree that will allow her to give back to the demanding industry her parents are so passionate about.

There's little-to-no chance Stephanie will lose touch with her roots. "My dad keeps me very grounded. He'll come visit me at a runway show and he will not recognise me. Growing up on the farm, you've just got to keep level headed.

"It's harsh for anyone living on the land. I definitely want to be here to support my family, even if it's involved with my psychology degree. My parents have given me such an amazing life so far and been there for me so I want to give something back."

After five months away from Jugiong and all the trappings an international modelling career can throw her way, Benangaroo Station is more than ever the place Stephanie can escape and get back to nature.

"I just love it. I wouldn't trade it for anything in the world and I really appreciate the fact I got to grow up here." **B**

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

# CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL

## INTERNATIONAL WOOL WEEKS

Since its launch in 2010, the Campaign for Wool has helped build new demand for wool on an international scale.

The Campaign was initiated by its patron, HRH The Prince of Wales, to raise awareness amongst consumers about the unique, natural, renewable and biodegradable benefits offered by the fibre. The initiative encourages collaboration between an international community of woolgrowers, major fashion designers, retailers, manufacturers, artisans and interior designers.

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

2015 has seen the campaign's annual international Wool Weeks being held in key global markets across the world. **B**

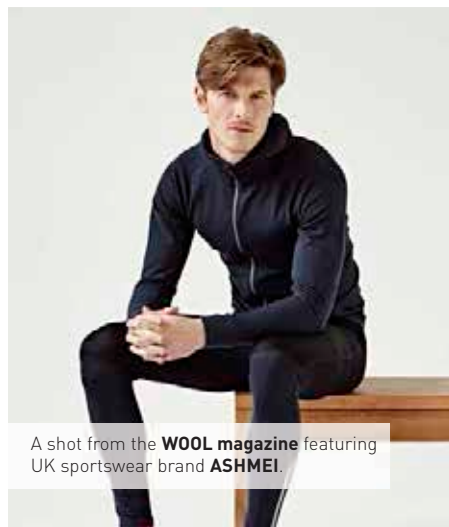
**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.campaignforwool.org](http://www.campaignforwool.org)



The **WOOL** magazine cover was literally unraveled by the European representatives for International Woolmark Prize 2015/16, **Nanna van Blaaderen** and **Jonathan Christopher**, at a launch ceremony attended by members of the Netherlands fashion industry and the media.



A shot from the **WOOL** magazine featuring Dutch fashion brand **AVELON**.



A shot from the **WOOL** magazine featuring UK sportswear brand **ASHMEI**.



An important feature of Wool Week in the Netherlands was the **promotion of wool apparel in stores**; pictured here is the window display of **Hackett** in Amsterdam.

## NETHERLANDS HIGHLIGHTS

**12–18 October**

At the heart of the Netherlands' Wool Week celebrations was a glossy 76-page **WOOL** magazine, containing images of designs – many from Dutch brands with an international distribution – all carefully crafted from wool. All products are available in stores as part of the brands' Autumn/Winter collections.

From high-end fashion to high-performance sportswear, the magazine celebrates the versatility and many faces of wool. 36,000 copies of the magazine were distributed to subscribers of *ELLE* and *Harper's BAZAAR* and were available in participating stores and selected areas during Wool Week. It is also available on AWT's website [www.merino.com/cfw2015NL](http://www.merino.com/cfw2015NL) for free download.

During Wool Week, stores across the Netherlands also held woolly activities, workshops, demonstrations and giveaways, engaging Dutch customers with a unique shopping experience whilst educating them about all things wool. **B**





## ITALY HIGHLIGHTS

8–13 September

From the latest in Merino wool fashion to a flock of sheep on Milan's high-end shopping hub Via Montenapoleone, Wool Week in Italy was a true showcase of all things wool. The proceedings were officially opened by campaign patron, HRH The Prince of Wales via a pre-recorded video message who reminded consumers of the Campaign for Wool's key message: 'Live Naturally, Choose Wool'.

Ten of the world's best emerging design talents sent a crew of models down a runway during the annual ON STAGE fashion show in Milan, showcasing their latest collections where Merino wool has played a pivotal role. Outside, shoppers discovered the latest wool essentials from iconic brands such as Ms Min, Ricostru and Luca Larenza.



Italian brand **Luca Larenza** at the **ON STAGE** fashion show.



Italian brand **Cornelianni** showcasing wool in its shop window displays.



Sports brand **adidas** exhibited wool as a high-performance and odour resistant fibre.



To highlight the machine washability of wool, **Electrolux** showed dancers washing wool clothes.

## FRANCE HIGHLIGHTS

25–27 September

This year's Wool Week France unleashed a multi-sensory feast for the eyes inside the iconic Palais de Tokyo in Paris as it opened its doors for a series of performances, workshops and displays promoting wool.

Partnering with adidas, Electrolux, Dormeuil and Brun de Vian-Tiran, wool was reimagined through dance to highlight the benefits of the fibre in each of the brand's

industries: sportswear, apparel care, tailoring and interiors.

Sports brand adidas had dancers high on energy as they exhibited wool as a high-performance and odour resistant fibre; Electrolux showcased that caring for wool is easy; tailors for Dormeuil displayed the superb drape, exquisite tailoring and natural breathability of Merino wool; and blanket manufacturer Brun de Vian-Tiran highlighted wool's benefits that enhance a good night's sleep.



## UNITED KINGDOM HIGHLIGHTS

5–11 October

The showcase event of Wool Week in the UK was sheep taking up residence on Savile Row in London, as the iconic tailoring strip was transformed into a green pasture and models showcased the finest in men's tailoring.

With more than 200 metres of the finest wool cloth, 80 metres of grass pasture, 60 sheep, 25 models, 25 bespoke menswear outfits, 25 tailoring houses, 28 weavers and merchants, accessories provided by the Gentleman's Houses of Mayfair and St. James's, two specially constructed wool sheds and a sheepdog – Wool Week UK was certainly launched in style.

Championing wool as the ultimate fibre of choice for menswear, this year's Campaign for Wool celebrations in London welcomed the city's dapper folk inside the tailoring houses, giving a rare look at how cloth is carefully crafted into the fine suits synonymous with Savile Row. Workshop tours, pattern cutting and tailoring demonstrations were perhaps a once-in-a-lifetime treat for those in attendance.

With HRH The Prince of Wales continuing to remind shoppers worldwide to 'Live Naturally, Choose Wool', retailers of central London hosted Wool Night Out – a special shopping night showing the latest in wool fashion.

The 'Wool This Way' map provided a consumer guide for the night event. 26 retailers and brands joined the festivities to celebrate wool in their collections, from exclusive discounts on wool garments and accessories to novel in-store activities.

The Campaign also featured a series of images and a film, shot on location in the Borders region of Scotland by Nick Leary. Luke Day, Editor *British GQ Style*, styled an edit of key wool items for Autumn/Winter 2015 from brands including Abraham Moons & Sons, Anderson & Sheppard, Barbour, E.Tautz, Finisterre, Harris Tweed Hebrides, Holly Fulton, Jaeger, Jigsaw, Marks & Spencer, Pringle of Scotland, Topshop and Topman, and Wool and the Gang. **B**



The 'Wool This Way' map provided a consumer guide to buying wool from featured London retailers during Wool Night Out.



Models strolled amongst the sheep, the media and the public on Savile Row showcasing the very best wool apparel.



A selection of models wearing wool with the sheep on Savile Row being photographed and filmed by the media which then relayed the day's activities and key messages about wool to their audiences.



A major feature of Wool Week in the UK was the promotion and availability of wool apparel in stores, pictured is the window display of Anderson & Sheppard in London.





## CHINA HIGHLIGHTS

17–25 October

Major Chinese brands showcased their best wool fashion for the upcoming autumn season, with 13 brands proudly supporting the Campaign For Wool, including Croquis, Depot 3, Eachway, Icicle, JNBY, jnby by JNBY, Mark Fairwhale, Masfer.Su, Tina Gia, Upper, White Collar and Yousoku. Fashion-savvy shoppers could also enjoy pop-up stores, special events and product giveaways and were treated to a special wool event with celebrity stylist/ model Li Ai.

Adding a unique twist to the Campaign, Wool Week China collaborated with China's largest jazz festival, the JZ Festival. With world-class musicians and Grammy award winners including Victor Wooten, Joss Stone, Lu Guang Zhong and Shunza amongst the line-up, more than 40,000 people experienced China's best wool fashion as they listened to the sultry sounds of the world's best jazz bands.



The promotion of the Campaign for Wool in the window display of a **Tina Gia store in Shanghai**.



The use of **digital marketing** is an increasingly important component of the Campaign for Wool.



Campaign for Wool **marketing collateral** in **Japan** featuring an Australian Merino sheep.

The Campaign For Wool



THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL  
Patron: HRH The Prince of Wales



PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY  
THE WOOLMARK COMPANY

## JAPAN HIGHLIGHTS

3–10 November

Iconic department Isetan Shinjuku played host to several exciting wool-themed activities, including two surprise performances and the promotion of more than 20 fashion brands working with wool. Shoppers were treated to a virtual trip to Australia, thanks to virtual reality headsets, transporting visitors to a Tasmanian wool-growing property to discover more about Australian Merino wool.

A pre-recorded video message by Campaign patron HRH The Prince of Wales was played continuously in store throughout the week, as

well as at Matsuzakaya Sakae store during the famous Tweed Run Bishu – where cyclists don their best wool outfits for a group bike ride.

With Isetan Shinjuku also being a proud retail partner of the coveted International Woolmark Prize, it was only fitting that 2015 womenswear winner Marcia Patmos was in store to showcase her winning collection alongside 2015 International Woolmark Prize Asia finalist VMAJOR.

Celebrated British menswear designer Jeremy Hackett also threw his support behind the Campaign, hosting an invite-only seminar followed by a fitting session for Isetan Shinjuku's stylish male shoppers.



The winning International Woolmark Prize collection of **M.PATMOS** was showcased during Wool Week in **Tokyo**.



# THE PERFECT PANTS MADE WITH THE PERFECT FIBRE: MERINO WOOL

- **OSMAN**, the eponymous label from leading fashion designer Osman Yousefzada, has launched a collection of key-piece trousers exclusively for Harvey Nichols in collaboration with AWI.
- Called **The Perfect Five**, the collection celebrates the timeless style of five iconic women and highlights wool as the ultimate below-the-waist fibre.
- According to the designer, the key to the perfect trouser is marrying the perfect cut with the perfect cloth, and Merino wool was crucial in completing the collection.

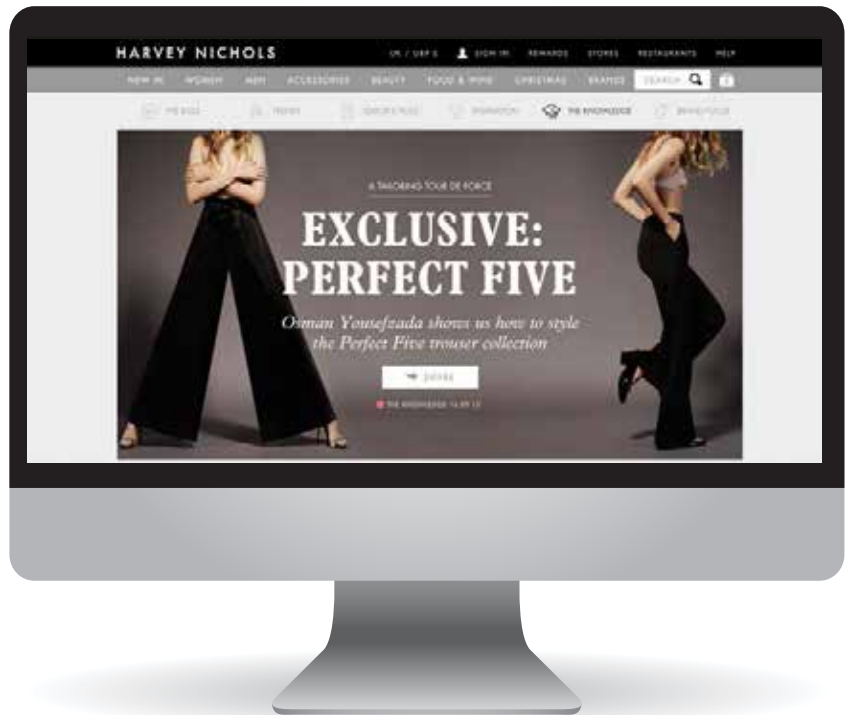
Celebrating 'The Art of Style', a month-long activity that was held in September by iconic retailer Harvey Nichols, renowned fashion designer Osman Yousefzada delved into his archives to unveil the 'Perfect Five', a capsule collection of key trousers in timeless silhouettes produced in collaboration with AWI.

AWI has worked closely with Yousefzada's label OSMAN for a number of years, helping the designer source the best Merino wool fabrics and inspiring him through its seasonal editions of The Wool Lab. After approaching AWI with his unique concept, Yousefzada was able to highlight Australian Merino wool as the best below-the-waist fibre and his premium five-piece collection is a true celebration of quality and style.

Collaborations such as these allow AWI to connect the world's best designers with the most important retailers, and in turn champion the benefits of wool to savvy consumers. By placing more wool on the shelves of department stores and boutiques, AWI highlights Australian wool as the ultimate natural fibre and premier ingredient in luxury apparel.

The Perfect Five pays homage to Yousefzada's muses: Bianca Jagger, Taylor Swift, Lauren Bacall, Paloma Picasso and Lupito Nyong'o, with each key look celebrating the women who wore them.

"They're special basics, they're not super fashion, so I wanted to give them a back story," says Yousefzada of the celebrity style names. Renowned for his clean lines and precision tailoring, Yousefzada has



Osman's 'Perfect Five' capsule collection is available to purchase online from the **Harvey Nichols** website.

incorporated refined cuts and luxurious fabrics including wool, satin and lace to craft a sophisticated yet eminently wearable collection of trousers, pants and culottes.

"The key to the perfect trousers is marrying the perfect cloth with the perfect cut," he says. "That is why I have married wool, which is comfortable, resilient and breathable, with a cut that enhances and gives you the best derrière possible."

The collection is available in Harvey Nichols' Knightsbridge store as well as online, and Harvey Nichols Group Fashion Buyer Anita Barr is confident of the collection's success.

"We are delighted to be working exclusively with OSMAN and AWI on this project and to be able to offer our customers the best edit of trousers for the season ahead. We know the Harvey Nichols woman is looking for directional styles that offer both comfort and effortless style; to be working with the master of both is really exciting for our brand." **B**

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



Osman's **'Bianca'** ivory wide-leg trousers made from 95 per cent wool is a favourite of **Harvey Nichols'** Group Fashion Buyer **Anita Barr**.



# TALKING TURKEY

## ABOUT WOOL

AWI promotes **Australian wool** in the significant textile manufacturing hub and increasingly important retail market of **Turkey** – a country overlapping Asian and European markets.

**A**WI was a proud supporter of this year's Annual Istanbul Fashion Conference organised by the Turkish Clothing Manufacturers Association (TGSD) which was held in October in conjunction with the International Apparel Federation's World Fashion Convention in Istanbul.

This important annual trade event brought together, not only Turkey's textile industry, but also an audience from more than 25 other countries from across the world.

AWI secured British fashion designer Gordon Richardson, the Creative Director of TOPMAN, as a keynote speaker for the event.

TOPMAN is a fast-paced and innovative UK-based men's fashion brand that produces 22 per cent of its product mix in Turkey.

Mr Richardson himself is a great advocate of Merino wool and uses the fibre where possible across his collections, from knitwear to tailoring and outerwear.

"Merino wool sits within our premium labelled collections," Mr Richardson said. "It has the added advantages of quality and luxury as opposed to man-made fibres that work well for more overt fashion styles."

Gordon Richardson depicted a key trend of "smartening down" for the coming seasons. "It's about taking casualwear garments and doing them in formal luxe woollen fabrics; this makes product look new, exciting and expensive."

This developing trend, coupled with the fact that formalwear is a product area that TOPMAN is actively looking to source from Turkey, represents an excellent opportunity for Merino wool and the Turkish manufacturers who work with the fibre.

AWI Country Manager for the UK, Rebecca Kelley, says Turkey is a strategically important manufacturing country that has capacity to drive volume growth in Australian Merino wool product.

"Not only does it occupy an ideal geographical position providing a middle ground between



TOPMAN Creative Director **Gordon Richardson** – who is an advocate of Merino wool – was presented with a glass tulip (the national symbol for Turkey) by TGSD board member **Esra Ercan** for his participation in the conference supported by AWI.

the US, Europe and the Far East, enabling quicker lead times, it is well placed to service significant countries on its periphery such as Russia and Iran," she said.

"The textile industry in Turkey is well established with a strong skill base; around 65 per cent of the country's population is under the age of 30 and well educated which makes the country attractive to overseas brands and investors.

"For example in 1998 Hugo Boss set up a state of the art manufacturing facility in the coastal city of Izmir followed by a second one in 2004; the factory employs approximately 3,000 people and produces in excess of 500,000 suits a year.

"TOPMAN's parent company, the Arcadia Group, is one of many other companies that has a buying office in the country and is

looking to increase the amount of product including Australian Merino wool that they source from Turkey.

"The textile sector makes up seven per cent of Turkey's GDP and is a significant contributor to the country's economy which has the domestic and foreign investment to grow. AWI is in a strong position to be able to leverage these opportunities within Turkey and its key export regions."

During the conference Mr Richardson also spoke of his and TOPMAN's active support of emerging design talent. He implored the audience to support this through their businesses if they had the chance and commented, "It's the future of our industry and without them this industry has nothing" – a sentiment that is shared by AWI which runs the prestigious International Woolmark Prize. **E**



Robert Sandlant with his Merinos at 'Pyrenees Park' in Victoria.

# WORLD RECORD MERINO WOOL BALE

**Pamela and Robert Sandlant** from Victoria have produced a world record Merino wool bale of 10.3 microns to win this year's **Loro Piana Record Bale award**.

The world record for the finest bale of wool ever produced has been broken by Australian woolgrowers Pamela and Robert Sandlant of 'Pyrenees Park' in Victoria.

In winning the annual Loro Piana Record Bale competition, the couple produced a bale of Merino wool of 10.3 microns beating the previous record of 10.6 microns.

Every year luxury clothing company Loro Piana engages Australian and New Zealand wool producers in the challenge,

involving a jury formed by the presidents of the Australian Superfine Wool Growers' Association and the director of the New Zealand Stud Merino Breeders Society. The panel is called upon to judge certified bales of wool which must comply with specific weight, length and strength standards, to be allowed into the competition.

AWI has partnered with Loro Piana since 2011 in the award event, as a way to celebrate the commitment of Australian woolgrowers. Thanks to their passion and



Fabric produced by Loro Piana from a Record Bale Award winner.

to the constant improvement of breeding techniques, Australian Merino wool has achieved an extremely high standard of fineness and quality.

Loro Piana hosted an exclusive gala event at Merchant Taylors' Hall in London in November to honour the commitment and professionalism of Australian woolgrowers, who constantly work to improve Merino wool. The event was attended by Loro Piana Deputy Chairman, Pier Luigi Loro Piana and Loro Piana CEO, Matthieu Brisset.

"We are delighted that it is Australian woolgrowers that have broken the world record," says AWI CEO Stuart McCullough. "The Loro Piana Record Bale award encourages breeders to achieve the highest levels of quality, and this is something at which Australian woolgrowers excel. Pamela and Robert Sandlant won the award last year and we congratulate them on their extraordinary achievement this year."

Loro Piana Group Deputy Chairman, Pier Luigi Loro Piana, says: "This award celebrates the professionalism, the skills and the passion so typical of these farms and all the parties involved. Thanks to constant mutual efforts, the wool industry can benefit from higher quality standards and fineness, which was unconceivable over 15 years ago. It is especially rewarding to see that the world record has been broken this year again."

