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Beyond the bale

PROFIT FROM WOOL INNOVATION

ISSUE 56 SEPTEMBER 2013

WOOL IN VOGUE

EVERGRAZE REGIONAL PACKAGES
MARKETING AUSTRALIAN WOOL
YOUNG WOOL ADVOCATES


awi
Australian
Wool Innovation
Limited


THE WOOLMARK COMPANY

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BEYOND THE BALE NOW INTERACTIVE

The online edition of the *Beyond the Bale* magazine is now interactive, providing readers with access to even more AWI digital content:

- Pop-up videos
- Pop-up image galleries
- Hyperlinks to other digital content
- Search and print features
- Download a PDF of the magazine
- Share pages via email, Facebook, Twitter and more.

Previous editions back to December 2006 are also available from the site.

To access the interactive edition of the magazine go to:

<http://beyondthebale.wool.com>

To receive an email notification when a new edition is available, subscribe to the quarterly *Beyond the Bale* e-newsletter at www.wool.com/subscribe

The hard copy of the magazine will still be produced and distributed as usual.



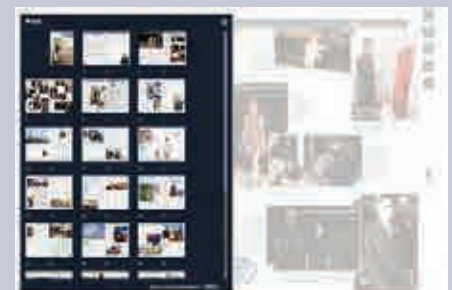
Buttons on the pages allow readers to view additional digital functionality.



Pop-up videos



Pop-up image galleries



Search and print features



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

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

AWI INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

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

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

Executive Editor: Richard Smith, richard.smith@wool.com, AWI Marketing and Communications.
AWI, Level 30, 580 George St, Sydney NSW 2000
AWI, GPO Box 4177, Sydney NSW 2001
P 02 8295 3100 F 02 8295 4100
E info@wool.com W www.wool.com
AWI Helpline, 1800 070 099

Subscription: *Beyond the Bale* is available free. To subscribe contact AWI
P 02 8295 3100 E info@wool.com

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Advertising sales: Max Hyde, Hyde Media Pty Ltd
P 03 5792 1314 F 03 5792 1359
E max@hydemediamedia.com.au

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ISSN: 1447-9680

Front cover: A Merino wool pullover designed by Sonia Rykiel which is showcased on the cover of a Vogue Paris feature as part of AWI's *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* fibre advocacy campaign - see page 10.

Getting on with business

We are continuing with initiatives to help increase the demand for wool through investments in marketing and R&D – from farm to fashion. I would like to inform you of some recent activities in which the organisation has been involved.

AWI three year Strategic Plan: Our Strategic Plan for the three financial years 2013/14 to 2015/16 was released on 1 July and is available on the AWI website at www.wool.com. We consulted widely with woolgrowers and their representatives to ensure that industry views are incorporated into the plan. Through AWI's extensive Planning and Consultation Cycle, we will continue to ensure that woolgrower levies are directed to projects that deliver the greatest value to woolgrowers. A summary of the Strategic Plan was posted to recipients of *Beyond the Bale* along with this edition.

Statutory Funding Agreement (SFA):

Through a consultation process with the Federal Government we have renegotiated a new SFA between the Commonwealth of Australia and AWI. At the end of June, Minister Ludwig signed the SFA, effective from 1 July for three years.

E-communications: In our endeavour to communicate better with our shareholders, AWI has launched a totally revamped Wool.com website with information and tools to help woolgrowers increase their on-farm profitability, and inform them of where AWI is investing their wool levies. Wool.com complements AWI's other two main websites: the Woolmark.com website for trade and designer audiences, and the consumer-focused Merino.com website. AWI produces several free e-newsletters to which woolgrowers can subscribe and receive by email. Visit www.wool.com/ subscribe for details.