Loro Piana established the Record Bale Award in 2000 to promote quality by supporting breeders in their pursuit of excellence. The competition involves Australia and New Zealand, the world's main producers of Merino wool, and awards the win to the finest bale from the two nations produced in the course of the previous year. The Loro Piana Record Bale Award invariably sets an annual record, and this year it also achieved a world record. Every record bale is archived by Loro Piana. Until a finer wool bale is purchased, the previous one cannot be used.

A bale weighs on average between 90 to 100 kg, which is also the minimum lot that can be transformed into fabric, suitable only for 40 made-to-measure suits. Numbered and marked by an exclusive label, the wool fabrics created with the Record Bale are absolutely unique. **B**



# A TAILOR MADE EXPERIENCE DOWN UNDER

English tailor **Justin Brogan** has worked with **Australian Merino wool** for decades – but it took a recent trip down under to bring him into close contact with the magnificent animals that produce this fine wool.

**T**ailor Justin Brogan says shearing a Merino sheep was the highlight of his spring trip to Australia, a journey he received as winner of a UK industry-wide competition run by Dormeuil – the French producer of suiting fabric that is a large buyer of Australian Merino wool.

The competition involved answering a string of questions about the yarn. Modest in recounting his victory, Justin confesses that it included an educated guess: having to estimate the weight of wool required to weave a length of cloth.

Based these days in his childhood home of Torquay, on the south coast of Devon, he describes himself as not at all a country boy. So Justin admits to a little pride in getting to grips with the clippers, in the most challenging task once he arrived in Australia.

“I was a little concerned, thinking that it was all going to be quite a wrestling match

between us!” he says. “Happily this was not the case and both sheep and I survived the event unscathed.”

A video streamed to British friends and customers confirmed the outcome, with the animal perfectly content to lie there in the shed at the surprisingly capable hands of a novice.

A warm welcome was provided by the hosts, the Picker family of ‘Salisbury’ near Crookwell, to Justin and photographer Rob Elford who accompanied him on the trip. AWI supported the visit. A long flight, followed by a drive and a quick shower, led immediately to “a stunning barbecue washed down by their good wine – a great evening under the Southern Cross,” Justin adds.

Justin trained in London at Central St Martin’s art and design school. That led to several years with Gieves & Hawkes at No 1 Savile Row, one of the British capital’s oldest and most revered bespoke tailoring houses.

Moving back to south-west England for family reasons, he then spent a decade at Lugets, a gentlemen’s outfitter in Exeter, and has recently started his own business, developing a web and social media presence to take private orders under the label Justin Brogan Bespoke.

As Australia is the source of much of the wool in good British suits, Dormeuil launched the contest for its UK contacts in order to promote Iconik, a lightweight Merino fabric that hangs especially well on the body.

“Iconik is first and foremost a tribute to all the Australian fine Merino woolgrowers. Without them Dormeuil would not have existed,” says Dominic Dormeuil, president of the clothier, whose UK division is headquartered around the corner from Savile Row.

Justin headed to Sydney for the rest of his brief but busy visit, spending what he describes as a greatly enjoyable time with Scott Carmody and the team at AWI.

He also compliments the “extremely warm reception” he received when dropping in to see top Sydney tailors Shane Rochefort and JC Cutler.

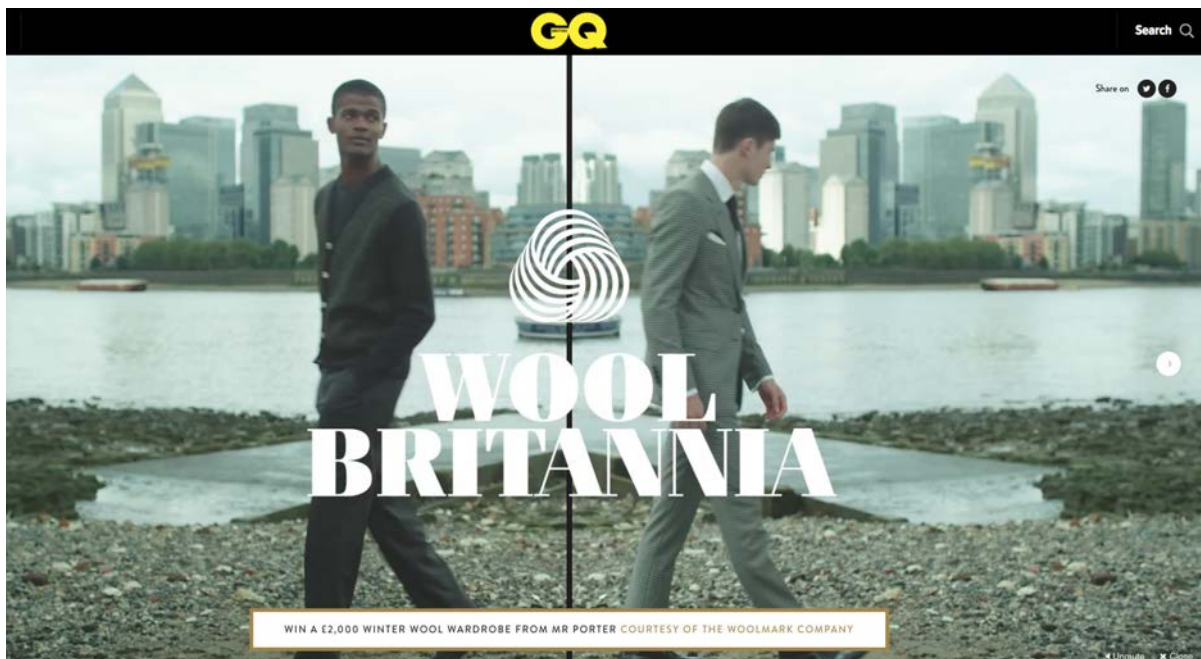
Back in England, orders are coming in regularly for Justin’s suits, jackets and waistcoats. As his website at [justinbrogan.co.uk](http://justinbrogan.co.uk) points out, he discusses options individually with clients, takes meticulous measurements and shows them a vast range of swatches from which to choose.

Nor is it an extravagance in the long run. “Let’s say it could be about having that one adaptable piece in your wardrobe. A three piece suit, where the jacket can be worn by itself or with the waistcoat, teamed with jeans to a bar, club or restaurant with or without a tie – or the entire suit for a business meeting or wedding reception.”

It’s a world away from having to flick through a rail of readymade clothes in a downtown store – hoping that something you like might fit. “Not snobbish,” Justin says. “Just sensible.”

English tailor **Justin Brogan** on his visit to the Picker family’s ‘Salisbury’ property near Crookwell in the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales.





The *British GQ* website uses video and music to promote Merino wool apparel.

# GQ MAGAZINE SHOWCASES THE LATEST WOOL MENSWEAR

AWI has collaborated with **GQ magazine** in three key consumer markets for Australian wool – the **UK, China and India** – to help promote the latest premium Merino wool apparel from some of the world’s leading menswear brands.



The lead page in the *British GQ* feature promoting commercially available apparel made from **Australian Merino wool**.

## BRITAIN

Influential men’s fashion magazine *British GQ* has long been a supporter of Merino wool, and the magazine’s latest homage to the premium fibre is presented in its November edition, titled *Wool Britannia*.

The six-page feature showcases some of the best wool fashion available to global consumers this winter. In an interesting transatlantic twist, the magazine features major brands from the US: Tom Ford, Tommy Hilfiger, Thom Browne, J Crew, Brooks Brothers and Ralph Lauren.

According to *British GQ*, the wool industry continues to thrive thanks to the growing trend of natural fibres. Now, says *British GQ*, “several international heavyweights are following suit, with impressive fabric innovations, designs and weaves – and, of course, it’s all thanks to Merino wool”.

Complementing the magazine, the *British GQ* website and a complete mix of

available digital media further explore the relationship between American flair and the finest British fabrics and is offering one lucky reader the chance to win a winter wool wardrobe thanks to MrPorter.com.

*British GQ* has a readership of nearly 400,000 with the digital version having more than 9 million monthly page views. **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.gq-magazine.co.uk](http://www.gq-magazine.co.uk)







A page from the **GQ China Cool Wool** feature with Hong Kong actor and singer **Chi Lam** styled in an outfit from **Alfred Dunhill**.

## CHINA

AWI was one of the proud sponsors of this year's **GQ China Men of the Year Awards**, which took place in September in Shanghai. The event was the pinnacle of AWI China's 2015 Cool Wool initiative and included a showcase of Cool Wool garments, imagery and video.

Cool Wool garments are made from fine, lightweight Merino wool fabrics and are suited to warmer seasons and climates – thereby extending the traditional selling season of wool.

After the event, the Cool Wool exhibition went on display during Shanghai fashion week with outfits from popular brands in China including Anzheng, Croquis, Notting Hill, Lacoste and Icicle Men.

The GQ Men of the Year Awards event followed three months of advertorial in **GQ China** featuring models and celebrities, such as famed Hong Kong actor and singer Chi Lam, styled in brand partners' Cool Wool outfits, who said: "Garments made from Cool Wool fabrics are highly versatile, they are suitable to wear for both casual or formal occasions."

**GQ China** has a readership of nearly 800,000 with the digital version having more than 187 million monthly page views. **B**

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



The **Cool Wool** display featuring popular brands in China.



An exhibition at the **GQ India Men of the Year** which showcased commercially available **Cool Wool** apparel.

## INDIA

The October edition of **GQ India** included an 6-page Q&A feature with leading Indian designers Rajesh Pratap Singh and Suket Dhir, each one explaining their personal journey with Merino wool and passion for the fibre.

"Wool is becoming integral to my designs," said Singh. "It's an aspect that is evolving rapidly, particularly for our main line, resulting in an individualistic, unique outcome. Although I was announced as The Woolmark Company's first Indian ambassador in 2013, I have been using Merino wool since I began designing – over the past two years I have received a lot of technical help to develop new textiles, which I weave in my textile facility."

With a focus on Cool Wool, **GQindia.com** also features articles highlighting wool as a trans-seasonal fibre, which keeps you comfortable

from "sultry Indian summers to freezing Siberian temperatures".

"If there is such a thing as an 'It' fabric, it has to be wool. This all-weather, versatile fibre ranks high on practicality and ups the ante on your cool factor," the **GQ India** site proudly states, alongside style tips from Indian brands Raymond and Park Avenue and US brand Brooks Brothers, to help make "wool look cool".

AWI also supported the **GQ India Men of the Year** event in September. The high profile event also presented the opportunity for partner brands to showcase their Cool Wool apparel to attendees.

**GQ India** has a readership of nearly 200,000 with the digital version having more than 4.5 million monthly page views. **B**

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



**RAJESH PRATAP SINGH'S**  
modern and pure aesthetic

Delhi-based Rajesh Pratap Singh has created a unique signature style that subtly draws from his Rajasthani roots. Faultlessly clean lines, careful detailing and international silhouettes lend uniqueness to his unparalleled designs. Singh's work epitomises simplicity, yet combines modern with traditional, complementing the unique attributes of the Merino wool fibre

and techniques that inspire me, as well as architecture and precision engineering."

**THE RAJESH PRATAP SINGH MAN:**  
"He is an intelligent and well travelled man, who understands and appreciates fine material as well as the construction of the clothes he wears. He is always willing to experiment."

**DESIGN PHILOSOPHY:**  
"Modern, clean and pure. Indian, but not kitsch. The materials, construction and shape are paramount for me, rather than fleeting trends."

**ON COOL WOOL:**  
"Wool is becoming integral to my designs. I have worked with wool indigo, wool hakis and wool jacquards. It's an aspect that is evolving rapidly, particularly for our main line, resulting in an individualistic, unique result. We have introduced a new dimension to traditional Indian textiles, most of which are hand-woven and hand-spun. To work with Merino wool from the fibre and yarn stage has been a fruitful challenge. Although I was announced as The Woolmark Company's first Indian ambassador since 2013, I have been using Merino wool since I began designing – over the last two years I have received a lot of technical help to develop new textiles, which I weave in my textile facility."

**THE INDIAN INFLUENCE:**  
"We use traditional Indian techniques with a modern and global view to add an element of surprise. I remain influenced by the materials I use, my travels, the people

**THE IDOLS:**  
Mahatma Gandhi, Keith Richards, Jivi Sethi, Serge Gainsbourg and most importantly, Vijay Sharma of Sikar.

The opening spread in the **GQ India** feature that included reports on the use of wool by leading Indian designers and also a promotion of commercially available **Cool Wool** apparel.



# NEW RANGE OF LUXURY MERINO WOOL FABRICS UNVEILED

**NEULANA Air** – one of four fabrics in the **NEULANA** range. This premium woven 100 per cent Merino wool fabric, suitable for smart casual jackets, offers warmth without weight.

- Years of intensive research and development between AWI's technical team and the production and design team of leading Chinese textile enterprise **The Nanshan Group** has resulted in the launch of a premium woven fabric collection called **NEULANA**.
- **NEULANA** comprises four different Merino wool and wool-rich fabrics for a wide range of apparel and accessories.
- **The Wool Development Centre**, co-founded by AWI and **The Nanshan Group**, played a critical role in the development and production of this innovative and premium fabric collection.

Collaboration between AWI and one of China's leading textile enterprises, **The Nanshan Group**, has created a new innovative range of 100 per cent Merino wool and wool-blend fabrics.

The new range, comprising four different fabrics known as **NEULANA**, was launched at the Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics trade show in October. **NEULANA Elite** is for elegant and luxury suits, **NEULANA Protect** is for machine washable and weather resistant coats and jackets, **NEULANA Air** is for upper or smart casual wear and **NEULANA Accessori** is for accessories including scarves and shawls.

"Nanshan Group has developed a long-standing relationship with AWI over the years," said Shandong Nanshan Fabric and Garment Company Ltd General Manager, Mr Song Riyou.

"Our close cooperation has resulted in successful achievements such as the

establishment of the Wool Development Center and the International Wool Education Center. The **NEULANA** new fabric collection, made from Australian Merino wool, highlights the industry's constant innovation and development."

According to AWI General Manager Product Development and Commercialisation Jimmy Jackson, **NEULANA** fabrics are the result of intensive research and development during the manufacturing stage.

"AWI's technical team has been working closely alongside Nanshan's production and design team during the past few years to optimise the manufacturing processing conditions, which eventually led to the development and launch of the **NEULANA** range of fabrics," explains Mr Jackson.

"The initial work was carried out on sample equipment at the Wool Development Centre, which was set up in October 2013 as a collaboration between Nanshan and AWI, before scaling up to industrial scale production of the new range of woven fabrics."

**NEULANA Elite** fabric, ideal for suiting for men and women, is made from Australian Merino wool fibres on which the latest stretch technology has been applied, resulting in a lightweight woven fabric with a cashmere-like hand feel and a subtle silk-like sheen. **NEULANA Elite** fabrics are available in 100 per cent Merino wool and wool blends. A range of shirting fabrics is also available.

**NEULANA Protect** fabric, perfect for weather resistant coats and jacket, uses pre-stretched Australian Merino wool fibres that are then temporally set. Following the spinning and weaving process, the 100 per cent Merino wool fabrics super contract during the finishing process, resulting in fabrics having a significantly higher weave density. This makes **NEULANA Protect** fabrics naturally both wind and water resistant.

**NEULANA Air** is a premium woven 100 per cent Australian Merino wool fabric offering warmth without the weight. By using special treatment technology, a loose-yet-full structure is formed inside the yarn resulting in a resilient fabric with a loft, bounce and touch suitable for outerwear such as high-end men's casual jackets.

**NEULANA Accessori** has a soft, smooth handle and silky lustre that allows for an elegant and luxurious end product made from 100 per cent Australian Merino wool. Maximising the natural properties of wool such as the ability to hold dynamic colours and suitability for all seasons, premium accessories can be produced.



The General Manager of Nanshan Fabric & Garments Co Ltd, **Mr Song Riyou**, at the launch of the **NEULANA** fabric range.



# WOOLRICH'S

## 100% MERINO OUTERWEAR

**AWI** has helped support the promotion in lucrative European markets of outerwear by US company **Woolrich John Rich & Bros** that uses **Loro Piana's** 100 per cent Merino wool Storm System® fabric.

In the early 19th century, John Rich II, son of an English wool carder, set off from Liverpool across the Atlantic in search of a new life. He went on to found the Woolrich Woolen Mills in Pennsylvania in 1830 and travelled from logging camp to logging camp selling his first wool products: fabric, socks and basic garments.

Since its establishment 185 years ago, the Woolrich product is still essentially rooted in the clothing needs of American pioneers: from the early lumberjacks and farmers through to the workers who took part in the construction of the great Alaskan Pipeline.

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

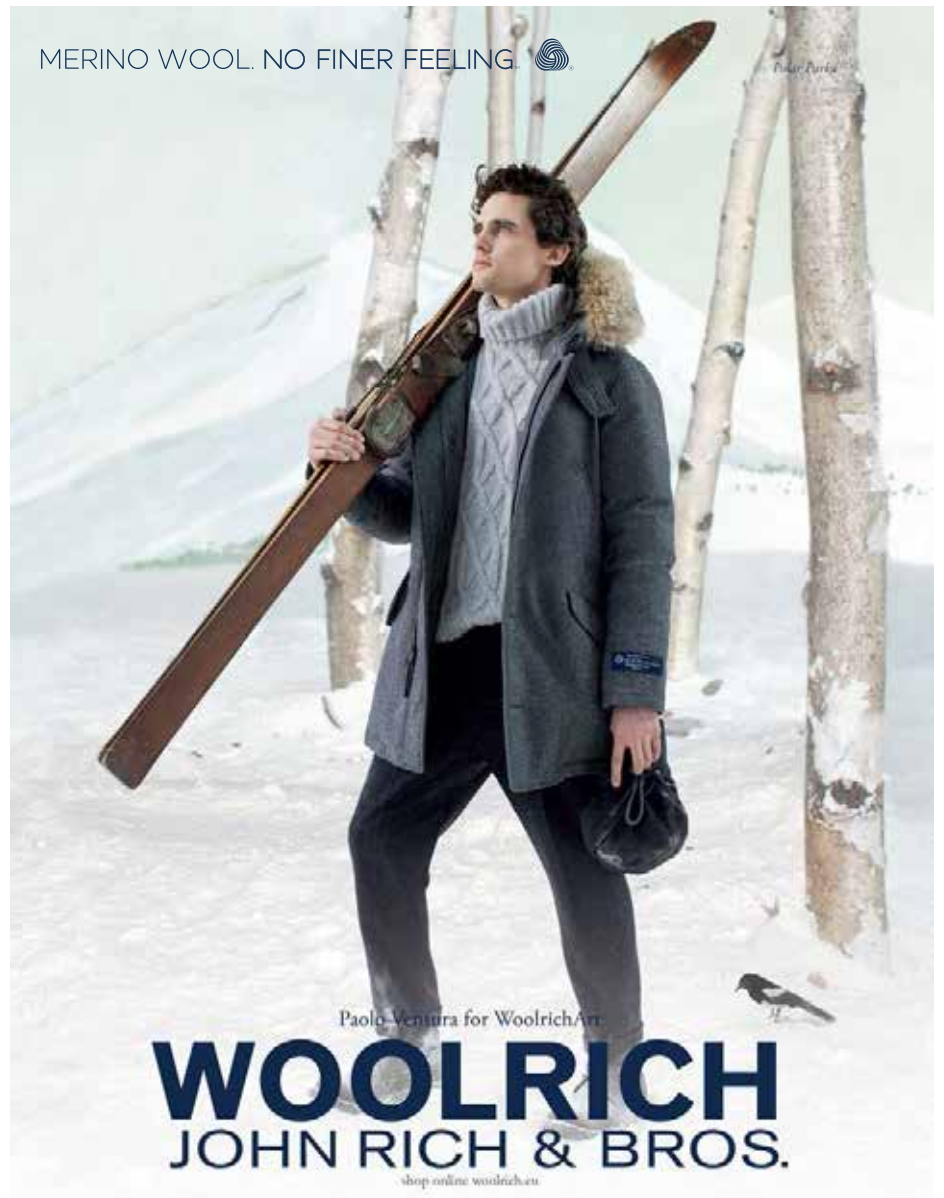
For this year's European Autumn/Winter season, Woolrich John Rich & Bros launched two new versions of its famous Arctic Parka – the Polar Parka and the Mackinaw Parka – both made with Loro Piana's 100 per cent Merino wool Storm System® fabric.

With support from AWI, the company has undertaken an advertising campaign across Europe, promoting the Merino outerwear in magazines in Italy, Switzerland, Germany, France, the UK and the Netherlands.

"It has been an amazing campaign run in key markets in Europe, focused on positioning Merino wool as a premium fibre and showing that Merino wool can be very well suited to outerwear," AWI Country Manager for Italy Francesco Magri said.

"The advertisements have featured in more than 10 magazines here in Italy, and magazines in other European countries such as *GQ France* and *Men's Health* in Germany. The initiative is promoting Merino wool apparel that is commercially available to consumers."

The advertisements incorporate the 'Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™' branding which is AWI's fibre advocacy initiative that establishes Merino wool as the fabric of choice for fine, contemporary



One of the advertisements for **Woolrich's Polar Parka** that is made using 100 per cent Merino wool fabric from **Loro Piana**.

apparel. The initiative is helping AWI to promote the natural benefits of Merino wool to international consumers through collaborating commercial partners.

The Loro Piana Storm System® fabric consists of a double barrier fabric. Firstly a water-repellent Rain System® treatment ensures that drops of water slide on the outer surface

of the fabric, enhancing its impermeability and protecting it against dust, dirt and liquid stains. Secondly a thin and extremely light microporous absorbent membrane, applied to the back of the fabric, is windproof and allows the skin to breathe. **B**

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



# HONG KONG DESIGNERS

INSPIRED BY AUSTRALIAN WOOL

The five visiting students from **Hong Kong** showcasing their award-winning designs on their visit to **G.H. Michell in Adelaide** – pictured with the South Australian Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries **Leon Bignell**.

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

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

The trip was also an opportunity for Australian woolgrowers to hear the designers' thoughts about working with wool and the key market of Hong Kong.

The five students were all recipients of awards from various fashion competitions at institutions including the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (HKPU), the Hong Kong Design Institute (HKDI) and the Knitwear Innovation and Design Society (KIDS). Four of the awards were sponsored by AWI with the other sponsored by the Flinders Merino wool-growing group of South Australia.

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

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

While in Melbourne, the students visited the School of Fashion and Textiles at RMIT University, the Textile and Fashion Hub at the Council of Textile and Fashion Industries of Australia, the Australian Wool Testing Authority, and AWEX where they viewed the wool auctions. In Geelong, they visited EMU Australia and the National Wool Museum. In Adelaide, they visited G.H. Michell and the School of Fashion Design at Adelaide TAFE.

During a five-day visit to the wool-growing properties of Flinders Merino, the delegation developed a greater appreciation for the farm to fashion journey and drew inspiration from the natural and beautiful environment where Australian Merino sheep are reared. The designers also got to try their hand at shearing and feeding sheep – work which they are so far removed from when in Hong Kong.

The designers said they were inspired by the various visits and hadn't previously realised how much effort was put into the production of wool.

"Through this trip we have learnt more than we

ever could have done in Hong Kong about the production of Merino wool and the advances made by the Australian wool industry," said Sky Wong from HKDI. "I now understand that the industry is strongly conscientious at producing quality wool in a sustainable manner. When designing wool clothes in future I will always remember and appreciate the hard work undertaken by the woolgrowers."

Christy Lee, also from HKDI, said: "This wonderful experience not only offered me an insight into the Australian wool industry, it has inspired me to continue using wool in my designs. I will never forget the hospitality that we received at all the places we visited and especially by the Flinders Merino woolgrowers and thank you to AWI for its sponsorship."

Polly Chan from KIDS added: "As a designer, we always dream that we can show our designs to people from overseas and I think we got a lot of appreciation for them from the design schools and the woolgrowers that we visited. We learnt so much about wool – a lot more than we expected. Thank you for an amazing trip."

The other two students on the trip were Victor Chu and Jan Kwok from HKPU. The delegation was guided on the trip by the AWI Hong Kong office training manager Cindy Chee. **B**



# FIRST MALE WINNER OF WOOL4SCHOOL

## FAST FACTS

- For the first time a male student has taken out the top prize in AWI's Wool4School student design competition.
- Wool4School offers a complete fashion design experience in the classroom, introducing a new generation of Australians to the versatility and benefits of wool.
- Registrations are now open for next year's Wool4School competition.

Now in its sixth year and linked to the Food and Fibre component of the National Curriculum, Wool4School 2015 involved 10,000 registered students from 700 Australian schools. The quality of the 1,100 final entries submitted was exceptional according to the judging panel and the number of final entries represents an eight per cent increase on last year.

With the theme of 'Live Life, Love Wool', secondary students from years 7 to 11 designed wool garments they would like to wear on a trip to one of five major city destinations. With an extensive resource library and free samples of both knitted and woven fabric for the classroom, students dreamt of visiting Paris, New York, New Delhi, Moscow or Tokyo wearing wool in various forms.

This year the Year 10 winner was Ben Colvin from SCECGS Redlands School in Sydney who created an outstanding design that

was innovative, contemporary and well-constructed. Ben designed a war-inspired outfit that he could wear to visit his grandfather's grave in France. His design, titled Something Missing, was born from the idea of travelling back in time to a military-dominated era, yet still incorporating a youthful spirit and contemporary street style element.

While participating students do not make their garment, they illustrate and carefully describe the textiles used in their designs. State and year level winning students and teachers share in the \$10,000 worth of prizes, with the overall Year 10 winner having their design made into reality by leading designer Jonathan Ward.

"Ben's winning entry was a standout this year," Mr Ward said. "His entry showed a well thought process from inspiration, interpretation and final execution of a very contemporary men's design utilising wool in different weights and textures. The simplicity and constancy of his design lines and the balance and proportion of colour makes Ben's design a joy to construct."

Amongst the year level winners were Isabelle Ingram, Year 7 from Tamborine Mountain State High School, Queensland; Clara Freeman, Year 8 from Ascham School, NSW; Jemma Hayes, Year 9 from GRC Penshurst Girls Campus, NSW; and Mikaela Fewster, Year 11 from Noosa District High School, Queensland.

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



A page from Ben's winning 2015 Wool4School entry.

## WOOL4SCHOOL 2016 GETS SPORTY

Registrations are now open for the 2016 competition. Students are asked to design a uniform for their favourite Australian sporting team and one which conveys the Aussie team spirit. The uniform, complete with wool accessory, should be designed from at least 70 per cent Australian Merino wool and suitable for the team to wear during their match or medal ceremony.

### HOW TO GET INVOLVED

#### WOOLGROWERS AND PARENTS

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

#### YEAR 7 -11 TEACHERS

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

#### YEAR 7 -11 STUDENTS

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

#### KEY DATES

Registrations close: 31 May 2016  
Submissions open: 1 June 2016

#### SUBMISSIONS CLOSE

Years 7 & 8: 19 July 2016  
Years 9 & 10: 26 July 2016  
Years 11 & teachers: 2 August 2016



Ben Colvin from SCECGS Redlands School in Sydney is the first ever male winner of AWI's Wool4School competition.

# EDUCATION

## HIGHLIGHTS



Judges **Franco Fabrello** (head designer at Italian textile manufacturer Marzotto) and **Kit Neale** (UK designer) interview the winner of **The Woolmark Company Texprint Award**, **Jessica Leclere**.

### FOSTERING TEXTILE EDUCATION WITH TEXPRINT

**AWI continues to encourage the use of Merino wool by emerging textile designers, through sponsoring an award at the UK's leading textile graduate design prize – Texprint.**

To highlight the versatility and benefits of Merino wool to the UK's leading textile students, AWI has once again partnered with the UK's foremost textile graduate design prize – Texprint – and sponsored a special award.

Texprint provides a vital bridge between the best of British textile design talent and the commercial world. The Woolmark Company Texprint Award encourages the most exceptional British-trained textile design graduates to use Merino wool in an innovative manner.

Royal College of Art graduate Jessica Leclere was announced as the winner of the 2015 Award during the *Première Vision Designs* trade show in Paris. Making the presentations was legendary designer and long-time head of the Missoni brand, Rosita Missoni.

Those eligible for this Texprint award must incorporate a minimum of 60 per cent Merino wool into their textiles, and demonstrate a good understanding of its qualities and potential application in fabric.

Miss Leclere was recognised for her collection of knitted designs in Merino wool inspired by the optical illusions that come from opposing positive and negative spaces, and by the textual and optical effects created by dip-dyeing and hand-manipulated linking techniques.

"Winning The Woolmark Company prize means that I will be able to investigate manufacturing and it will be invaluable in sourcing wonderful yarn," said Miss Leclere after her win. "I am thrilled to win this, given the stiff competition amongst this year's Texprint designers."

### LOCAL TAILORING TALENT ON SHOW

**AWI has sponsored the St George TAFE NSW Tailoring Event in Sydney to help encourage the use of Merino wool by fashion students.**

Fashion design student Maddison O'Connell has won this year's St George TAFE NSW Tailoring Event. The 20-year-old is currently studying applied fashion design and technology and was rewarded for her stunning Merino wool tailored jacket and pant suit.

Sponsored by AWI, the prize includes \$1,000 worth of Australian Merino wool fabric and the opportunity to be mentored by an AWI representative to help her develop her final collection, which was on show during a fashion exhibition held at TAFE Ultimo's gallery space, The Muse.

Miss O'Connell said the entire process of developing her collection taught her a lot about working with wool and she was amazed with the results she could achieve with wool, particularly felt.

"Wool is amazing to work with," Miss O'Connell said. "Being able to mould it around the shoulders, it was really good to work with. It sat really nicely as well; it just fitted the body really well."

"Originally I was looking at wet felting because I knew that you could do that with wool, but being able to do needle felting helped to exaggerate all the layers in the jacket and it was really good to use."

Maddison O'Connell who won this year's St George TAFE NSW Tailoring Event sponsored by AWI.







AWI consultant and IWTO president **Peter Ackroyd** giving a presentation to fashion and textile students at a 'Naturally Inspiring' seminar in Melbourne.

## NATURALLY INSPIRING STUDENT SEMINARS

This year AWI has continued to host seminars for textile and fashion students in Sydney and Melbourne about Merino wool and its place in contemporary fashion and textiles.

**A**WI held three seminars for fashion and textiles students in Sydney and Melbourne, inspiring students to work with Australian Merino wool as they enter into a career in the industry. More than 500 students and teachers from 15 universities and design colleges attended the 'Naturally Inspiring' seminars, which not only offered students the chance to learn about wool and the variety of ways to work with the fibre, but gave students a rare insight into the fashion and retail industry from those in the know.

Fashion designers Dion Lee and Mario-Luca Carlucci told of their journey with Merino wool and International Woolmark Prize experience. Orotan General Manger and Creative Director Ana Maria Escobar and Nataie Skubel –

formerly of Country Road – offered exclusive retail insight and explained the various career paths possible within the fashion industry.

Student Emily Moszkowicz from The Whitehouse Institute in Melbourne said she found the entire seminar she attended was extremely inspirational: "It was very informative and it has inspired me a lot for my design future."

Others, such as Mary Ocian from Sydney's St George School of Fashion, found the intimate talks with real-life fashion designers valuable and refreshing: "I really enjoyed the designer journey from Dion Lee. I myself want to become a fashion designer and his talk gave me a lot of information and a fresh perspective about being a designer in Australia." **B**

## VISIT BY BIELLA MASTERS

AWI has supported a visit by four 'Biella Masters' postgraduate students to learn more about Merino wool.

**A** group of four Italian students forging careers in the textile industry visited Australia in September to further explore the origins of Australian Merino wool and develop a greater appreciation and understanding of the premium fibre and the Australian industry.

While in Australia, they participated in AWI's Wool Appreciation Course and learnt about AWI's on-farm and off-farm programs. They also visited a wool-growing property in

Goulburn, NSW, to discover how Merino wool is produced and visited the Australian Wool Testing Authority to better understand the story of what happens to fleece before it leaves Australia's shores.

"The visit to Australia was a unique opportunity for me to discover the origin of the wool textile fabrics as an informed future worker in the industry – it is very important to know the history of the product that I'm going to sell, and as a conscious customer," said Elena

Comunian, who is studying at the Polytechnic University of Milan.

Alice Annetta, who is studying at the University of Turin, said, "The work that woolgrowers do every single day is remarkable and the passion they have for wool and their mission is very contagious!"

"Having the possibility to see what's behind a piece of fabric is absolutely amazing; seeing the farms and the sheep shearing made me think that nature and fashion are not so far from each other after all. I would recommend to everyone that works in fashion to consider going to Australia, seeing where the journey of the fabric begins." **B**



Postgraduate student **Elena Comunian** from the **Polytechnic University of Milan**: "I saw for the first time the amazing grassland landscape where Merino sheep live and how the sheep are expertly shorn in a very short time."



# MERINO WOOL: FIBRE OF FOOTBALL

Through **AWI's Fibre of Football** campaign, woolgrowers, shearers, agents and studmasters have been joined by top AFL players to celebrate the rich heritage connecting the Australian wool industry and Australian Football. The campaign has also placed Merino wool back into football jumpers and supporter apparel with more than 140 different lines of wool supporter gear now available through AFL and club shops. The sales in 2015 have outstripped all expectations with many clubs having to re-order stock.



Nat Fyfe steps up to collect his **Brownlow Medal** in a superfine **Zegna** wool suit.

## NAT FYFE: SUPERFINE AT THE BROWNLOW

Ambassador for AWI's Fibre of Football campaign, AFL superstar Nat Fyfe was proudly wearing a superfine wool suit on his Brownlow Medal winning night in September.

The Fremantle Dockers player was awarded the prestigious medal for the 'fairest and best' player in this season's AFL competition. The award caps off a great year for the 24-year-old from Lake Grace in Western Australia. His humble but insightful speech was spoken

about for many weeks afterwards, showing himself as not only a fine player but an articulate and focused individual.

After the Brownlow night, Nat was in touch with AWI. "Thank you for your support during the year, I really appreciate it. The suit is the talk of the town," he said.

Nat's family runs its transport business carting wool, livestock and grain. With a road train license, Nat helps out when he can and enjoys the time on the road as a healthy balance to the fishbowl life of being an AFL superstar.

## NAT FYFE'S FIBRE OF FOOTBALL VIDEOS

### BACK HOME AT LAKE GRACE



Nat Fyfe's Fibre of Football video, produced by AWI, takes the viewer back to Lake Grace in Western Australia with the AFL superstar where he explains how the country keeps him balanced and grounded. The video has been viewed more than one million times through social media since it was released in May this year. It has been also pushed out by the **Fremantle Dockers** to its fans and played on **Channel 7** several times.

### ON SAVILE ROW IN LONDON



Nat Fyfe was in London to cheer on the Wallabies for the recent Rugby World Cup. While there, he visited Savile Row in London and was dressed by bespoke tailors Gieves & Hawkes. "Merino wool is such a famous wool and such a famous sheep that when people see it on a label they instantly recognise it and there's always this kind of innate knowledge that it's a good quality wool," Davide Taub of Gieves & Hawkes explained to Nat. **B**

#### MORE INFORMATION

[www.youtube.com/AWIWoolProduction](http://www.youtube.com/AWIWoolProduction)



# GRAB SOME WOOL SUPPORTER GEAR FOR CHRISTMAS

With Christmas just a few weeks away and the 2016 Australian Football League (AFL) and National Rugby League (NRL) seasons starting in March, now is an ideal time to snap up some wool supporter gear for yourself, your family and your friends.

**Retro football jumpers and scarves, gloves and beanies** for your favourite AFL club, made from 100 per cent Australian Merino wool (see right).

**Knit Kits** in AFL club colours for child and adult beanies and scarves. The kits contain balls of 100 per cent Australian wool 14ply yarn, 7mm knitting needles, wool needle, instruction leaflet, AFL fabric badge and club fabric badge.



**Hawthorn Hawks 2015 Premiers Scarf** is Woolmark-certified and is made from 100 per cent 21 micron Merino wool, and manufactured in Melbourne.



**Wool blend jumpers** for all 18 AFL clubs as well as 16 NRL clubs, in men's and ladies' styles. Simple yet stylish, the Supporter Knit by ClubKnit is constructed from a Woolmark-certified wool/acrylic blend.



**Where can I buy the gear?** The AFL supporter gear, branded under AWI's Fibre of Football campaign, is available from club shops as well as [www.shop.afl.com.au/woollen-range/](http://www.shop.afl.com.au/woollen-range/). The NRL official product jumpers are available at selected NRL Club Stores and online at [www.NRLshop.com](http://www.NRLshop.com).

## AMBASSADOR EMMA CLAPHAM WRAPPED IN MERINO WOOL

As part of her role as ambassador of AWI's Fibre of Football campaign, Emma Clapham – partner of Geelong Cats footballing star and campaign ambassador Tom Hawkins – this year designed a limited edition Australian Merino wool scarf in the colours of the premiership cup.

Emma Clapham is the grand-daughter of legendary Boonoke studmaster Basil Clapham. Both Emma and Tom are from the Riverina district of NSW, with Emma being brought up in Deniliquin and Tom coming from a wool, cropping and rice property in Finley, NSW.

“My Grandfather was one of Australia's greatest stud masters of the Merino breed and has helped design what wool is today, so this is a huge honour to be a part of and means a lot to my family,” Emma said. “Fibre of Football is all about highlighting the deep and ongoing connections between our national game and our natural fibre.”

The scarf – now sold out – was available at the ‘AFL Women's Style Lounge’ which was a fun-filled marquee, catering to the female AFL fan, open in the MCG precinct during the four day AFL Grand Final festival.



Emma Clapham's post on Instagram in which she poses with the AFL premiership cup wool scarf she designed.





Left: The shearing shed at 'Karori'. Below: Rob and Katrina Blomfield. PHOTOS: Caleb Westwood



# BLUEY MERINO: SUPER SOFT WOOL SOURCED DIRECT FROM THE FARM

**Bluey Merino** sources from a select group of Australian Merino woolgrowers known for both their **ethical and sustainable production** methods and, most importantly, the **softness and consistency of their fibre**.

**B**luey Merino is an Australian owned activewear and outdoor clothing brand with a core focus on manufacturing garments that are super soft and provide ultimate next to skin comfort.

The company highlights the traceability of its garments through the supply chain from the farms that grow the Merino wool fibre to the manufacturing of the garments in Australia.

Until recently, the company's product range has been made from 100 per cent Australian superfine Merino wool of 18.3 micron. However, last month it launched an additional collection of even softer apparel made from Australian ultrafine Merino wool of 16.3 micron (core spun with 10 per cent high grade Nylon to improve durability).

The fabric in the new range has been tested by the Australian Wool Testing Authority using the industry's new ComfortMeter. While fabrics that are rated as providing 'everyday comfort' require a score  $\leq 600$  and elite performance activewear needs to score  $\leq 250$ , Bluey Merino's new range of activewear singlets scores an impressive 103 and 109 respectively.

The company sources direct from a select group of Australian Merino woolgrowers in the NSW Northern Tablelands and Southern Slopes and Plains for fibre that has softness, strength, lustre and character. This arrangement benefits the woolgrowers, who receive a premium.

"It's this commitment to selective sourcing,

measurement and constantly seeking a softer next-to-skin experience that we believe differentiates us from all other activewear and outdoor Merino clothing brands in Australia," Bluey Merino founder Andrew Ross says.