Shearer and wool hander training: Adequate numbers of highly skilled professional shearers and wool handlers are key to the profitability of the Australian wool industry. In the past year, AWI investment has increased the number of shearers and wool handlers trained across Australia. 1571 shearers and 983 wool handlers were trained directly through the AWI shearer and wool handler training program in 2012/13. An additional 786 participants attended crutching and

other introductory workshops, and 1370 high school students received an introduction to wool harvesting.

AWI state networks: AWI continues to invest and grow its state based extension networks which have increased their membership base over the past 12 months to 8100. Strong partnerships with state departments, private providers and woolgrowers have secured ongoing funds for Leading Sheep (Qld), Sheep Connect NSW, BESTWOOL/BESTLAMB (Vic), Sheep Connect Tasmania, Sheep Connect South Australia, The Sheep's Back (WA) and Bestprac (pastoral) networks. Call the AWI Helpline on 1800 070 099 if you want to get involved with a group in your area.

EverGraze regional packages: The results and recommendations from the EverGraze research program, carried out across the high rainfall zone of southern Australia between 2004 and 2013, are now available on a new EverGraze website (www.evergraze.com.au). The results have been presented as regionally relevant information packages to help producers in particular regions manage their pasture and livestock systems. The information quantifies the productivity, economic, environmental, risk and lifestyle impacts of implementing changes on farm.

Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™: In the lead-up to the northern hemisphere autumn/winter retail season we have intensified our efforts with the *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* fibre advocacy campaign that is informing a new generation of consumers about the natural attributes and benefits of Merino wool. This year, the campaign involved AWI strengthening its partnerships with well-known designers, brands and fashion media. Brand endorsements of the campaign provide real penetration in fashion markets.

International Woolmark Prize: The regional finalists have been announced for the 2013/14 International Woolmark Prize global final, to be held in Milan next February. The interest in this award from the fashion communities and media globally continues to be phenomenal. It is helping put wool back on the agendas of fashion designers across the world, and consequently into retail

stores for consumers to purchase. Items from the 2012/13 International Woolmark Prize winning collection of Christian Wijnants are now available in the Sydney city store of David Jones.

International Wool Textile Organisation

(IWTO): The environmental credentials of wool and the unique properties of wool that set it apart from other fibres in the marketplace were at the forefront of discussions at this year's IWTO Congress held in June. The content of many of the presentations on the first days of the Congress echoed this theme, and Australia and AWI in particular were heavily represented. On the last day of the Congress there was an AWI-sponsored session titled "From Farm to Fashion – The Wool Supply Chain and the Consumer" led by myself and a panel of leading industrialists from Italy's fashion industry including Nino Cerruti, Paolo Zegna, Pier Luigi Loro Piana and Franca Sozzani.

Annual General Meeting (AGM): The AWI 2013 AGM will be held on Friday 22 November at the Grace Hotel in Sydney. Formal notice and meeting papers will be sent to AWI shareholders in October. AWI shareholders who are unable to attend the AGM in person will be able to view the AGM proceedings via webcast. Further details are available on the AWI website at www.wool.com/agm

Stuart McCullough
Chief Executive Officer,
Australian Wool Innovation



INTERNATIONAL WOOLMARK PRIZE



Sydney-based fashion designer Christopher Esber won the Australia regional final of the International Woolmark Prize and will compete in the grand final of the coveted award at Milan Fashion Week in February 2014.

Australia judging panel

- **Edwina McCann** – Editor-in-Chief, Vogue Australia
- **Kellie Hush** – Editor-in-Chief, Harper's BAZAAR
- **Scott Schuman** – Founder, The Sartorialist
- **Simon Lock** – CEO, The Lock Group
- **Sophie Clark** – Womenswear General Manager, David Jones

FAST FACTS

- The regional finalists have been announced for the 2013/14 International Woolmark Prize global final, to be held in Milan next February.
- The final winning collection, made from Australian Merino wool, will be commercially available at key retail outlets worldwide.
- Sydney-based label Christopher Esber is flying the flag for Australia after winning the regional final in July.

For an emerging fashion designer, the prospect of not only showing on the Milan Fashion Week schedule but also having a mini-capsule collection made commercially available in some of the world's leading retailers is a dream come true.