Knowing where the fibre comes from also enables the brand to provide transparency and tell a great marketing story to consumers.

"With the wool being fully traceable to specific family-owned farms and woolgrowers, the company can showcase the human face of farming and the farms' high animal welfare standards and environmentally friendly production practices," he said.

The super soft wool in Bluey's new range is sourced from the Blomfield family's 'Karori' property north east of Walcha.

Rob and Katrina, and their son Ed and his wife Karen, take great pride in their 6,000 sheep and have worked hard to ensure they produce the right fibre characteristics to ensure extreme softness for the new apparel.

"Our fibre is of a quality that's probably rare in the wool industry; people have always said that the wool at Karori is the softest wool they've ever seen in Australia for its micron range," Rob said.

The whole family was excited to receive its delivery of garments from the new range.

"When Andrew Ross from Bluey Merino

showed us the fabric, it was so soft to the touch and felt sensational next to the skin – we just thought 'yes, that's what we're trying to do'," Katrina said.

Rob explained how one of their regular shearers was given a Bluey singlet to wear in the shed that day.

"He had actually shorn half the sheep that particular year so he had shorn half the wool in that garment. I asked him as he left the shed how it felt wearing the singlet and he said that it was absolutely amazing – he said you couldn't feel it, it was so soft. That was just so lovely to hear, from someone that was working hard shearing the sheep, he had it against his skin and it just felt so good. That's a really good feeling for us as woolgrowers."

Traceability of the wool in Bluey Merino's apparel does not stop at the farm gate – it extends through the whole supply chain.

The wool is spun into yarn in Italy, and the rest of the manufacturing process is done completely onshore in Australia, which embeds the 'Australian Made and Owned' ethos into the company and supports the company's marketing activities.

"We track the progress of our fibre from its origin through to every stage of production, seeking to integrate the best partners at every phase of this process," Andrew said. **B**

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



# HAINSWORTH AND MERINO WOOL HELP PROTECT FROM FIRE

The iconic scarlet cloth of the thin red line of British soldiers at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 was provided by **Yorkshire textile mill Hainsworth**. Two centuries later, while still supplying wool fabric to the military, the company is also using **wool's flame resistant properties** to help protect firefighters in Britain and all across the world to Australia.

For more than 200 years British textile manufacturer AW Hainsworth has been buying Australian Merino wool for production at its textile mill in Yorkshire. The company has an illustrious history – having clothed royalty and the military, and provided the fabric that covers the famous Woosack in the British Houses of Parliament.

Hainsworth, which became a Woolmark licensee last year, now produces a wide range of quality wool textiles for uses as diverse as apparel and interior fabrics, ceremonial military uniforms, snooker and pool cloth, car roof lining and piano felt.

The company also produces innovative heat and flame-retardant fabrics that now protect emergency services around the world, including Australia, from the damaging effects of fire.

“One of the main reasons why Hainsworth is so closely aligned with the personal protective equipment (PPE) industry is because of the Australian Merino wool that we use at our mill,” Hainsworth director Rachel Hainsworth says.

“Until 1987 in the UK and slightly later in Australia, felted Merino wool cloth had been used for the manufacture of firefighters’ PPE, but while it was undoubtedly a great fibre, a downside was that it held too much moisture and consequently would become extremely heavy and wet for the wearer.

“Now, thanks to advances in textile production and finishing, the many benefits of wool are making a comeback into the world of PPE, but with a modern twist.

“Hainsworth is delighted to be playing its part in ensuring that Australian Merino wool has a big future in the manufacture of firefighters’ kit. An example of this is Hainsworth® ECO-DRY, an innovative range of lining fabrics incorporating the many benefits of wool to provide today’s firefighter with the highest possible standards of comfort when wearing their PPE.

“The unique structure of wool offers distinct properties not mimicked by any other natural or man-made fibres – properties that offer many benefits to the



The Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, **Alexander Downer AC**, on a visit facilitated by AWI to AW Hainsworth’s Yorkshire mill in August. He is pictured here with Hainsworth director **Rachel Hainsworth**.

wearer and that will not wash out or decline over time. Our commitment to using the finest Australian Merino wool is perhaps stronger today than it has ever been.”

AWI is actively involved in the R&D and promotion of wool as a flame resistant fibre for interior textiles and apparel. For example, a new video (available at [www.merino.com/fire](http://www.merino.com/fire)) produced by AWI in conjunction with the Australian Wool Testing Authority visually illustrates the effects of fire on a home furnished with wool versus non-wool items.

The Campaign for Wool also plays its part in helping consumers choose wool to furnish their homes. In June last year HRH The Prince of Wales conducted a flammability test for the media in the gardens of his London home, Clarence House. Put to the test was a wool duvet, a wool carpet and wool jacket, along with their synthetic counterparts – with wool outperforming the synthetic fibres. **B**

**MORE INFORMATION**  
[www.awhainsworth.co.uk](http://www.awhainsworth.co.uk)  
[www.protectsyou.co.uk](http://www.protectsyou.co.uk)  
[www.merino.com/fire](http://www.merino.com/fire)

## WOOL'S FLAME RESISTANCE: THE SCIENCE

Of the commonly used textile fibres including cotton, rayon, polyester, acrylic and nylon, wool is widely recognised as the most flame resistant.

Some of wool’s key flame resistant attributes include a very high ignition temperature of around 570-600°C, a high Limiting Oxygen Index (LOI) which is the measure of the amount of oxygen needed to sustain combustion, a low heat of combustion which relates to the measure of the amount of heat energy released in the burning process, and the fact that wool does not melt or stick.

Due to its naturally high nitrogen and water content, wool requires higher levels of oxygen in the surrounding environment in order to burn. In addition, wool’s highly cross-linked cell membrane structure will swell when heated to the point of combustion, forming an insulating layer that prevents the spread of flame.



# YOUNG FARMING CHAMPIONS

## BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

Meet two AWI-sponsored Young Farming Champions who are sharing their knowledge of agriculture and the wool industry with school students across the country.

Sixth generation young farmer **Dione Howard** from the Riverina is the latest Young Farming Champion, while **Bessie Thomas**, who became a Young Farming Champion in 2013, is proof that you don't necessarily have to be born on the land to try your best to make a positive difference to the agricultural industry.

## NEW CHAMPION **DIONE HOWARD** STARTS OUT

**"W**hether it's the smell of freshly turned earth or the hum of handpieces in the shearing shed, there's something irresistible about agriculture."

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

Dione is a 21-year-old mixed farmer from near Lockhart in NSW and has been involved in the family farm from a young age,

contributing to all areas of the enterprise including the family-owned Illawarra Merino Stud in particular.

"I was lucky enough to grow up in a rural community in the heart of Australia's beautiful Riverina region. We rode on the back of the ute when Dad fed sheep, sat on the sidekick seat in the header and played hide and seek as the canola flowers towered above us.

"I'm the sixth generation on our family farm which operates sheep and winter cropping enterprises. Illawarra Merino Stud was started by my great-grandfather Ernie Howard 80 years ago and today is run by my grandfather Ken and father Graeme. I've

inherited their enthusiasm for sheep and wool and I am completing my woolclassing certificate so that I can better understand the intricacies of Merino breeding and trait selection.

"I think I realised how important this 'farming' business was when I was sinking my teeth into agriculture during high school at St. Paul's College, Walla Walla. I travelled far and wide with the sheep and cattle show team, agricultural tours and participating in competitions such as the Dubbo Speech Spectacular. In doing so, I met other young people like me. These people loved everything that the land was about – whether it was what they ran on it, grew from it or put back into it."

Dione began studying Veterinary Science at Charles Sturt University in 2013 which has a large focus on agriculture. Dione says extra-curricular activities in which she has participated while at university have given her some of her most memorable experiences.

"I've been involved in AWI's annual National Merino Challenge since its inception in 2013, travelling to Dubbo, Melbourne and Adelaide to compete and was a member of the champion tertiary team in the 2014 Challenge. It enables youth with varying levels of experience to engage with almost all aspects of Merino production. I'm excited for the future of this event as it's been able to establish itself as a key date on the calendar for youth in the Merino industry.

"I have also assisted with recording for the Peter Westblade Memorial Merino Challenge and the current MerinoLink Sire Evaluation program."

Dione says she joined the Young Farming



**Dione Howard** from **Lockhart** in NSW is the latest Young Farming Champion representing the wool industry.

Champions program to help encourage young people to enter the agricultural sector when they finish school.

"I don't believe there is nearly enough emphasis placed on agriculture as a viable option for a career to year 10, 11 and 12 students in both rural and urban communities. I believe that the promotion of agriculture should begin as early as possible at a high school level and I hope to accomplish this as a Young Farming Champion.

"What I've realised about agriculture is that everyone is connected. When you eat food or choose clothes, you are making decisions that affect Australia's farmers. That's why I believe agricultural engagement is so important. It's vital that every person has the chance to access information and make an informed decision about what they're buying.

"And what better place to start than at school level? This is the age where students are taught basic experimental skills in a laboratory, research processes on the internet and communication abilities in the classroom. This is the age where they can best learn to apply all of these fundamentals to agriculture and its endless career possibilities."



Bessie Thomas outside the shearing shed on her property in far west NSW.

## BESSIE THOMAS SCHOOLS THE NEXT GENERATION

**F**ive years ago Bessie Thomas from Queensland knew little about farming. But after falling for a woolgrower and moving to far west NSW to live and work on 30,000 hectares of grazing land, she is now a keen and vocal advocate for the wool industry.

"I don't come from a farming background; in fact I'm actually a journalist. But I fell in love with a handsome traveller, who turned out to be a farmer's son," Bessie says. "So I moved from the tropics of North Queensland to join his family on their little slice of outback paradise more than 100km from the closest town of Wilcannia.

"I went from wearing heels and skirts to work writing the television news, to wearing boots and jeans to work, helping my partner and his family run up to 20,000 head of Merinos across three properties – and I'm loving it. I have developed a passion for life on the land, and wool-growing in particular, that borders on crazed at times!"

Bessie became a Young Farming Champion sponsored by AWI in 2013 and through the program, run by Art4Agriculture, has travelled to schools in the state passing on her zeal for wool to the next generation and helping bridge the gap between city and country.

The first school she visited was Hamilton North Public School in Newcastle which set the tone for her experience as wool ambassador.

"I had one of the most fantastic experiences

of my life there. Nothing prepared me for the reception that I received from the children and teachers. To suddenly walk among swarms of children that are yelling, 'It's Bessie! She's here!' and singing 'She is a champion' to the tune of 'We are the champions' is crazy, unreal and exhilarating, and the first morning bell hadn't even rung yet!

"My first morning was spent touring the classes – first grades 5 and 6, then 3 and 4, and then K, 1 and 2 – giving my presentation to the students. This was well received and I ran out of time with each class to answer all their questions. They wanted to know everything, from 'How much grass do sheep eat each day?' to 'How do you get them into the shearing shed?' They were enthralled and exceptionally interested in my stories of farming, sheep, and everything to do with how wool makes it from farm to fashion.

"I then joined the all-school assembly where students took the opportunity to ask me more questions that they'd thought of after my classroom presentations. They wanted to discuss every little detail of farm life and growing wool... such a huge topic to fit into just a few days!"

Bessie also spent time with the teacher and five Year 4 students who make up the editorial team of the school's Archibull blog. The girls picked Bessie's brain for industry knowledge, taking down notes and discussing more in-depth topics such as different breeds of sheep, a year in the life of a sheep and the

various properties of wool.

A week after Bessie's school visit, AWI also took some sheep and a shearer to Hamilton North for a shearing demonstration. The feedback from the children was outstanding.

Bessie says it's easy for farmers, especially ones so far removed from cities, consumers and even the rest of the supply chain process, to fall into the habit of feeling unappreciated.

"My two days at Hamilton North – and the other schools I've visited – proved the exact opposite. We are so genuinely welcomed, loved and appreciated. Consumers really are interested in hearing our stories and understanding why producing food and fibre is such a vital part of all their lives. I wish all farmers had the opportunity to experience this the way I did.

"Communities and the agricultural sector have a symbiotic relationship, one cannot thrive without the other, and I believe there could be a lot more understanding and appreciation for both. Building bonds between the two will ensure the continued survival and success of our agricultural industries."

### MORE INFORMATION

[www.wool.com/YFC](http://www.wool.com/YFC)  
[www.art4agriculture.com.au/yfc](http://www.art4agriculture.com.au/yfc)  
[www.facebook.com/bessieatburrigan](https://www.facebook.com/bessieatburrigan)  
[www.hamiltonnorthsarchibull2014.wordpress.com](http://www.hamiltonnorthsarchibull2014.wordpress.com)



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# R&D INTO LOW COST, NON-SURGICAL 'CERVICAL' ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION USING FROZEN SEMEN

A 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.


**C**ervical AI is a cheaper, less invasive and simpler alternative to the current industry practice of veterinary administered laparoscopic AI. Currently, laparoscopic AI is necessary for the insemination of frozen-thawed semen due to the inability of this sperm type to move through the ewe's cervix and fertilise available eggs in the upper tract.

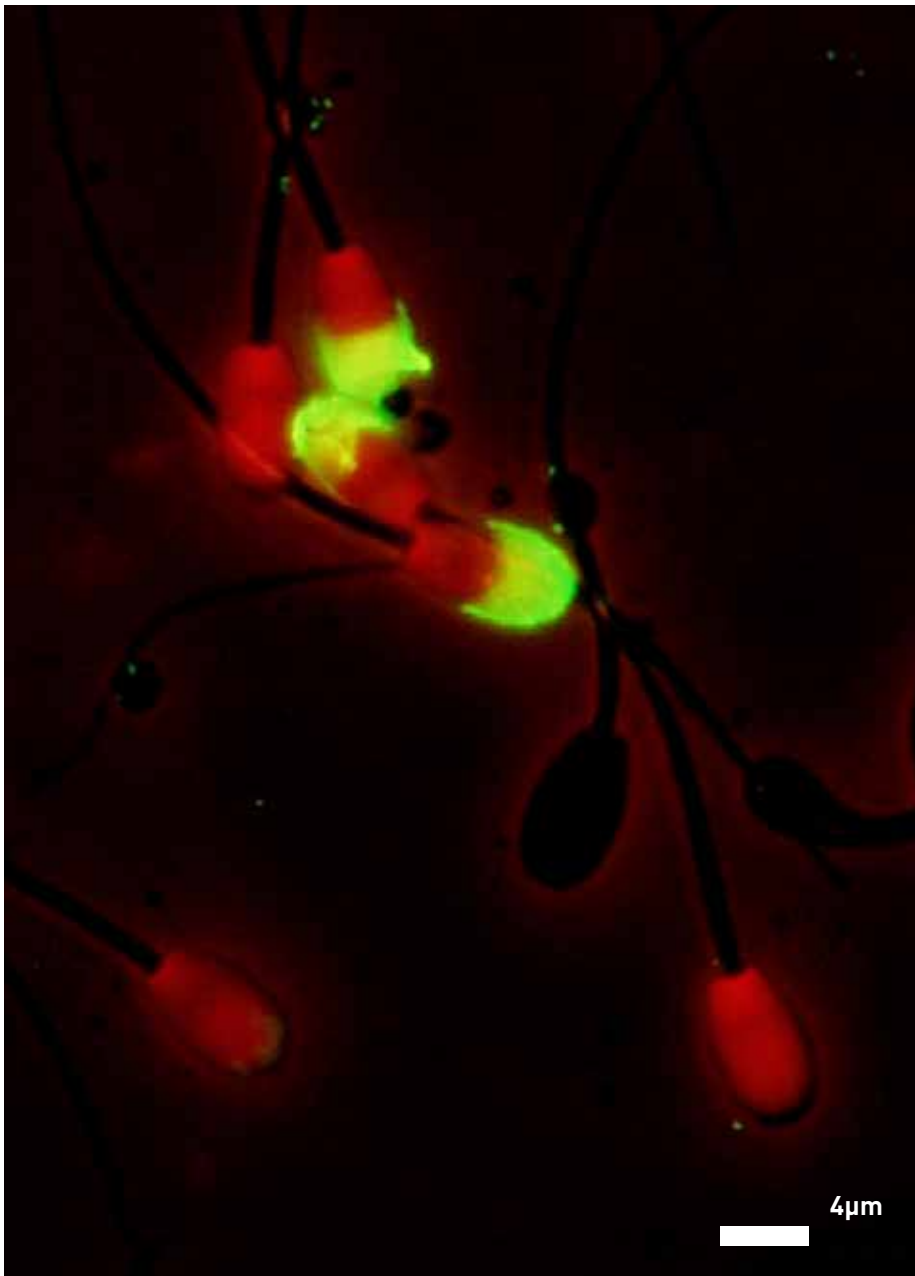
The deposition of hundreds of millions of viable 'frozen-thawed' sperm into the cervix results in a conception rate of only 20 per cent. This contrasts to the 70 per cent achieved with natural service, or cervical AI with 'fresh' semen, or laparoscopic AI with 'frozen-thawed' semen. The aim of this project is to investigate why seemingly fertile frozen-thawed ram sperm which are motile and viable are not able to traverse the ewe's cervix. Why are fresh sperm able to cross the cervix into the uterus but frozen-thawed sperm cannot?

To date, state-of-the-art proteomic techniques and novel in vivo cell imaging systems have been used to investigate the issue. Through this research, major progress has been made in the basic understanding of the composition of seminal plasma, the sperm membrane and cervical mucus as well as the interactions between them.

Use of advanced in utero, in vivo and in vitro sperm analyses have revealed that the survival and transport of ram sperm through the cervix of the ewe is not linked to their motility or velocity but rather their exposure to seminal plasma. This project is now focused on identifying the seminal plasma components that increase cervical penetration and increase fertility.

The anticipated return to woolgrowers from this research is expected to come primarily through (1) a reduction in the cost per ewe of AI, and (2) an increase in the number of ewes conceiving to AI from very high genetic merit sires thereby accelerating genetic progress throughout the industry.

This work is being funded by NSW Stud Merino Breeders' Association Trust, AWI and the University of Sydney. 



Assessment of sperm quality by fluorescent staining. Damaged cells are red or red/green while non-damaged cells are not stained. The non-damaged frozen-thawed sperm still cannot navigate the cervix well and only 20% of ewes conceive following cervical AI. Research is focused on identifying the cervical penetration trait within seminal plasma to rectify this problem and increase fertility.

**MORE INFORMATION**  
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(02) 9351 3363



# CHOOSING AND USING DRENCHES

- In Australia's moderate and high rainfall areas, drenching is an essential practice to maintain health, productivity and good animal welfare.
- Choosing the right drench for the right occasion is critical to achieve the benefits of effective control of worms and of keeping each drench group working on your farm for as many years as possible.
- Unfortunately, on many farms, drench resistance has already developed, making it more difficult to control worms. With good choices, you can greatly slow further development of drench resistance on your farm.

## KNOW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR DRENCHES

The most important step for correct drench choice is to know how effective each drench is on your property because it's unlikely to be the same on the property next door. A drench resistance test is not expensive—about 20c/head/year if you have 2,000 sheep and cheaper per head the more sheep you have; that's generally less than the cost of giving one drench to your flock. The steps are not hard, but it is a two-person job – if you don't have help on the farm, buddy up with a neighbour and help each other to do a *DrenchTest*.

Simply test specific single actives alongside a non-drenched group, and your laboratory can calculate the effectiveness of any drench combination you might choose to use in the coming few years. **Step-by-step instructions are on WormBoss.**

## WHETHER OR WHEN TO DRENCH

Aside from quarantine and strategic drenches (which differ between regions), such as the 'first summer drench' and the pre-lambing and weaning drenches, use your regional *WormBoss Drench Decision Guide* combined with a *WormTest* to decide when other drenching is needed.