For the next five months, five of the world's future stars in the fashion industry will be busy creating a six-piece capsule collection as part of the final judging for the International Woolmark Prize 2013/14. Christopher Esber from Australia,

fiXXed from Asia, SIBLING from Europe, Rahul Mishra from India and the USA's Altuzarra will compete in the global final in February after winning their respective regional finals in June and July of this year.

The eventual winner will have the opportunity to be stocked in the most

important retailers of the world including Harvey Nichols, London; Saks Fifth Avenue, New York; 10 Corso Como, Milan; Joyce, China; David Jones, Sydney; and My Theresa, Germany and online.

Last year's International Woolmark Prize winner, Christian Wijnants, is currently enjoying retail success with his

Asia judging panel

- **Angelica Cheung** – Editor-in-Chief, Vogue China
- **Bartley Ingram** – Head of Art & Visual, Joyce
- **Christian Wijnants** – International Woolmark Prize 2012/13 winner
- **Kevin Carrigan** – Global Creative Director, Calvin Klein platinum label, Calvin Klein white label, Calvin Klein Jeans and Calvin Klein Underwear
- **Simon Lock** – CEO, The Lock Group

Hong Kong-based label fiXXed that won the Asia regional final.



winning collection, which is available from this month at the Sydney flagship store of David Jones. For Wijnants, it can be said his International Woolmark Prize journey has come full circle as this year he found himself sitting on the judging panel for the Asia regional final.

Back on home soil, eight of Australia's most talented emerging designers faced an elite judging panel at the picturesque Sydney Theatre Company, Walsh Bay.

Sydney-based designer Christopher Esber and his eponymous label was up against Alistair Trung, DRESS UP, Haryono Setiadi, KAHLO, Michael Lo Sordo, Lui Hon and STRATAEUS.CARLUCCI, but Esber took the honours by utilising innovative wool product developments in the form of deconstructed suiting.

"It is such an honour to win the Woolmark prize as it is the highest recognition my brand has received to date," Esber said.

"Thank you to Australian Wool Innovation and Woolmark for my nomination and inclusion in this prestigious international award. I am so excited to represent Australia in Milan in February 2014."

The International Woolmark Prize reflects AWI's ongoing commitment to educating the next generation of fashion industry leaders about the extraordinary potential of wool. And according to AWI Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer, Rob Langtry, it provides a platform to forge ongoing partnerships with these future industry leaders.

"We congratulate Christopher Esber on winning the Australian regional prize," Mr Langtry said. "With the exciting expansion of the prize across Asia and the Middle East, the International Woolmark Prize is a truly global celebration of emerging talent and an increasingly important opportunity to see commercial success on a global scale each year.

"We look forward to supporting all the finalists in their journey toward the final event in Milan in February 2014. We wish all the designers participating in the prize this year the best and we hope the inherent properties of wool will stimulate the designers' creative thinking."

More information:

www.woolmarkprize.com

www.woolmark.com/woolmark-prize



Rahul Mishra won the India and Middle East regional final.

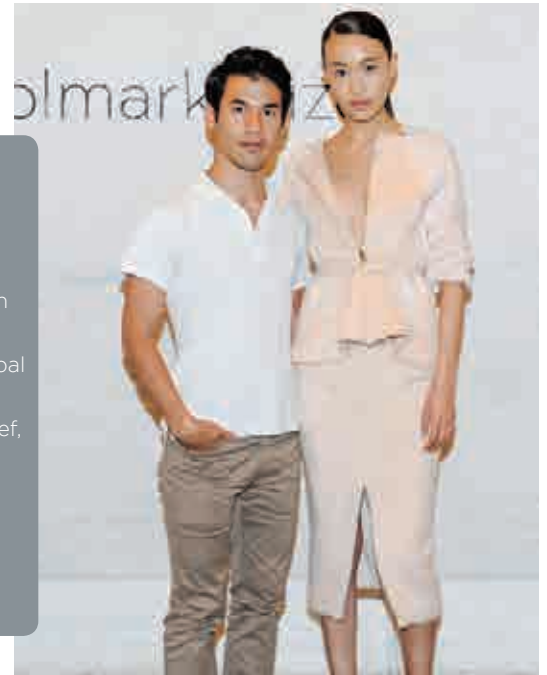
India and Middle East judging panel

- **Peter Ackroyd** – President, International Wool Textile Organisation
- **Imran Amed** – Founder, The Business of Fashion
- **Manish Arora** – Indian fashion designer
- **Simon Lock** – CEO, The Lock Group
- **Sunil Sethi** – President, Fashion Design Council of India

Altuzarra who won the USA regional final.