## CHOOSING DRENCHES

Each time you need to drench, there are five principles that should be integrated into your drench choice:



Using drenches wisely is an important part of a sustainable and effective worm control program and with careful use you can slow down the development of drench resistance on your property.

1. *Use drenches most effective on your property as shown by a *DrenchTest* or *DrenchCheck-Day10*. The more effective a drench is, the fewer drench-resistant worms will remain in the sheep after treatment.*
2. *Use a combination of two or more drench groups, as the chance of a worm being resistant to all drench groups in the combination is much lower than for each individual group on its own.*
3. *Use short-acting treatments and restrict*
4. *the use of persistent products to specific purposes and high worm-risk times of year. There is little need to use mid-length or long-acting treatments if sheep are being moved to low worm-risk paddocks.*
4. *Rotate\* among all effective drench groups each time a mob is drenched (and for each paddock). An effective drench from a different group may kill worms that were resistant to the last treatment. These may be worms that survived treatment in the sheep or were picked up from the paddock.*

- Choose a drench with an appropriate meat withholding period (WHP) and export slaughter interval (ESI) according to the time left before the sheep may go to slaughter.

\*When rotating drenches the current drench would ideally exclude any groups that were used the previous time. However, in practice, ensure the current drench has at least one effective active from a drench group that was not used the previous time.

The 'Drenches' section on WormBoss allows you to search for drenches and find practical information about each drench.

## USING DRENCHES

Good drenching practices are also a key factor in slowing development of drench resistance. Each time sheep are drenched, resistant worms survive and increase in amount and proportion on your property.

The following five principles for drench use can limit how many resistant worms survive.

- Avoid unnecessary drenching, especially:
  - adults
  - during droughts or prolonged dry periods
  - immediately before or after moving sheep onto very clean, low worm-risk paddocks (such as ungrazed cereal stubbles or paddocks that have been sheep-free for extended periods). See points 5.i and 5.ii below for further discussion on this.
- Calibrate drench guns to ensure the correct dose is delivered.
- Calculate the dose based on the heaviest animals in the mob. Split mobs for drenching if there is a large weight range, so sheep are not under-dosed.
- Follow the label instructions to ensure correct dose and use of treatments.
- If sheep must be drenched onto low worm-risk paddocks, such as lambing, weaning or winter weaner paddocks, do both of the following:
  - When the sheep eventually leave these low worm-risk paddocks, treat them with an effective drench that has at least one effective active from a drench group that was not used when the sheep first went onto the paddock. The aim is to remove any drench-resistant worms surviving in the sheep after the first drench.
  - Ensure that the next time the paddock is grazed it is with a different mob of sheep. This second mob should have a moderate worm burden and their last treatment must be different from the treatment used on the first mob that grazed the low worm-risk paddock. This will dilute drench-resistant worms already on the paddock with more susceptible worms that the second mob is carrying.

# wormboss

WormBoss is an online tool at [www.wormboss.com.au](http://www.wormboss.com.au) developed by AWI, MLA and the Sheep CRC to help producers optimise the timing and effectiveness of drenching and other worm management practices.

The aim of the website is to reduce drenching and minimise the onset of drench resistance while increasing animal productivity, profitability and welfare.

WormBoss is one of the three online products, along with LiceBoss and FlyBoss, that are consolidated (with AWI and MLA funding) into the one co-ordinated ParaBoss program.

Subscribe to the monthly ParaBoss News e-bulletin at [www.paraboss.com.au](http://www.paraboss.com.au). Written by regional experts, it includes monthly state and regional outlooks on worms, lice and flies, as well as feature articles.

Note that grazing with cattle will not dilute the proportion of drench-resistant worms, but will decrease the total number of worm larvae on this paddock.

## QUARANTINE DRENCHING

Finally, when new sheep are being brought on to the property, you should assume they are carrying drench-resistant worms. Avoid adding someone else's problems to your own – quarantine drench the sheep as soon as they arrive.

- 'Quarantine' drench all sheep (including rams) new to the property.
  - Use a combination of no less than 4 unrelated drench actives with at least one of these being the newest drench actives: monepantel (Zolvix®) or derquantel (with abamectin – Startect®) because the worms are least likely to be resistant to these. This can be done using multi-active (combination) and/or single-active products at the same treatment – up the race with one product, then up the race again with the next.
  - Do not mix different drenches unless the label states you can, as different products may be incompatible.
- Quarantine the sheep after treatment.
  - Hold the sheep in quarantine in yards (small mobs) or a secure paddock (larger mobs) for at least 3 days to allow worm eggs present at the time of drenching to pass out of the gut.
  - Provide adequate feed and water.
  - Afterwards, keep this paddock free of sheep, goats or alpacas for at least 3 months in summer or 6 months in cooler months.
- After quarantine, release the sheep onto a paddock that is likely to be contaminated with worm larvae due to grazing by other sheep. This will 'dilute' (lower the proportion of) resistant worms surviving treatment with worm larvae already on

your property.

- WormTest the imported sheep 10-14 days after drenching for added confidence that treatment was successful.
- Get expert advice on up-to-date recommendations for quarantine treatments. These will evolve as the drench resistance picture changes. **B**

### MORE INFORMATION

[www.wormboss.com.au](http://www.wormboss.com.au)  
[www.facebook.com/paraboss.com.au](https://www.facebook.com/paraboss.com.au)



Choosing drenches wisely is an important part of a sustainable and effective worm control program.  
 PHOTO: Deb Maxwell



# BOOSTING RABBIT BIOCONTROL

The approaching roll out, **co-funded by AWI**, of a strain of **rabbit calicivirus** new to Australia will boost existing biological control agents that are already in the environment and help **woolgrowers increase their productivity**.



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

**T**he upcoming national roll out in Australia of a naturally occurring overseas strain of rabbit calicivirus called RHDV K5 has been bolstered by the Australian Government's announcement in August of an additional \$1.2 million grant to the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (IA CRC) to help biocontrol of wild rabbits.

The funding complements the \$1.7 million funding already provided to the IA CRC by AWI and other industry partners, along with the \$6 million in-kind investment by the IA CRC's research partners, all towards the RHD Boost initiative that is enhancing existing biological control agents.

The RHDV K5 release is currently pending Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) approval. Approval is expected in 2015/16, with the proposed release to follow in the autumn of 2016.

Minister for Agriculture, Barnaby Joyce, said the Government's additional grant reflected their commitment to supporting a collaborative approach to pest animal management and research.

"Effective management of pest animals is critical to productivity and profitability at the farmgate," Minister Joyce said.

"Rabbits cause over \$200 million in damage across the country each year, much of that on Australian farms. They actively compete with Australian livestock and – particularly during drought – can strip pastures bare. Just two rabbits per hectare are enough to stop plant regeneration.

"The release of rabbit haemorrhagic disease virus in 1996-98 reduced populations by more than 50 per cent in some regions of Australia.

The benefits to agriculture have been estimated to be worth \$6 billion to the nation to date, or an average \$350 million a year.

“It was a fantastic example of the real-world benefits that strong R&D investment delivers, however the virus has, over time, led to have a patchy distribution.

“A new strain of calicivirus has been identified, and now subject to appropriate approvals, we will be ready to release it nationally to assist farmers, the environment and rural communities.

“I commend all of our partners in this project including Australian Wool Innovation, Meat and Livestock Australia, state and territory governments, particularly New South Wales who is the lead project proponent and major investor, University of Canberra, University of Adelaide, CSIRO and Foundation for Rabbit Free Australia.”

RHDV K5 is not a newly developed virus; it is a Korean variant of the existing virus already widespread in Australia. It is a naturally occurring variant of RHDV – the virus has not been altered by humans in any way.

RHDV is predominately spread by insects,

such as bushflies and blowflies. Direct contact between a rabbit and a rabbit carcass with RHDV is also an avenue of spread. Animals that predate on rabbit carcasses such as foxes, dogs and cats may also excrete the virus in their faeces.

No variant of RHDV1 has ever been found to cause infection in any other animal except the European rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*). Scientific evidence has also shown that even predatory animals which eat rabbits (infected or dead from RHDV1) will not develop an infection.

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

AWI On-farm Program Manager Ian Evans said the RHDV K5 release will boost existing biological control agents that are already out in the environment.

“This is a national initiative to better control rabbits, particularly in areas where the current strain of RHDV has not had as much success, like the cool-wet regions of Australia,” Ian said.

“Population reductions are anticipated to be improved by anywhere from 0-40% depending on location and susceptibility of the rabbit population to RHDV K5, but knockdowns like those seen with the release of calicivirus in 1996/97 are not expected.

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

As well as helping to lessen the impacts of rabbits on production and biodiversity, RHDV K5 provides improved animal welfare due to a faster death than the current variant of RHDV. Basically the rabbits end up with ‘cold-like’ symptoms, become lethargic and then die quickly.

B

#### MORE INFORMATION

[www.pestsmart.org.au/?p=62706](http://www.pestsmart.org.au/?p=62706)

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED IN THE RHDV K5 RELEASE

Farmers, landholders, community groups, councils and everyone across the country are invited to express their interest in participating in the final stages of the research to support the release of RHDV K5.

“You can take part by nominating to be a monitoring and/or release site,” CEO of the Invasive Animals CRC Andreas Glanznig says. “You can also get involved by downloading the free RabbitScan App to your phone and map rabbit sightings, helping us better understand where rabbits are.

“The more people who are involved across Australia, the more our ability to monitor rabbits and deliver effective pest management across the country will improve – we need your help.

“Rabbits don’t stop at fence lines and we need landholders, Landcare groups and councils alike to take a coordinated community-led approach to assist in monitoring the effectiveness of our management methods.

“An integrated approach is crucial – RHDV K5 is not a silver bullet. The data collected by the community will be used to provide advice for land managers and farmers on the effectiveness of their management programs and best practice approaches

for future management methods.”

Indicating they would like to participate in the project, the Surf Coast Shire Council in Victoria – which includes wool-growing areas around Winchelsea – has already received responses from more than 30 landholders who have expressed an interest as rabbit monitoring sites.

One of these landholders and shire councillors Heather Wellington said she hears on a daily basis from her constituency the need to improve rabbit management strategies due to the damage they are causing, not only to the environment but also to agriculture and farmers’ livelihoods.

“Rabbit management in our shire has always been a challenge and we welcome research into any new tools in development.

“We also feel it is our responsibility as a council to facilitate community-led action and we have already had a lot of interest from Landcare groups and landholders in our area to do this.”

#### MORE INFORMATION:

To get involved, visit [www.pestsmart.org.au/get-involved-as-a-monitoring-site](http://www.pestsmart.org.au/get-involved-as-a-monitoring-site). The RabbitScan App can be downloaded from [www.feralscan.org.au/rabbitscan](http://www.feralscan.org.au/rabbitscan)

## FREE RESOURCES on PestSmart Connect website [www.pestsmart.org.au](http://www.pestsmart.org.au)

The new PestSmart Connect website from the Invasive Animals CRC provides a toolkit of free materials – including guides, videos, case studies and links to assistance – to help woolgrowers and land managers combat a range of pest animals including rabbits, wild dogs, foxes and feral pigs.

#### AWI co-funded rabbit control guides on the website include:

**Rabbits:** a threat to conservation and natural resource management – this 16-page guide helps farmers to make a quick assessment of whether rabbits are a problem on their property.

**Glovebox Guide for Managing Rabbits** – this 24-page guide provides information on best practice rabbit management for farmers and other land managers.







# COORDINATION VITAL FOR WILD DOG CONTROL

Participation in a **community wild dog control group** has helped **Penny and Fraser Barry** reduce predation on the historic 4,000 hectare Bindi Station in **East Gippsland**.

Since starting to **work together** to collectively help protect their sheep flocks from wild dog attack, producers in Victoria's high country around **Swifts Creek** have managed to reduce predation.

**F**raser and Penny Barry run the historic 'Bindi Station' in the East Gippsland of Victoria, which has been in Penny's family for more than 100 years. Their experience of the devastating effects of wild dogs is typical of many in the area. While they are now successfully controlling the problem, their situation had been grim.

"The dogs have given us a bit of a caning," Fraser says. "There was a stage when we thought we might have to get out of sheep because of the numbers that we were losing. It just kept on getting worse and after the 2003 fires it just escalated to a degree where we were losing probably 1,500 sheep a year."

But it wasn't just the livestock and financial losses that were a burden; having to always focus on repelling wild dog attacks was having an emotional impact.

"We didn't sleep because it was a constant program of trying to find where the dogs were coming in, or attempting to shoot a dog in the morning and at night. All I ever did was think about dogs and so the problem was that we didn't look at any other facet of our business.

"You feel so helpless because you can't do anything about it, and you just think 'I'm doing as much as I can, how am I physically

going to do any more?' and then all of a sudden you just feel 'I can't cope.'"

And the effect was not just felt by the producers working the land.

"The wives are picking all this up, the children feed on it, so the whole problem is a community problem," Penny said. "We knew we had to change or we were going out the back door fast."

## CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

Fraser says the change for the better began when the local community began to take a collective approach to wild dog control. Rather than each producer trying individually to tackle the issue, a 'nil-tenure landscape level' approach with the local community was adopted – this highlights the benefit of focusing on the 'common problem' rather than attributing ownership of the dogs to individual land managers.

"Once we started to take ownership of the problem, we could then actually start to find ways to handle it. We only had to take the first step and acknowledge there are other communities that are having success, which means we must be able to have success if we look and see what they are doing and take from them what will adapt to our place.

"There's been a big change in the process of combatting wild dogs in the past few years and I think people are really learning that together we can all achieve more. We've previously been isolated and had traditional views of how to handle it, but through the community engagement process we actually are learning strategies that have worked elsewhere.

"Last year we lost no sheep to dogs and this year we have had only one dog inside our electric fence, so we actually sleep at night now."

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"On Bindi, our predation problem has really fallen away to nearly zero."

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As can be seen at Swifts Creek, a collective approach to controlling wild dogs can be beneficial, but it can take time and on-going vigilance and measures are needed to keep wild dog numbers under control.

Through a truly consultative process local farmers can not only share in the 'ownership' of the decision-making but can identify and pursue the resources (baits, trap kits, contractors, fencing etc) required to successfully implement a local and regional solution.

## AWI FUNDING AVAILABLE

Funding is available under AWI's 'Community Wild Dog Control Initiative' to individual groups to undertake wild dog control activities. Funding can be directed by groups to fill gaps they have identified in their control plans.

To apply, groups should download and complete the application form at [www.wool.com/wilddogs](http://www.wool.com/wilddogs) and submit it along with a plan, a map and a project budget to [wilddogs@wool.com](mailto:wilddogs@wool.com). Applications are open to new groups as well as those groups that have previously received funding from AWI.

If you need clarification or assistance please contact Ian Evans at AWI on 0427 773 005 or [ian.evans@wool.com](mailto:ian.evans@wool.com)

# WA AG STUDENTS GET HANDS-ON WITH MERINOS

The Stud Merino Breeders' Association of WA with support from AWI is helping Agricultural College students from Western Australia become more involved with the Merino sheep industry by holding competitions to further their practical skills.

**S**tudents from agricultural colleges in Western Australia have competed in the second running of the AWI Future Sheep Breeders Challenge run by the Stud Merino Breeders' Association of WA (SMBAWA).

Teams from the WA Colleges of Agriculture in Cunderdin, Harvey and Narrogin, as well as from Esperance Senior High School's Farm Training Centre gathered at the Perth Show in September to compete in the wether competition.

Earlier in the year, in March, each team chose six wethers from Hyfield Merino stud in Kojonup for the competition. Industry experts were on hand to advise the students on classing and the nutrition and environment requirements to optimise the condition of wool, wool cut and bodyweight. Over the following six months the teams prepared the sheep for the competition in Perth, at which the top four wethers were presented by each team.

The Challenge involved wether measurement and preparation competitions that were judged by the president of the SMBAWA Steven Bolt of 'Claypans' at Corrigin and committee member Grantly Mullan of 'Eastville Park' at Dudinin.

The top honours went to the all-female team from the WA College of Agriculture Narrogin that had the best combined scores out of both classes. Second and third places were taken out by the WA Colleges of Agriculture in Cunderdin and Harvey respectively.

The Narrogin team comprised Year 10 student Melanie Were of Kellerberrin, Year 11 students and twin sisters Lauren and Kirrily Rayner of Brookton and Year 12 student Paula Hardingham of Kojonup.

Mr Bolt said the Challenge provides an opportunity for the next generation of sheep breeders in Western Australia to get actively involved with the Merino sheep industry.

"The Stud Merino Breeders' Association here in WA had over the years observed the success of similar initiatives around the country, such as those in South Australia and at Dubbo in NSW, and wanted a competition that would fit Western Australia," he said.

"With support from AWI, we now have this Merino wether competition, for which the students have shown a lot of enthusiasm. They have put a lot of hard work into presenting the wethers. The initiative has opened their eyes to the raft of different

opportunities there are in the wool industry."

The SMBAWA also held in August – again with AWI support – the Katanning Schools Challenge in which participating Agricultural Colleges each sent a team of eight students to the competition at the Katanning Sheep Show, with two students each taking part in four categories: Merino sheep classing, prime lamb assessment, shearing and wool handling.

AWI's Stuart Hodgson judged the Merino sheep classing at Katanning with assistance from WA sheep classer Hugh Warden, with other industry specialists acting as judges in the relevant categories.

"It is the first time the Katanning Schools Challenge has been run and full credit must go to Stephen Bolt and his hard working committee for running both this event and the AWI Future Sheep Breeders Challenge," Stuart said.

"They are both very worthwhile initiatives that AWI was pleased to support. A very pleasing aspect is that they are very hands-on and practical, with the Western Australian students very enthusiastic and willing to learn."



The winner of the AWI Future Sheep Breeders Challenge was **WA College of Agriculture Narrogin** – represented by students **Melanie Were**, **Paula Hardingham**, and sisters **Lauren** and **Kirrily Reyner**, pictured with the WA Stud Merino Breeders' Association's **Grantly Mullan** and **Steven Bolt** with AWI director **David Webster**.



# ELMORE FIELD DAYS

## TRIAL DUAL PURPOSE MERINOS ARE TOP PERFORMERS



The trial is run by the **Elmore Field Days** in cooperation with the **Campaspe Lamb Producers Group**, pictured at lamb marking. Left to right: Pat Johnston, Roger Kemp, David Lees, Peter Safstrom, Erica Schelfhorst, Frank Oliver, Max Williams, Bill Johnston, Glen Rathjen, Rod Fiedler, Ged McCormick, Kieran Ransom and Rob Williamson.

**How do sheep types compare for prime lamb and for wool production?** This question has been debated by sheep producers for years. The Elmore Field Days trial, which began in January 2009, has published its final report that will help sheep producers determine the merits of a number of ewe breed alternatives for prime lamb and wool production.

### FAST FACTS

- The Elmore Field Days trial 'Ewes for the Future: Lambs, Wool and Profit' compared five breeds of ewes for their lifetime production of meat and wool.
- The main characters being compared were lambing percentages, lamb growth and wool production.
- The final results indicate dual purpose Merinos to be a very profitable sheep system for northern Victoria.

In the trial five breed types of ewes were joined to terminal sires, either White Suffolk or Poll Dorset for six years; their first joining was as ewe lambs. The ewe breed types were:

#### BORDER LEICESTER X MERINO CROSS

The most common prime lamb mother in northern Victoria; ewes were sourced with the help of the SuperBorder\$ group.

#### MERINOS, LODDON VALLEY

The second most common prime lamb mother in northern Victoria; based on

Peppin bloodlines with some influence from South Australian bloodlines. Ewes were sourced with the help of the Loddon Valley Stud Merino Breeders Association.

These local ewes were compared to three dual purpose Merinos that have been recently introduced to the district.

#### CENTRE PLUS MERINO

Centre Plus is a group breeding scheme and Merino stud in Central West NSW that aims to produce multipurpose sheep. Sheep were sourced with help from the group.

#### DOHNE

The Dohne Merino is a dual-purpose breed developed in South Africa. In 2008 the Dohne breed was in the early stages of introduction to Australia from South Africa. Two properties supplied F2 ewe lambs while the third property supplied F3 ewes. Sheep were sourced with the assistance of the Australian Dohne Breeders Association.

#### SAMM

The South African Meat Merino is a dual-purpose sheep originally bred in South Africa. In 2008 the SAMM breed was in the

early stages of introduction to Australia. Two properties supplied F3 ewe lambs while the third supplied a mix of F2s and F3s. Sheep were sourced with the assistance of the Prime SAMM Breeders' Society of Australia.

### RESULTS

The ewes were run together as one mob except at lambing. The results presented in the tables opposite only cover the five adult years. The first year joining as ewe lambs occurred only seven weeks after their arrival on the Elmore farm and their body weights and age were the main reasons for the breed differences.

Lambing percentages, lamb growth, wool and easy care characters are all highly relevant to improving profitability, but no single ewe type excelled in all compartments. The main results and estimated returns are shown in the tables.

Lambs from the Dohne and Centre Plus ewes were only 1.5 kg lighter than the lambs from Border Leicester x Merino ewes on the date of the first lamb sale. The Centre Plus ewes lambed 20 per cent better than the local Merinos and Dohnes; they were only 16 per cent behind the Border Leicester x Merino ewes. The Loddon Valley Merino and Centre

Plus Merino had the greatest wool returns whereas Border Leicester x Merino and SAMP had the greatest lamb returns. When wool and meat were combined, the SAMP and Centre Plus were equivalent and the Border Leicester x Merino was close. However, returns per hectare from the Border Leicester x Merino and SAMP would be reduced when accounting for their higher feed intake, due to higher number of lambs reared and heavier ewes. However indications are that dual purpose Merinos with good wool, reproduction and lamb growth are likely to be the most profitable alternative in this Elmore environment. Whole flock systems analyses using models such as GrassGro are needed to fully investigate whole farm profitability.

The statistical analyses by University of Adelaide researchers clearly show the trial had sufficient numbers to validly test sheep reproduction, weights and wool production. They are a reliable guide to the reproductive performance of the flocks of origin as the property of origin variance was very small and several trials have indicated the nutrition of the young ewe, from a foetus to weaning, has zero or small long term effects on subsequent reproduction under commercial farm conditions.

This project was funded and conducted by the Elmore Field Days Inc together with The Campaspe Prime Lamb Producers Group with professional help from three organisations and six product support sponsors. AWI provided funds for statistical analyses. 

**MORE INFORMATION**

The full results are on the Elmore Field Days website at [www.elmorefielddays.com.au](http://www.elmorefielddays.com.au). The 12 page summary report contains the key findings. A 52 page report gives the full details.

**Main results for the five adult years from 2010 to 2014**

Breed Group	Border Leicester x Merino	Merino, Loddon Valley	Centre Plus Merino	Dohne	SAMP	Least significant difference
Ewe weight at joining (kg)	79.6	63.6	70.7	70.6	79.7	8.1
Clean fleece weight (kg)	3.9	4.8	4.1	3.5	2.6	0.4
Fibre diameter mean (um)	30.3	20.9	19.0	20.8	24.4	1.3
Foetuses scanned per ewe joined	158%	129%	148%	126%	161%	18%
Lambs born per ewe joined	150%	116%	138%	120%	156%	9%
Lambs marked per ewe joined	132%	96%	116%	96%	132%	6%
Lamb weight in spring (kg)	47.7	44.3	46.1	46.3	48.5	0.5
Wrinkle, neck & body (score 1-5)	1.2	2.5	2.3	1.6	1.1	0.2

**Yearly returns per ewe from lamb and wool production with the average DSE estimate per ewe-lambs unit; average 5 years as adults\***

Breed Group	Border Leicester x Merino	Merino, Loddon Valley	Centre Plus Merino	Dohne	SAMP
Lamb returns, \$/ewe	\$154.54	\$102.32	\$130.04	\$108.68	\$157.08
Wool returns, \$/ewe	\$19.94	\$52.96	\$49.67	\$38.70	\$23.17
Total returns, \$/ewe	\$174.48	\$155.28	\$179.71	\$147.39	\$180.25
DSE rating per ewe-lambs unit	3.07	2.21	2.62	2.42	3.06
Total returns, \$/DSE	57	70	69	61	59

\* The wool and lamb returns per ewe were calculated each year using average prices over the previous 12 months. Lamb returns per ewe were calculated from lambing percentage, lamb live weight, dressing percentage and skin value. Wool returns reflected clean fleece weight and fibre diameter differences.



Ewes penned for regular husbandry.



# FOR SAFER ON FARM SOLUTIONS

# THINK - Heiniger

## TPW XPRESS WOOLPRESS

- ▶ Fully compliant safety guard
- ▶ Fully automatic bale pinning and bale ejection
- ▶ Fast pack locking system
- ▶ Fast cycle time
- ▶ Contamination free short square bales
- ▶ Fully integrated scale system
- ▶ Woolbale trolley (optional)



## EVO SHEARING PLANT

- ▶ Unique electronic safety switch designed to eliminate shearing handpiece 'lock-up'
- ▶ Integrated soft start - increases safety and improves shearing handpiece life
- ▶ Quick release downtube
- ▶ No risk of electric shock
- ▶ Winner of 2 Australian Worksafe Industry Awards



## BACKEASE 600 HYDRAULIC HOIST

View You Tube demos at:

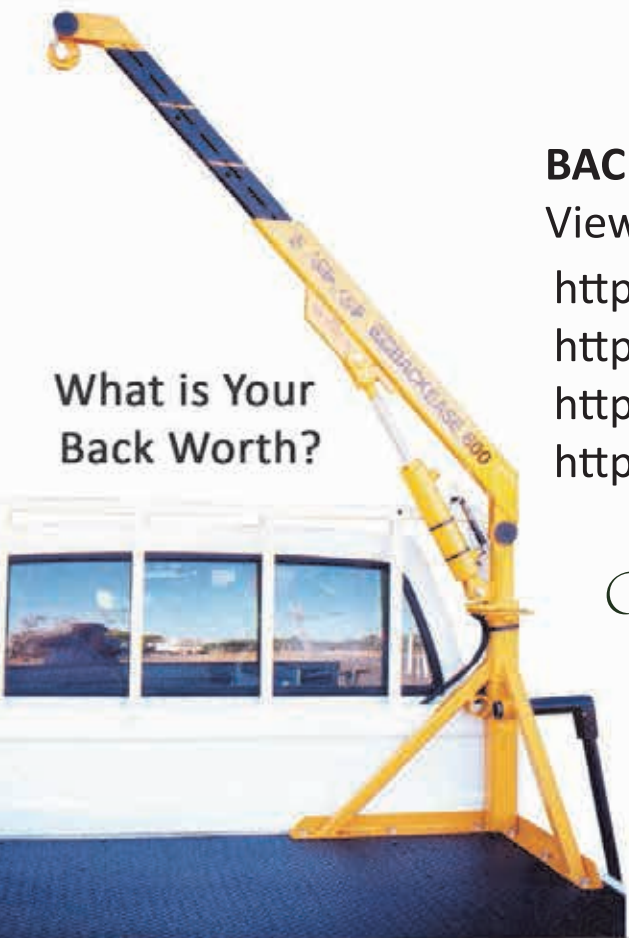
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i94MgbJZlpU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NksY5gvgYAc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HC55VLFE0wM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7G7QsPucYwM>

What is Your  
Back Worth?



*We would like to take this opportunity to  
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Sydney Lawrie of 'Collandra North', Tumby Bay; Heiniger SA sales manager **Darren McEvoy** and AWI shearing industry development coordinator **Jim Murray** with some poll Merino ram lambs shorn with a cover comb. PHOTO: Stock Journal.

# COVER COMBS IN THE HEAT OF ACTION

**Shearing cover combs** leave **two to three weeks' wool growth** which can help protect freshly shorn sheep from heat and sunburn in peak summer weather as well as from the cold in wintery conditions.

**A**s Australia moves into the middle of summer, woolgrowers might want to consider the option of their shearers using cover combs to help protect their sheep from peak temperatures.

Cover combs are only a nine-tooth comb, so there is wider gap between the cutting edges than the normal thirteen-tooth flat comb used in most sheds. This leaves about two to three weeks' growth of wool on the sheep after shearing which provides the sheep with thermal protection from the elements.

While cover combs have been around for a long time, their design has improved in recent years and their adoption is slowly increasing.

Already used in some regions during the middle of winter, such as the New England region of NSW, cover combs have traditionally been used to protect sheep from the cold. However, they could also be useful during hot summers to protect sheep from the heat and sunburn.

AWI shearing industry development coordinator Jim Murray says there could be advantages in using a cover comb when extreme weather conditions are forecast in the immediate period after shearing.

"If woolgrowers know that a big change in weather is expected – cold or heat – it is worth woolgrowers and shearers discussing what type of comb might be best," he said.

"Flat combs will still very much have a place in the shearing shed. Cover combs are simply

another tool for the shearing team and the producer to consider.

**The advantage for the woolgrower of cover combs is that their sheep with a layer of wool on them go through tough conditions better.**

"For the shearer, cover combs enter and are pushed through the wool easier than a flat comb, and there is also less chance for the shearer to accidentally nick the skin because the wool cutter is up off the skin more.

"The shearer holds the handpiece slightly different to normal but it is quick to learn and easy to use, especially if the sheep are in good condition. It takes about the same time to shear each sheep."

Woolgrower Sydney Lawrie of 'Collandra North' on the Eye Peninsula of South Australia believes cover combs can be useful to help protect freshly shorn sheep on his property from sunburn and extreme heat.

"Earlier this year we shored all our rams and young ewes using cover combs to leave a bit of protective wool on the sheep. The shearing went well, with the shearers having no problem adapting to the new combs.

"I think the use of cover combs benefitted the sheep as they didn't have the pink look that freshly shorn sheep with a flat comb can sometimes have which can be prone to sunburn.

"We'll be shearing our ewes at the end of January which is only a couple of months before lambing. We want to minimise any stress for the ewes at this time, and because sunburn has the potential to be sore and stop the ewes eating as well, we'll be using cover combs to leave a couple of weeks' wool on them.

"This will help ensure the ewes have as good a condition score as they can at lambing, which is important to help increase lamb survival and marking." **B**



Gun shearer **Damien Boyle** from Western Australia doesn't have any problem with cover combs. In October, he won the New Zealand Merino Championship's Open final – a competition in which cover combs are used – for a sixth time in a row. PHOTO: Barbara Newton



# COMPETITIONS

## PROMOTE EXCELLENCE

AWI provides support to **shearing competitions** at local, state and national levels. The aim is to promote excellence and encourage better techniques in shearing and woolhandling.

**A**WI once again sponsored the National Championships and Trans-Tasman Tests, which were held this year at Hamilton in Victoria at the end of September.

In addition to these competitions at the event, a highlight was workshops at which novice, intermediate and senior wool handlers and shearers had the opportunity to learn and refine their skills amongst some of the very best professionals in the country. They then also had the opportunity to compete in the novice to senior shearing and woolhandling

competitions at the event.

AWI provides support for this event, plus many local, regional and state shearing and woolhandling competitions across the country, with the main aims of promoting excellence within the shearing industry, and to encourage young people to join the industry.

AWI shearing industry training development coordinator Jim Murray says AWI is keen to raise the profile and status of the shearing industry by enabling

participation in well conducted shearing and woolhandling competitions.

“Competitions help encourage better techniques in shearing and woolhandling, which is for the benefit of the woolgrowing industry from which they derive,” he said. “AWI’s support aims to encourage a quality workforce, an interest in wool, and an appreciation of the art and skill of shearers and wool handlers. AWI’s financial support for competitions makes a significant impact on the viability of many competitions.” **B**



Some of the **novice wool handlers** – who had the opportunity to learn and refine their skills before competition at Hamilton. PHOTO: Tara Hadley Stephens



Wool handlers **Tara Smith** and **Sarah Moran** taking part in the Trans-Tasman Test against New Zealand.



Glen Innes-based shearer **Daniel McIntyre** winning the **2015 Australian National Shearing** title.

### NATIONAL SHEARING AND WOOLHANDLING CHAMPIONSHIPS RESULTS

#### TRANS-TASMAN SHEARING TEST

1. Australia 271.68	2. New Zealand 298.18
Shannon Warnest 18min 18sec, 88.32	Tony Coster 19min 0sec, 93.25
Daniel McIntyre 17min 42sec, 90.43	Troy Pyper 19min 36sec, 96.13
Nathan Meaney 18min 47sec, 92.93	Aaron Haynes 19min 46sec, 108.80

#### TRANS-TASMAN BLADE SHEARING TEST

1. New Zealand 189.55	2. Australia 211.75
Tony Dobbs 14min 46sec, 92.55	John Dalla 14min 42sec, 105.35
Brian Thomson 16min 15sec, 97.00	Ken French 18min 28sec, 106.40

#### TRANS-TASMAN WOOLHANDLING TEST

1. New Zealand 42.28	2. Australia 45.53
Joel Henare and Sheree Alabaster	Tara Smith and Sarah Moran

#### NATIONAL SHEARING FINAL

1. Daniel McIntyre (NSW) 102.27	4. Wayne Hosie (NSW) 115.60
2. Shannon Warnest (SA) 107.12	5. Robert Glover (Tas) 120.67
3. Justin Dolphin (SA) 112.07	6. Steve Rigby (Tas) 136.57

#### NATIONAL WOOLHANDLING FINAL

1. Rachel Hutchinson (NSW) 39.20	4. Sophie Huf (Vic) 49.90
2. Angela Wakely (NSW) 47.00	5. Tara Smith (SA) 52.20
3. Sarah Moran (Vic) 47.20	6. Kayla Garner (NSW) 58.50

#### NATIONAL BLADE SHEARING FINAL

1. John Dalla (SA) 44.15	4. Terry Rowbottom (Vic) 77.70
2. Ken French (Vic) 55.50	5. Jim Murray (NSW) 86.05
3. Mike Pora (NSW) 71.15	6. Mal Griffiths (Vic) 100.65

#### NATIONAL TEAM FINALS

1. Victoria 83.70
2. Tasmania 90.30
3. South Australia 99.20



Students from **Warren Central School** and **Gilgandra Public School** during AWI-funded training at Haddon Rig, NSW.

# COURSES CREATING **JOB READY SHED STAFF**

AWI is undertaking hands-on practical courses for school students to help attract them into the wool harvesting industry and make them job ready for shed work.

In July, AWI organised a two-day crutching school for students from Warren Central School in NSW. Eight students from Year 9/10 Agriculture and Year 11 Primary Industry classes attended the training that was held at George and Sally Falkiner's 'Haddon Rig' property and run by Shaun Wilson and Andrew Newstead from AWI's Independent Coaching Program.

The training involved many aspects of the wool industry and taught students about safety and equipment in the shed as well as learning to crutch.

"All students who attended worked really well and were commended by the presenters on their work ethic," said teacher Bill Murray from Warren Central School. "By the end of the second day all students – the girls and boys – were very accomplished and were even able to teach their Deputy Principal the fine points of crutching."

In November the Warren Central School students, along with students from Gilgandra Public School, attended a week-long follow up course in which they learnt about wool handling and how to shear.

"During this class, the students learnt much more about the wool industry. It was a great course and everyone really enjoyed the hard

but very informative week," Mr Murray said.

A similar week-long course has also recently been held for students from Wellington High School at Hugh Taylor's property, and a course for Tenterfield High School students is scheduled for this month at Hugh McCowen's 'Mispah' property.

"The aim of these courses is to have the students come out of the week ready to be safely engaged in shed work during their school holidays, with some of the students able to be employed as crutchers. It also provides good grounding for a career in shearing," AWI shearing industry development coordinator Jim Murray said.

"The course teaches how to identify different types of wool and practical wool handling skills. It also teaches handpiece skills and how to safely handle sheep – imperative skills for crutching and shearing.

"It's important to have people entering the industry job ready. Shearing contractors are more likely to employ a youngster if they already have good skills – the higher the better.

"AWI's longer term plan is that trainees will come out of our high school courses job ready for shearing as well as crutching and shed work."

## WOOL HARVESTING VIDEOS - NOW ONLINE



AWI also makes available training resources such as shearing and wool handling videos. The videos, which are available on AWI's YouTube channel, are a complete reference guide for shearers, wool handlers, woolgrowers, instructors and students working in various areas of wool harvesting.

Packed with tips, hints and practical advice, the videos include advice from experienced shearers, wool handlers and wool classers such as Shannon Warnest, Dwayne Black and Rachel Hutchinson.

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



# LIFETIME EWE MANAGEMENT: PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES



Robert and Alison Glenn, with daughters Samantha and Charleton, who manage 'Edward Park' in the western Riverina of NSW. PHOTO: Stock & Land and Fairfax Media

## FAST FACTS

- Robert Glenn from Moulamein in southern NSW continues to fine tune his Merino operation, implementing many on-farm 'best management' practices in an effort to optimise wool and sheepmeat production and returns.
- He has found Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) principles and a focus on practices that offer more 'bang for his buck' have allowed him to further push production boundaries.
- While monitoring stock condition, meeting stock feed needs and careful attention to lambing ewe management are critical, Robert continues to look 'outside the square' to ensure the most cost effective management practices are put in place.

Woolgrower Robert Glenn, from Moulamein in the western Riverina of NSW, joined the Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) program with five other 'like-minded' local producers in early 2015.

Robert and his wife Alison manage 'Edward

Park', a 5,200ha property consisting of 4,550ha of dryland crop/grazing and 650ha allocated to irrigated winter clover/rye pastures and rice.

The 'Edward Park' program revolves around a 5-week joining period in late November/December. Early weaning, having ewes in 3+ body condition score, using teasers, scanning and separating ewes based on feed requirement prior to and during lambing have all led to improved lamb numbers and survival rates.

Robert, as with many woolgrowers, has trialed a number of different Merino blood lines and joined a portion of CFA ewes to Terminals in the past but now believes they have finally achieved a well-balanced, profitable Merino line that optimises both wool and meat returns.

"We want a large framed, early maturing Merino with sound 20-21 micron wool. The ewes have to be able to conceive and rear a lamb – weaning rate to ewes joined is the major profit driver out here," Robert said.

Robert now believes that the right genetics, coupled with using many LTEM practices, has seen their operation's efficiencies and profit margins improve.

"We were pretty well shot in 2008 once

paddock and grain/hay feed reserves ran out. We made the decision to completely destock the dry pasture areas and reduced our breeding ewe base from 2,500 down to 800 core breeders."

The Glenns preferentially kept ewes that had weaned a lamb in 2008. The following two years saw lamb marking rates exceed 135% and, when asked why, Robert was quick to admit that they focused their energies on feeding the breeding flock.

"This is one of the primary objectives and greatest strengths, I believe, for producers who enroll in a LTEM course – learning how to monitor, measure and meet feed needs. While we learnt 'the hard way' that many of the LTEM principles work, I was keen to join the LTEM group to see how we could further fine tune our sheep management.

"I find that working with an accredited deliverer and having open, frank discussions with like-minded producers have been major positives and a driving factor behind our involvement."

Robert has, in recent years, placed greater focus on meeting ram, ewe and lamb feed needs at critical points throughout the year. Supplementing stock with grain and hay appears to be a major cost but

Robert is adamant that the benefits gained far outweigh the costs in terms of conception rates, fetal and lamb survival and wool benefits.

"Last year I estimated that it cost \$20/head to supplement ewes. This cost was recouped in extra wool cut and tensile strength alone. The added benefits from extra lambs, greater lamb survival and improved performance to weaning were cream."