USA judging panel

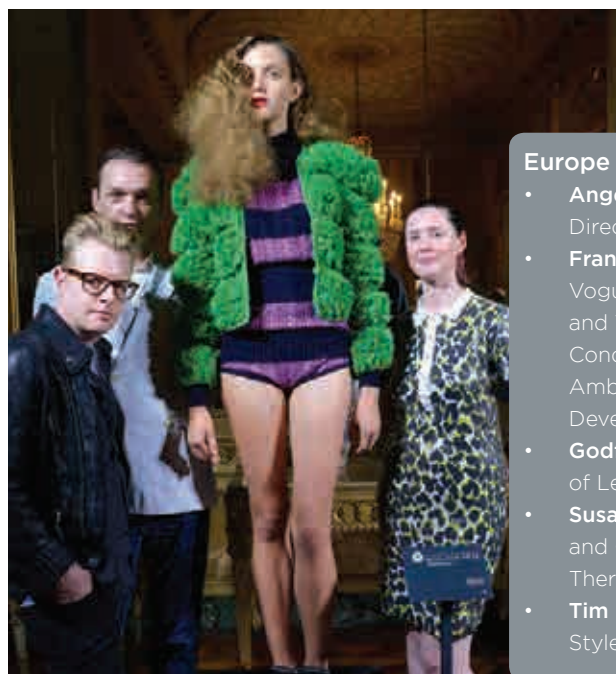
- **Alexander Wang** – Creative Director, Alexander Wang, Inc. and Balenciaga
- **Colleen Sherin** – Senior fashion director, Saks Fifth Avenue
- **Malcolm Carfrae** – EVP of Global Communications, Calvin Klein
- **Stefano Tonchi** – Editor-in-Chief, W magazine
- **Steven Kolb** – CEO, Council of Fashion Designers of America
- **Vanessa Friedman** – Fashion Editor, Financial Times



UK brand SIBLING that won the European regional final.

Europe judging panel

- **Angela Missoni** – Creative Director Womenswear, Missoni
- **Franca Sozzani** – Editor-in-Chief, Vogue Italia, L'Uomo Vogue Italia and Vogue.it. Editorial Director, Condé Nast Italia. "Goodwill Ambassador for Fashion 4 Development" for the UN
- **Godfrey Deeny** – Editor-at-Large of Le Figaro
- **Susanne Botschen** – Founder and Creative Director of My Theresa
- **Tim Blanks** – Editor-at-Large Style.com



Alexander Wang promotes Merino

FAST FACTS

- Celebrated American fashion designer Alexander Wang has been photographed by world-renowned Annie Leibovitz for advertisements promoting AWI's *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* global fibre advocacy campaign.
- Select pieces of his Fall/Winter 2013 and Fall/Winter 2014 collections will include Merino wool and carry the Woolmark logo.
- Alexander Wang was one of the judges of the USA regional final of the International Woolmark Prize.

Leading fashion designer Alexander Wang has been photographed by world-renowned photographer Annie Leibovitz as part of AWI's *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* global fibre advocacy campaign.

Wang will include Merino wool pieces in his namesake brand's Fall/Winter 2013 collection and champion the benefits of Merino wool as a luxury fibre.

"I have used Merino wool since I first started designing so collaborating with Woolmark was a natural fit for me," said Alexander Wang. "Wool has strong environmental credentials, and it always feels modern, and relevant."

For the two season partnership, select pieces of Wang's Fall/Winter 2013 and Fall/Winter 2014 collections will include Merino wool and carry the Woolmark logo.

Leibovitz has captured the essence of Alexander Wang and the beauty of his collaboration with AWI. The portrait of the designer will appear in the world's leading fashion magazines as well as in digital and social media.