While confident that the LTEM program is a win/win for industry and producers, and happy to incorporate many of the LTEM principles into practice, Robert is mindful that there are areas where additional work is needed or where management can be tweaked further.

"I'm prepared to lamb in smaller mobs but may lamb single and twin bearing ewes together if I have to – but only once I've scanned the ewes and fed the twin bearers up to the point of lambing!"

"Pastoral or Western areas struggle at times to have adequate paddocks if we have to split to the 'n<sup>th</sup>' degree. We need to work within the constraints of our region and environment but I'd support the science behind the LTEM principles for sure – it's just how we adopt and implement the strategies that's important."

Areas in which Robert would like to see additional research undertaken include:

- The pros and cons of joining and lambing maiden ewes alone/with mature aged ewes.
- The pros and cons of pre-joining and pre-lambing shearing and shearing effects on ewe body condition score/conception/fetal survival etc.
- Improvements in scanning accuracies through operator accreditation and/or impacts from scanning speed being addressed. 'Edward Park' had scanned, single bearing ewe mobs mark in excess of 110% in 2015 and Robert is quick to say that such inaccuracies have the potential to undermine the good work LTEM offers.
- The role and cost effectiveness of mineral supplements particularly during lambing.
- Streamlining fly control and pain relief operations through a single, easy use product to improve animal welfare and industry uptake.
- Monitoring and costing the flow-on effects and benefits to weaners of sound LTEM flock management practices.

There are six LTEM groups operating within southern NSW that are supported by the Western Murray Land Improvement Group (WMLIG) and the Murray Local Land Services through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme.

**B**

# AWI INVESTMENT BOOST FOR REPRODUCTION

AWI is tripling its investment in reproductive efficiency over the next four years.

Building on its investment of more than \$2.7 million in all facets of the Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) program over four years, AWI is to accelerate the further extension of the program while investing in new research and development opportunities to improve the reproductive performance of the Merino.

As AWI's flagship extension program, LTEM has now directly influenced 20% of the national flock. The 3,000 woolgrowers that have participated in LTEM have on average increased weaning rates by 10% and reduced ewe mortality by 30%. If these levels of impact of LTEM on woolgrowers can be maintained, then AWI plans to lift the participation rate of LTEM to 50% of the national flock by 2019, assisted by regional variants of the program.

A farm-based course developed and delivered through Rural Industries Skill Training (RIST), LTEM involves woolgrowers learning to best match the energy requirements of animals with pasture production and supplementary feeding to maximise production and animal welfare.

AWI General Manager Research, Dr Paul Swan, said: "LTEM is now regarded as best practice nutritional management but we also want to explore the next opportunities around genetics and management to further improve reproductive efficiency. It is important to continue the momentum."

To help guide research opportunities, renew strategy and deliver further extension, AWI has enlisted the expertise of renowned sheep researcher Dr Andrew Thompson as the new Program Manager of Reproduction for AWI.

Dr Thompson is Associate Professor of Animal Science at Murdoch University, Perth and is well known across the country for his research leadership of sheep production systems, especially in the area of reproduction. He has managed many large national projects for both AWI and MLA over the past 15 years including the AWI-funded Lifetime Wool Project and subsequently co-developed the LTEM program. He will remain at Murdoch University and be employed by AWI on a part-time basis.

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



The LTEM course is very hands-on, being entirely based in the sheep yards, shearing sheds and paddocks of the participating woolgrowers; the course is run in groups of four to six woolgrowers who meet six times each year with the facilitation of a trainer.



# PRESCRIPTION/ VARIABLE RATE FERTILISER

## APPLICATION IN LIVESTOCK SYSTEMS

**J**ack England, from Kingston in the south-east of South Australia has been awarded the prestigious 2016 Nuffield Scholarship supported by AWI. The 2014 Young Farmer of the Year will use his scholarship to investigate the benefits and costs of using variable rate technology (VRT) for fertiliser and trace element prescription use in livestock systems.

Jack manages his family's 3,200 hectare mixed sheep, beef and cropping property, which supports 8,000 head of Merino ewes for wool and prime lamb production, 450 head of Murray Grey and Angus cows, and 200 to 400 hectares of barley and pasture.

With a background in agronomy, he brings a scientific focus to the livestock, pasture and financial management of the farm business and sees potential for innovative technologies, such as zoning paddocks for VRT fertiliser application, to be used more widely in livestock systems.

"Being able to actively measure yearly grazing days, minus supplementary feed quantities, at a paddock or zone scale allows you to economically assess various trials, the need for fertiliser at maintenance or higher levels using meaningful data, such as stock weight gains, wool growth, quality and quantity, and carrying capacity," he says.

"Many grain growers are adopting variable input rates; why not let livestock systems begin the process based on objective decision making given many of our soils lock up vast quantities of phosphorus in the unavailable inorganic fraction?"

"I am interested in seeing what technology is available in our sector to achieve and monitor capital inputs versus outputs."

Jack aims to travel through parts of Canada, New Zealand, England and the United States to complete his studies

"AWI is proud to continue its involvement with Nuffield by offering a specific wool-focused scholarship," said Dr Paul Swan, AWI General Manager of Research.

"It is a unique opportunity for a woolgrower to study a particular subject of interest, and increase practical farming knowledge,

management skills and techniques in the Australian wool industry. Previous Nuffield Scholars have contributed significantly to our knowledge of our industry."

Nuffield Australia is an organisation which provides an opportunity to Australian farmers to travel overseas on an agricultural research scholarship. It is a 16-week program consisting of both group and individual travel.



**Nuffield Scholarship recipient Jack England** from Kingston, South Australia. PHOTO: Liz Harfull, The Furrow

## RECENT AWI NUFFIELD WOOLGROWER SCHOLARS

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

AWI Nuffield woolgrower scholars and their study areas or report titles are:

**2016**

**Jack England, Kingston, SA**

Jack will study variable rate fertiliser application in livestock systems.

**2015**

**Robert Webb, Tarana, NSW**

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

**2014**

**Tim Gubbins, Moyston, Vic**

Tim is studying the Merino breed with a specific focus on the period from conception through to weaning.

**2013**

**Matthew Ipsen, Wareek, Vic**

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

**2012**

**James Walker, Longreach, Qld**

James has been studying if the multiple reproductive cycle trait of ewes can be capitalised to speed up the lamb-to-lamb interval using real-time, remote weight and health management.

**2011**

**James Robertson, Renmark, SA**

Report: Improving sheep efficiency through weaning nutrition.

**2009**

**David Cussons, Kojunup, WA**

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

**2008**

**Ben Ranford, Cleve, SA**

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

**2007**

**James Walker, Carrick, Tas**

Report: Wool and sheep production in the global market.

**2007**

**Andrew Bouffler, Lockhart, NSW**

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

**2006**

**Robert Kelly, Guyra, NSW**

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

**B**

**MORE INFORMATION**

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



# A SINGLE FOCUS ON DUAL PURPOSE

Eighteen-year-old **Royce Pitchford** started his own **Corriedale** stud three years ago.

Eighteen-year-old **Royce Pitchford** of Echunga in South Australia owns his own **Corriedale stud** and is enthusiastic about breeding dual purpose sheep. He is the 2015 recipient of an **Horizon Scholarship** sponsored by AWI while he studies Agricultural Science at the University of Adelaide.

**H**aving established and run his own Corriedale stud since 2012, 18-year-old Royce Pitchford from Echunga in the Adelaide Hills already has an impressive track record in the sheep industry.

In July last year, while a student at Urrbrae Agricultural High School in Adelaide, he won the student section of the Young Guns competition at the LambEx conference. Two months later he won the Merino sheep young judges' championship at the Adelaide Show and earned the right to represent South Australia at the national finals.

Fast forward a year, and as well as running his stud 'Lushford Corriedales', Royce is now studying for a Bachelor of Agricultural Science at the University of Adelaide with career aspirations mainly based around sheep breeding.

To help him develop into one of the next generation of agricultural leaders, he has received a 2015 Horizon Scholarship supported by AWI. Under the Scholarship, which is an initiative of the Rural Industries R&D Corporation, AWI is supporting Royce throughout the course of his undergraduate studies by providing him with a financial bursary and professional support in the form of mentoring, professional development workshops and industry placement.

Royce says his interest in agriculture started when he was very young, spending holidays doing sheep work on his grandparents' farm.

"My commitment grew when I invested in 10 ewes and a ram in 2009 when I was 12 years' old. Two years later, I started my own Corriedale stud," he says.

"Currently I use Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBVs) to achieve higher growth rates and higher reproduction rates whilst maintaining fleece type.

"My long term aim is to also breed these sheep with a longer staple length so shearing can be done twice a year, to eliminate the need for crutching, and also to breed bare breeches so that tailing, mulesing and crutching aren't required. This aim isn't limited to the Corriedale breed; I would look for other breeds to contribute to this.

"I am a member of Performance Corriedales, an Australian and New Zealand group recording animal performance, which has meetings at least twice each year. We work together to promote our sheep, promote the use of SheepGenetics figures to the industry and to use link sires across the group to improve the accuracy of our figures."

Although Royce focuses more on ASBVs when selecting stock for his stud, he maintains that visual selection is still an important skill to have.

"I have been involved with showing sheep, mainly at the Royal Adelaide Show and the Australian Sheep and Wool Show in Bendigo, and over the past five years I have competed

in state junior judging competitions for Merino rams and meat sheep. So I have a good appreciation of visual assessment."

While his career aspirations in agriculture are mainly based around sheep breeding, he also hopes to work in agribusiness and is interested in livestock nutrition and agronomy. He would also like to implement sustainable farming techniques on-farm to increase long term productivity of the land.

Royce is grateful and excited about being part of the Horizon Scholarship program and the opportunity to improve his skills in leadership and communication, which will help him become an effective agricultural ambassador.

"I believe the Scholarship will enhance my learning at university and put me in a position to be a leader in the industry. The work placements offered by the Scholarship and networking will also be of benefit to me as I expand my knowledge by learning from some of the best in the industry." **E**

## MORE INFORMATION

Applications for 2016 Horizon Scholarships close on 30 January 2016. See [www.rirdc.gov.au](http://www.rirdc.gov.au)





# FUNDING STRATEGIES

## FOR YOUNG SHEEP PRODUCERS

**Are you a young producer who wants to enter the sheep industry, but feel finance is too hard to obtain?** Do you wish to set up your sheep enterprise separate from existing family arrangements? Would you like to get a better understanding of what financiers are after when you apply? **Read on for some useful advice.**

**Y**oung producers who tuned in to a webinar in August run by the Queensland Innovative Sheep Network (QISN) learnt about financing options to enter the sheep and wool industry and some of the initial aspects to consider.

For those who missed it, the 'Finance the Future' webinar – with guest speaker Brad Sewell of Robinson Sewell Partners – was recorded and is available free on the Leading Sheep website [www.leadingssheep.com.au](http://www.leadingssheep.com.au) to anyone across the country.

### COMMUNICATE YOUR AMBITIONS

Mr Sewell said that one of the most important things for a young person setting out in the industry is to express their passion for the industry and state their goals to their community, family, friends and colleagues.

"It's important at any stage in life but especially when you're younger to let people within your network and rural community know what your ambitions are," Mr Sewell said. "In my experience, the older generations are very receptive to young people wanting to come into the industry but if they don't understand that's what you want to do then they're not going to put opportunities in front of you.

"Whether you're at the races, at the pub – wherever you are – if you see one of your local graziers, interact and let them know what you're trying to achieve in life. You'll be amazed at the opportunities that will be presented to you."

Mr Sewell said it's important for young people to keep themselves educated through industry workshops on topics from finance to the practical aspects of farming. As well as the intrinsic benefit of learning the skills, banks take note of a farmer's management abilities when considering loan applications.

"People believe that the banks' credit assessment of you all comes down to security and cash flow, but your management skills are key to lending. Up to 30 per cent of the credit assessment by some banks includes what they perceive to be your abilities in this area."

### AGRIBUSINESS OPTIONS

It is important to consider all the finance options for getting into agriculture, including agistment, leasing, share farming, land purchase and joint ventures. Succession planning is the obvious way for those already in the industry.

Mr Sewell said one of the biggest issues for young people in agriculture at the moment is

getting a big enough deposit to purchase land, with banks typically lending 60–70 per cent of a property's valuation at a stretch. So where do you find the other 30–40 per cent?

"Quite often there are options around vendor finance," said Mr Sewell. "Traditionally this hasn't been popular with vendors but, as time goes on and more properties aren't getting capital gains tax exemptions, vendors are increasingly open to receiving some cash up front and then the balance over a number of years. With term deposit rates at about 2 per cent at the moment, a buyer offering a rate of say 5 per cent is quite attractive to a vendor.

"Another option for land purchase is through family support, such as your parents putting their property up as collateral. They might simply be the guarantor for you, or in some cases the parents will borrow the money because they have the credit rating. They could get a separate loan in their name against their property, and the son or daughter would pay them back the principal and interest over time."

Mr Sewell said that most leasing and share farming opportunities arise through contact with somebody the young farmer already knows; not many get advertised. Joint ventures, partnership and equity partners are relatively rare.

## BUSINESS PLANNING

Mr Sewell said the young people that are most successful at getting finance are those with a realistic timeframe and have worked out exactly what they want to do.

"Have an overall business strategy which describes, with timelines, how you will accomplish your goals – and be realistic about that. Do your projected cash flow. Consider all the aspects of getting into agriculture such as purchase costs (including stamp duty); look at what infrastructure (eg yards, sheds, fencing), machinery and livestock you require; and

consider what working capital you need to keep the property going in the first few years."

Mr Sewell warns that when applying to the bank for a loan, it is critical that the presentation and its timing are right.

"Banks are very busy. If you don't present properly the first time around, they typically are not keen on looking at you again (because of time constraints) within a 6–12 month period.

"There are several items of financial information that a bank will need to see to consider a loan application. These include the loan amounts required, loan types and terms,

assets and liabilities, security, equity, cash flow forecasts and information on the historical financial and production performance of the property.

"When embarking on sourcing funding, don't try and do it by yourself. It is very important that you team up with good business advisors to help achieve your goals". **B**

### MORE INFORMATION

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

Brad Sewell: [brad@robinsonsewell.com.au](mailto:brad@robinsonsewell.com.au)  
or 0427 390 016

# GUIDE TO HELP WITH THE HARD DECISIONS

Developing a **succession plan** that meets the expectations of all involved is not easy. A good starting point for people looking to broach the subject with family members is the **'Guide to Succession'**, produced in 2007 by GRDC with the support of AWI and other major agricultural organisations.

## SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF A SUCCESSION PLAN

- Work out what the exiting generation wants to do – where they'll live and what they will do in retirement – if succession is an option
- Identify the needs and aspirations of each family member in each generation
- Build, maintain and, if necessary, repair relationships between family members
- Manage expectations amongst family members
- Look at transferring management and control of the farm over time
- Sort out how to transfer ownership of the farm
- Determine what deal there should be for the incoming generation and what provision to make for the non-farming children.

**S**uccession planning involves the transfer of ownership and control of farming assets to the next generation charged with the responsibility of continuing the business.

It can be a complex issue for farm businesses, with often four generations actively involved. Understanding the different motivations, characteristics and needs of these groups is essential for constructive planning to occur.

Each family situation is unique and legal and accounting advice should be obtained to work through the succession process.

It is important to communicate openly with other family members and professionals. The 'Guide to Succession – Sustaining Families and Farms' has provided, and continues to provide, an important starting point for many families. The publication is divided into three sections: guiding principles, case studies, and tips and checklists.

The first section provides guiding principles from professionals who may contribute to the

succession planning process: an agronomist, an accountant, a lawyer, a financial planner and a generation consultant.

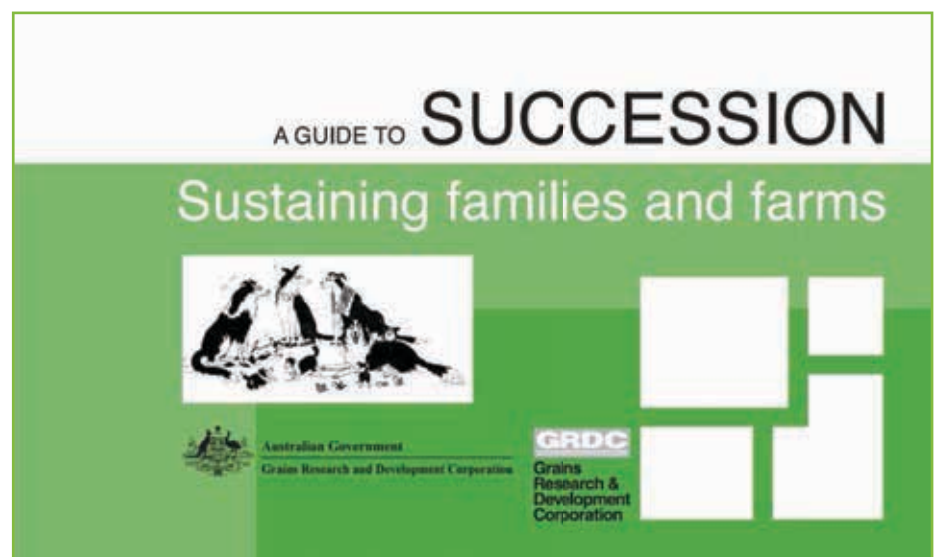
The 16 case studies in the second section are drawn from the actual experiences of farm families. Each case study explains why the family came together, provides a diagrammatic representation of the family, lists assets and liabilities and details the agreements made by the family and their comments about those agreements.

The final section provides tips and checklists to help in the initiation, development and implementation of a plan.

The guide covers 'front-end' options when people are entering a business, either through invitation or marriage, and 'back-end' options when they are leaving. **B**

### MORE INFORMATION

Download the publication from [www.wool.com](http://www.wool.com) or contact the AWI Helpline on 1800 070 099 to obtain a copy.





# NATIVE SHELTERBELTS: THE BENEFITS

The Basalt to Bay Landcare Network in South West Victoria is spreading the word to farmers across the country about the potential productivity and biodiversity benefits of native shelterbelts.

The Basalt to Bay Landcare Network has produced a 15-page report: 'Economic Benefits of Native Shelterbelts'.



The Basalt to Bay Landcare Network's 'Economic Benefits of Native Shelterbelts' report brings together more than 30 years of local, national and international research applicable to a range of agricultural sectors including the wool industry.

The research review indicates that the protection of existing native vegetation and the planting of shelterbelts can provide farmers with productivity and biodiversity benefits while conserving and enhancing critical resources such as soil health and water quality.

"Well-designed, established and maintained shelterbelts support ecologically sustainable agriculture, with farmers benefiting from increased productivity, sustainability, biodiversity, and property and landscape values," Lisette Mill from the Basalt to Bay Landcare Network explains.

"Shelterbelts are not a short term panacea but a mid to long-term proposition that requires a flexible approach and site-specific solutions. More than this, they contribute to equity for future generations, position farmers for a 'low-carbon' future, and adaptation to a variable climate."

In terms of productivity, shelterbelts can provide benefits by reducing the extremes of heat and cold experienced by livestock. In sunny weather, shelterbelts provide stock with the opportunity of shade and protection from hot winds – a relief that can be especially beneficial during lengthy periods of heat during summer. In the colder months, shelterbelts provide protection from chilling winds.

The Basalt to Bay review of research indicates that heat stress is detrimental to ram fertility, ovulation rate and conception in ewes, and foetal development. Hot ewes don't eat as much and this translates to the performance of their unborn and born young. When the heat load in ewes is reduced at joining and lambing,

their lambs grow faster and produce more wool, with more lambs present at marking.

Cold stress reduces live-weight gain in sheep and depresses wool growth; it can also increase lamb mortality. Shelter can protect sheep from extremes of cold and therefore reduce the animal's body heat maintenance needs, especially for lambs and sheep off-shears, providing more energy for production.