"We are thrilled to be collaborating with celebrated designer Alexander Wang whose modern sensibility and innovative designs exhibit the beauty of Merino wool," says AWI CEO Stuart McCullough.

"His ability to think differently embodies our ethos of exploring the boundless potential and versatility of wool in fashion designers' creations."

Alexander Wang was born and raised in San Francisco, California and later moved to New York City to attend Parsons School of Design. In 2005, after

two years, he decided to pursue the launch of his own label.

In 2008, he was the recipient of the Vogue/CFDA Fashion Fund. He has also been the recipient of the Swarovski Womenswear Designer of the Year, Swiss Textiles Award, was acknowledged by GQ as Best Menswear Designer of the Year and by the CFDA for Best Accessory Designer. He was also one of the judges of the USA regional final of the International Woolmark Prize in July this year. Today, Alexander Wang has over 15 stores worldwide, including its own e-commerce site shipping to more than 50 countries, and is sold in more than 700 of the world's leading retailers.

Annie Leibovitz has been a professional photographer for more than 40 years. Among her most notable portraits are: John Lennon and Yoko Ono

in 1980 for Rolling Stone magazine, which was photographed just five hours before John was tragically killed; a pregnant and nude Demi Moore in 2008 for Vanity Fair, Queen Elizabeth II on her state visit to the United States in 2007; and Bruce Springsteen for his Born in the USA album cover in 1984.

The advertisements are part of AWI's *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* global fibre advocacy campaign that positions Merino wool as the fibre of choice for the world's leading designers and premium apparel brands. The global campaign addresses a new, younger generation of discerning shoppers, establishing Australian Merino wool as the fibre of choice for fine, contemporary fashion. ◀

More information:
www.alexanderwang.com



Leading American fashion designer Alexander Wang features, along with a Merino sheep, in the latest advertisement promoting AWI's *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* global fibre advocacy campaign.



The Sartorialist on fashion and social media

Scott Schuman (right) with Editor-in-Chief of Vogue Australia, Edwina McCann (left) and AWI Fashion Communications Manager, Melissa Grace (centre), examining a design of Christopher Esber during the judging of the Australia regional final of the International Woolmark Prize.

FAST FACTS

- Scott Schuman, aka The Sartorialist, who pioneered fashion photography in blog form, was one of the judges of the Australia regional final of the International Woolmark Prize.
- Scott says social media has given people a chance to see fashion from the catwalk on “real people”, not just models in a magazine.
- AWI continues to boost its use of social media to help reconnect a new generation of consumers with the natural wonders of wool.

Renowned American fashion photo-blogger Scott Schuman was a guest of AWI in Sydney in July as a judge of the Australia regional final of the International Woolmark Prize.

Scott is famous for creating The Sartorialist fashion photo-blog in 2005 with the idea of creating a two-way dialogue with its readers about the world of style and its relationship to daily life. Scott photographs people he sees “on the street” whose style he finds striking and then posts the photos to the blog.

He has redefined street-style fashion, photo blogging and the use of mixing social media with a savvy sense of business acumen.

Beyond the Bale caught up with Scott who was looking forward to the judging of the International Woolmark Prize regional final.

“I always really love working with young designers, young talented people, and seeing how they take something as basic as wool to life and figuring out how to use their creativity, whether it’s their artistic creativity or technology, to reimagine wool in a new way,” Scott told us.

“So the thing I’m looking forward to the most is seeing creative minds at work when they’re given as much freedom as Woolmark has given them in this contest.”

Scott said he thinks social media is influencing fashion, and society, in new, positive ways.

“I think that social media has given people a chance to see the fashion from

the runway on real people, not just models in a magazine. It gives them a chance to imagine fashion on more than a size two 18-year-old model.

“Social media has totally changed the way people live their life both locally and globally. People now feel more connected to global tribes of like-minded people, than necessarily being chained to their physical space in which they live.

“I think it’s had a chance to bring people together and, depending on what their likes and loves are, to not feel so alone on the planet.”

More information: www.thesartorialist.com

Social media extends wool’s reach

AWI continues to boost its use of social media to help reconnect a new generation of consumers with the natural wonders of wool. The company is helping drive the agenda for wool on Facebook and other social platforms such as Twitter and YouTube to generate positive online conversation about wool.

Of note, AWI’s “We Love Wool” page on Facebook more than doubled its fan base over the past year to more than 386,000 fans. The Woolmark pages on Facebook had similar results, increasing the number of fans on Facebook to 205,000 fans.

In total, our “social community” on Facebook increased by 80 per cent from the start of the 2012/13 financial year to 591,000 by the end of the year. The content we released through our communities reached over 150 million people online. This reach is created when our audience interacts with our content and it is seen by their friends.

AWI also uploads videos – on subjects across the whole of the wool pipeline – onto the company’s YouTube video sharing channel which has received more than one million views.

Our social media presence also includes Twitter and has recently extended to Instagram and Pinterest (online photo-sharing services).



Part of the three page fold-out spread of "The English Gentleman at Lord's" event that featured in the UK edition of GQ magazine. PHOTO: Robert Fairer

FAST FACTS

- Australian Merino wool and lightweight Cool Wool apparel were showcased as the modern face of British elegance at the iconic Lord's cricket ground in June in front of an international audience of buyers and journalists.
- The event was staged by AWI in collaboration with the bespoke tailors of Savile Row as part of the Spring/Summer 2014 edition of the menswear-specific fashion week *London Collections: Men*.
- As a supporter of *London Collections: Men* since the event's inception, AWI continues to highlight the relevance of Australian Merino wool within menswear and especially within the British fashion industry.

It seemed only fitting that a place where legends are made provided the backdrop for an event starring a legendary fibre – that the historic home of the gentleman's game was the setting for an event presenting the modern-face of British elegance – and that the bespoke tailors of Savile Row once again formed a hard-hitting partnership with AWI and the Woolmark brand to showcase first class craftsmanship and fine Merino wool in front of an international audience of buyers and journalists.

Staged as part of the Spring/Summer 2014 edition of the *London Collections: Men* fashion week, "The English Gentleman at Lord's" event involved more than one hundred dapper models dressed by Savile

Row's famous tailors in stylish attire for the warmer seasons.

The tailored collection represented a powerful combination of beautiful materials – principally Merino wool in fine lightweight Cool Wool fabrics – and unparalleled artisanship.

The different outfits on show, spread through the heritage rooms and terraces of Lord's Pavilion, ranged from summer sports jackets to cricket sweaters, taking in blazers, lightweight suits and flannel waistcoats with trousers.

Under the artistic direction of GQ Creative Fashion Director Jo Levin, the event celebrated the authentic English approach to menswear, highlighting the

historical role played by Merino wool throughout the spring and summer seasons over the centuries in a variety of lightweight fabrics and knitwear.

The event paid homage to AWI's Cool Wool campaign, relaunched last year to extend the wool selling seasons beyond the traditional autumn and winter. The campaign aims to persuade fashion designers and consumers that lightweight Merino wool is the perfect natural fibre for warmer climates, due to its breathability, temperature management, elasticity, performance, fineness and drape.

AWI Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer Rob Langtry, who attended the English Gentleman at Lord's event, said the partnership which had formed between AWI and Savile Row was one built on similar principles.

"Both share values of excellence, integrity and a commitment to quality," Mr Langtry said. "Our collaboration at the Lord's event showed the level of elegance and beauty which could be achieved through Merino wool. The fibre is very much relevant today."

Legends of cricket attending the event included Jeff Thomson, Brian Lara, Graham Gooch, John Emburey and Gladstone Small.

Cool Wool at *London Collections: Men*

In addition to the collaboration with Savile Row at Lord's Cricket Ground, AWI strongly promoted Merino wool by teaming up with some of the best designers at *London Collections: Men* – the focus of the initiative being to showcase lightweight Cool Wool.

As a supporter of *London Collections: Men* since its inception, AWI continues to expand and develop its activities and partnerships at the event as a way to highlight the relevance of Merino wool within menswear.

AWI's focus this year was on continuing collaborations with designers Richard Nicoll, Richard James and E Tautz, along with new collaborations with Jonathan Saunders (extending the relationship into menswear), Christopher Raeburn and Lou Dalton.