The research indicates that shelter can also improve pasture production by reducing moisture loss from soils and transpiration from the pasture.

Also of benefit to woolgrowers, shelterbelts increase the practical boundaries for biosecurity measures, such as helping stop the spread of weeds like serrated tussock and reducing livestock contact with lice and ticks.

As we move into fire season, it is worth noting that shelter belts increase a property's ability to buffer stock from the direct flames of fast moving grass fires and hot winds pushing radiant heat. They also slow wind speed down to protect farm infrastructure including houses, wool sheds, roads, pasture and machinery.

Interestingly, the review notes that property values on well sheltered farms are on average 15 per cent higher than those without good shelter, due to better farm productivity and also added aesthetic value.

Mrs Mill says the location of a new shelterbelt should be influenced by considering all site features.

"These include property infrastructure, prevailing and seasonally problem winds, soil types, problem areas of erosion and salinity, remnant vegetation, use of non-arable areas, and other on-site specific features. It is important to specifically design the shelterbelt to suit the required purposes and benefits."

While shelterbelts have many benefits and can contribute to greater livestock productivity gains – through increased live-weight gain, wool production and lamb markings – woolgrowers considering shelterbelts should also weigh up other consequences on the business such as establishment costs and the loss of productive land to trees. **B**

## MORE INFORMATION

Download the 15-page report at [www.basalttobay.org.au](http://www.basalttobay.org.au)

## POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF NATIVE SHELTERBELTS

- Provide shade to protect stock from the effects of heat in summer (eg parasites and weeds) from neighbouring land
- Protect livestock from cold or hot winds
- Provide habitat for wildlife and natural biological control agents
- Protect pastures and crops from drying winds
- Act as a firebreak
- Help prevent salinity, soil erosion and nutrient loss
- Protect and enhance living and working areas
- Conserve soil water, extending the pasture growing season
- Increase medium to long-term land values
- Reduce bio-security hazards
- Provide fodder, timber, bush foods and other products.

# 2016 IWTO CONGRESS IN SYDNEY

Registrations are now open for the **International Wool Textile Organisation's (IWTO) annual Congress** which is taking place **4-6 April 2016** in Sydney.

The IWTO Congress is the annual gathering of the entire wool industry, connecting farm with fashion and everyone in between. Woolgrowers, spinners, weavers, garment manufacturers, designers and retailers will be united to discuss the role of wool for future generations.

Co-hosted by the Federation of Australian Wool Organisations (FAWO), the Congress will be held in the historic The Rocks precinct at the Four Seasons Hotel Sydney.

Featuring presentations from local and international speakers, the program covers global consumer and retail trends for wool, market intelligence, trade, economic sustainability, woolgrower technology, education for future generations and more.

Woolgrowers are invited to attend two days of the Congress for a registration fee of \$825 including GST. Registration includes the Wednesday Retail Forum / Strategic Market Insights sessions with high profile speakers,

day delegate package, Woolgrower Dinner and access to the wool auctions being held at the Four Seasons. Thursday will include an all-day post-Congress farm tour – an additional fee of \$100 will cover transport costs and secure your seat on the bus.

AWI is proudly supporting the Congress.

"The Congress is a wonderful opportunity for Australia to showcase its wool industry and many success stories," AWI CEO Stuart McCullough said. "With the Sydney Royal Easter Show taking place just prior to the Congress, we're hoping that many woolgrowers will continue on to the Congress and take the opportunity to connect with the rest of the global wool supply chain."

**MORE INFORMATION**

Further information including the draft program, costs and full registration details are available on [www.iwto.org/events](http://www.iwto.org/events)



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# MARKET INTELL

## AVERAGE MONTHLY EMI COMPARISON

THE EMI HAS BEEN PERFORMED WELL, ESPECIALLY BROADER MICRONS

The chart opposite provides a snapshot of how well the AWEX monthly Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) and a range of microns have performed for the past three months (August – October 2015) in Australian dollar terms compared with the past five years (circles) and the decade January 2000 – December 2010 (squares).

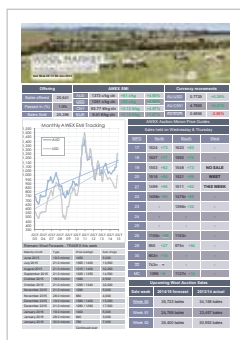
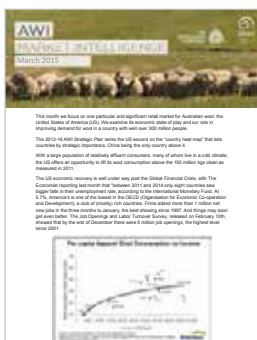
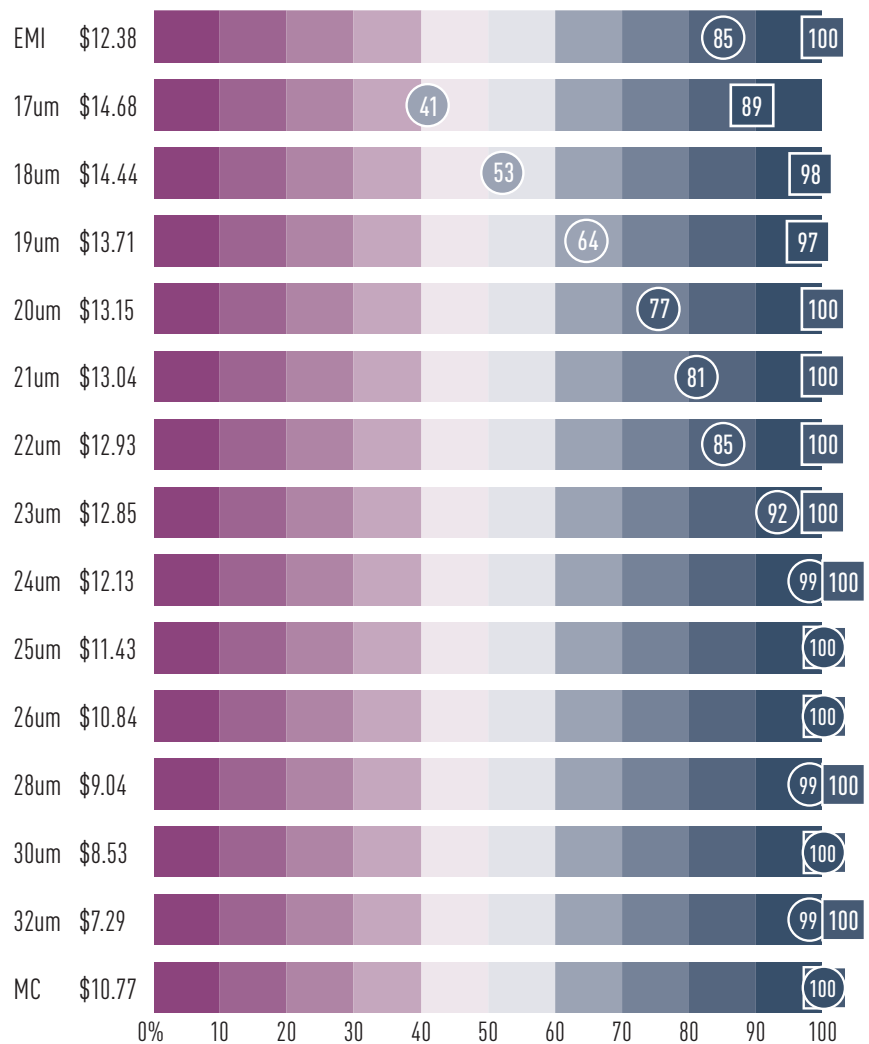
From August-October 2015, the monthly EMI averaged at \$12.38, tracking at the 85th percentile against the past five-year monthly EMI. The percentile value (85th) indicates that the five-year monthly EMI recorded a price lower than \$12.38 for 85 per cent of the time. Or to put it another way, in the past five years the monthly EMI has recorded a price higher than the current \$12.38 (August – October 2015) for only 15 per cent of the time.

While the EMI is tracking at the 85th percentile over the past five years, it is at the 100th percentile when compared to January 2000 - December 2010. This means the current EMI of \$12.38 (August – October 2015) is higher than it was at any time during the first decade of this century.

The broader microns and Merino Cardings (MC) have been performing particularly well recently. For the past three months (August-October 2015) Merino Cardings averaged at \$10.77, operating at the 100th percentile for both the past five years and first decade of the century.

For the same period, 18 micron averaged at a monthly value of \$14.44 (53rd percentile and 98th percentile respectively), 21 micron averaged at \$13.04 (81st percentile and 100th percentile), and 28 micron averaged at \$9.04 (99th percentile and 100th percentile). **B**

**AVERAGE MONTHLY EMI FOR AUGUST 2015 - OCTOBER 2015 COMPARED WITH**  
 ● PAST 5 YEARS NOVEMBER 2010 - OCTOBER 2015 ■ DECADE JAN 2000 - DEC 2010



### AWI'S BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

AWI provides weekly market reports and monthly electronic newsletters, which can be subscribed to at [www.wool.com/subscribe](http://www.wool.com/subscribe) or by direct download from the AWI website at [www.wool.com/marketintelligence](http://www.wool.com/marketintelligence)

These reports provide weekly commentary on the wool auction market from AWI trade specialists and monthly insights into economic, finance and trade issues affecting global demand for wool, and what this means for the Australian wool industry.

# IGENCE REPORT

## WOOL PRODUCTION TESTING RESULTS

Wool production/testing has fallen in the first third of the 2015/16 wool selling season, but the qualities of this wool are suiting buyers' requirements better.

A significant reduction of wool testing/production has occurred in the first third of the current 2015/16 wool selling season.

This period has registered a reduction of nearly 53,000 bales having been presented for testing when compared to the same period in 2014/15. This represents a short fall of 7.6 per cent year on year.

Some of this figure may have been influenced by woolgrowers shearing earlier in May/June to capture the attractive prices available at the time, and possibly to avoid any discounts being applied to their clip if the wool was offered with overlong (plus 100mm GSL) sale lots. Seasonal conditions may be producing a lower per head wool cut, but this is yet to be measured properly and confirmed. A further shift to meat breeds may also be a factor, as these breeds produce much lower wool cuts per head compared to a good Merino wool cutter.

The AWTA key test data shows the AM (additional measurement) results generally

trending to a better alignment with the ideal specifications the buyers are requiring. Of significant note is the lowering of the position of break in the national clip to around 50 PobM and the staple strength improving to a national average of around 34nkt.

### PREMIUMS AND DISCOUNTS

The Merino fleece sector is the wool type sector relying heavily on these figures and the following factors came up when analyzing recent wool sale prices.

Generally speaking, on individual Merino fleece sale lots:

- Strength gets discounted when less than 31nkt.
- Strength gets a premium when 38nkt or better (particularly for lots finer than 19 micron).
- PobM gets a discount when more than 70 PobM.

- PobM gets a progressively higher premium when 45 PobM or lower.
- GSL gets a small discount when lots test 98mm to 110mm. A larger discount is applied for lots longer than 110mm.
- Ideal GSL is 76mm to 90mm.
- Only a very small discount is applied to lots of 60 to 76mm GSL.
- Small discounts can start to appear for lots with a dry yield lower than 60 per cent. **B**

### MORE INFORMATION

For more information on premiums and discounts, contact your local wool broker, visit Woolcheque at [www.wool.com/woolcheque](http://www.wool.com/woolcheque) or refer to 'The Economic Value of Wool Attributes' report by **Dr Elizabeth Nolan** of the University of Sydney which is available on [www.wool.com](http://www.wool.com)

## AUSTRALIAN WOOL PRODUCTION PER AWTA KEY TEST DATA AS AT NOVEMBER 2015

Year on Year comparison for first 4 months of season JULY through OCTOBER.

	BALES			MICRON		GSL		NKT	
	2014/15	2015/16	Difference	2014/15	2015/16	2014/15	2015/16	2014/15	2015/16
Queensland	16,954	14,516	-14.40%	19.3	19.3	84.1	84	29.4	34.2
NSW	221,452	199,537	-9.90%	20.6	20.4	89.2	88.3	35.4	36.3
Victoria	229,721	210,327	-8.40%	21.3	21.2	90.7	90.1	34.7	34.3
Tasmania	23,132	18,655	-19.40%	20.4	20.5	87	87.3	39.5	40.3
SA	78,991	76,255	-3.50%	21.3	21	95.3	94.6	32.6	36.6
WA	127,895	125,906	-1.60%	19.5	19.8	87.5	90.7	28.7	30.4
<b>Australia</b>	<b>698,145</b>	<b>645,196</b>	<b>-7.60%</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>89.9</b>	<b>90.1</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>33.9</b>

	POBM		YIELD	
	2014/15	2015/16	2014/15	2015/16
Queensland	52.9	54.3	63.2	64.9
NSW	59.3	51.3	66.7	66.6
Victoria	53	48.2	66	65.4
Tasmania	44.8	46.1	71	71
SA	56.1	49.7	64.2	63.7
WA	47.8	52.7	61.9	63.1
<b>Australia</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>50.3</b>	<b>65.4</b>	<b>65.3</b>

### Notes to the table:

- \* Figures based on a state basis of the location of where the bales were cored, not the location of where the wool was grown.
- \* Figures are an aggregate of all wool types cored.
- \* GSL = greasy staple length
- \* NKT = Strength measured in newtons per kilotex
- \* PobM = position of break middle
- \* Yield reported is schlum dry 1% tfm



# JAPAN:

## WOOL SHINES IN THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN



**Peter Ackroyd**, President of the IWTO and Chief Operating Officer of the Campaign for Wool.

In the fourth of a regular feature article written by AWI's Global Strategic Advisor Peter Ackroyd, we provide an insight into the robust and enduring demand for wool in Japan. Mr Ackroyd is President of the International Wool Textile Organisation and Chief Operating Officer of the Campaign for Wool.

Autumn is a strange time of year in Japan. Summer tends to linger on into November as the leaves on the ginkgo trees that line the long boulevards of Tokyo struggle to turn brown and fall. This has an odd effect on the fashion system in this orderly country where seasons are often governed by calendar rather than climate.

Autumn is a strange time of year in Japan. Summer tends to linger on into November as the leaves on the ginkgo trees that line the long boulevards of Tokyo struggle to turn brown and fall. This has an odd effect on the fashion system in this orderly country where seasons are often governed by calendar rather than climate.

"When will the women wear those long woollen coats?" was the often asked question at the Isetan department store as Wool Week Japan opened in the first week of November, as daytime temperatures averaged around 21°C in the midday sun. Heavy coats were not just confined to women's wear. The stylish Chesterfield coat was a central feature in men's wear at Isetan and every other respectable store, a look that sits well alongside both impeccably tailored formal suits and semi casual country wear.

No one in the wool trade has anything but praise with a touch of awe for the way the Japanese apparel market responded to the Global Financial Crisis (GFC). In a near perfect example of a consumer driven demand shift, the famously knowledgeable Japanese began to buy better and buy less. This bit of timely manna from heaven gave weavers of woollen and worsted fabrics in Italy and the UK, and

to some extent China, some welcome respite as the rest of the world began to fall apart. In fact imports of woollen and worsted cloth into Japan increased by 20 per cent in the past four years and imports of tailored apparel, mainly from China, grew at a similarly encouraging rate (source: IWTO World Trade Patterns in Wool).

This classic example of market polarisation didn't delight the trade in its entirety. Far from it. Large clothing conglomerates have been obliged to close hundreds of stores in the lower to middle segment of the market. Well-known names such as Onward, World and Renown are actively seeking to engage in the upper middle sector of the market, traditionally the fief of the 'select brands' such as Beams, Ships, Tomorrowland and United Arrows.

Select brands are a curiously Japanese concept which offer consumers a selection of merchandise pitched at a clearly defined segment of the market. Well cut business suits in fine Merino, tweed jackets and trousers, all sit alongside Merino knitwear, shirts and accessories, as well as watches and jewellery, shoes and men's furnishings (US speak for socks and jocks). The presentation is as impeccable as only the Japanese know how to pull together. A look at [www.beams.co.jp](http://www.beams.co.jp) or [www.united-arrows.jp](http://www.united-arrows.jp) is worth a few minutes of anyone's time, for it is in this area where the bulk market will seek to reposition itself in the next few years.

Australia's wool industry has a long history with Japan – some years more happy than others. In 1936, Australia banned

all wool exports to Japan in protest at Tokyo's imperial antics in Manchuria. Just before the war the entire Australian clip was reserved for UK manufacturing in anticipation of hostilities.

Just twelve years after Japan's defeat in 1945, the Menzies Government was the first allied country having fought Japan in the Pacific War to seek a bilateral trade agreement with the former enemy. The Australia-Japan Commerce Agreement of 1957 was a clever move at a time when certain Australian visionaries saw their national interests in danger of being sidelined by European nations seeking greater unity on the other side of the world. Commenting on the Japan-Australia agreement in an ABC broadcast in 2007 to commemorate fifty years of trade in the region, John Howard noted: "The Menzies Government and particularly John McEwan the Deputy Prime Minister and Trade Minister was visionary enough in 1957 to realise that Australia and Japan, despite their military conflict just twelve years earlier, had an enormous future in this part of the world."

A lot has changed in nearly sixty years as much of the post war clothing manufacturing industry that was meticulously reconstructed in the 1950s and 60s has moved across the Yellow Sea to China. Despite the advent of offshore manufacturing and globalisation, Japan steadfastly remains the third most important per capita consumer of wool in the world and the reason why several mills in Italy and UK have remained in business throughout some very turbulent decades for the wool trade.

# READERS' PHOTOS!

Have you got any interesting photos that you'd like to share with other readers of *Beyond the Bale*?

We 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](mailto:richard.smith@wool.com). The photos could portray any feature, be it humorous or poignant, informative or provoking, gritty or beautiful.

Here are a few photos that we have recently received from readers.

## MORE THAN YOUR AVERAGE JOE

**Kelly Kirkland** of **Balaklava** in **South Australia** sent in this photo taken a few years ago of their old **Kelpie dog Joe**, surrounded by orphaned Merino lambs who loved to curl up with him. There were about 50 orphaned Merino lambs in this particular year and all of them were raised successfully.



## THE LAST MUSTER FOR THE FJ HOLDEN UTE

**Sunrise** at **George** and **Gaby McInnes's** farm at **Milang** in **South Australia**.



## FOOTSCRAY FIBRE OF FOOTBALL FAN

**Greg Sawyer** of **Australian Wool Network** sent in this photo of his son **Jackson** wearing his **Western Bulldogs** jumper – another example of wool being the **Fibre of Football**.



## SHE EARNED IT!

**Donna White** of **Mudgee** sent in this photo of her much loved and now deceased working companion **Ruby** after shearing.



## DAD'S HELPER

**John Hall** of **'Meadowlane'** at **Bowning** on the **Southern Tablelands** of **NSW** sent in this photo of his daughter **Jemima** helping with lamb shearing.



WIN!!!

If you submit a photo that gets published in Readers' Photos, you'll receive a copy of Tracey Kruger's *'Shearing in Victoria's Western District'*.

Front cover of Tracey Kruger's 224-page *'Shearing in Victoria's Western District'*. The book is also available to purchase for \$60 (postage included) from Tracey's website [www.shearinginvictoriaswesternndistrict.com](http://www.shearinginvictoriaswesternndistrict.com) or by phone on 0427 735 208.

## FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW

**Tim Dalla**, Stud manager of **Collinsville Stud Merinos** in the **Mid North** of **South Australia**, sent in this photo of his son **Harrison** aged 1½ at the time with one of their rams that sold for \$17,500.



## TRANS PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

**Jim** and **Sonya Hunt** of **Mundulla** in **South Australia** sent in this photo of their American-born, three week old grandson with his Australian father and American mother.







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Angus Carter and his daughter Mary, Calliope, Kentucky, NSW

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