These six prestigious and highly appreciated UK menswear designers promoted Cool Wool through each of their Spring/Summer 2014 collections which they launched at *London Collections: Men*.

"*London Collections: Men* presented AWI with the perfect platform to showcase Cool Wool and the versatility of the fibre throughout the trans-seasonal months and into summer," Mr Langtry said.

"We are delighted to see Cool Wool fabrics incorporated into the Spring/Summer 2014 shows of six of the event's most revered designers." ◀

More information: www.woolmark.com/lords www.londoncollections.co.uk/men

Designers at *London Collections: Men* featuring Cool Wool

Richard Nicoll

"Merino wool is an important aspect of my collections as it anchors the collections with a modern elegance and authenticity and brings a complementary contrast to the more casual pieces to create a cool mashed and eclectic definition of modern style."

Richard James

Richard James showcased unstructured and unlined precision cut tailoring in super lightweight fabrics inspired by a colour-drenched fading summer's day. Fine worsted Cool Wool fabrics feature prominently throughout tailoring and casual wear.

E Tautz

E Tautz used a combination of incredible technical wool fabrics, woven with nylon and silk to add shimmer/sparkle, in some cases overprinted, and beautiful vibrant Cool Wool cloths, reworked from the 1920's archive in neons and other super brightly coloured yarns by Bower Roebuck.

Jonathan Saunders

"We have looked at different ways of how to innovate and elevate traditional wool suiting cloths. Laser cut and bonded surface applications are used to give traditional tailoring a modern finish. These shell like constructions have allowed us to create lightweight, unlined garments, suitable for today's modern man."

Christopher Raeburn

"Working with Cool Wool has been a fantastic experience. We've been able to use fine Merino throughout our desert-inspired collection to bring a completely new dynamic to the Christopher Raeburn collection. My personal favourites include our signature hoodie."

Lou Dalton

"Coming from a tailoring background the use of wool in some form has always been a big part of my collections. For SS14 using Cool Wool was a given, choosing to put what is often on the interior as the exterior this time worked so well with the lightness of cloth and the Cool Wool aesthetic."



Richard James Cool Wool design



Lou Dalton Cool Wool design



Richard Nicoll Cool Wool design

Merino wool in Vogue Paris

FAST FACTS

- AWI continues to re-establish its presence in France and engage with some of the leading international brands in this key womenswear market necessary to increase the demand for Merino wool.
- The French edition of Vogue has collaborated with AWI and four internationally renowned fashion designers to promote Merino wool in the September issue of the magazine.
- The eight-page feature is part of AWI's *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* fibre advocacy campaign.

France continues to remain at the forefront of AWI's marketing of Merino wool, with the renaissance of the fibre

firmly making its mark in the birthplace of fashion's chic womenswear.

The French edition of Vogue, Vogue Paris, has collaborated with four internationally renowned fashion designers, as part of AWI's *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* fibre advocacy campaign, to include a special eight-page feature on Merino wool in the September issue of the magazine.

The feature, titled "Wool Look – the fibre of fashion", illustrates unique and inspiring interpretations of Merino wool by designers Sonia Rykiel, Jean Paul Gaultier, Nina Ricci and Chloé.

The promotion has been designed for cross-media distribution, having been launched online by Vogue in a microsite at www.vogue.fr/woolmark2013 on the same day the September issue hit the newsstands. The microsite takes you

behind-the-scenes of the photo shoot and features exclusive interviews with the designers.

In his interview Jean Paul Gaultier provides an insight into his thoughts on Merino wool and how the fibre's natural properties make it both sensual and sophisticated.

AWI's Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer Rob Langtry said this year's feature in Vogue Paris follows on from a similar feature last year, which shows that AWI is serious about re-engaging with the country so influential in the fashion industry.

"AWI's feature in last year's September issue of Vogue Paris set the bar for high calibre designers to join in the collaboration and endorse the *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* campaign," Mr Langtry said.

"We are delighted to see Jean Paul Gaultier return for the 2013 special feature, and the inclusion of Sonia Rykiel, Nina Ricci and Chloé highlights the intrinsic connection between the global fashion industry at the highest level and the Woomark brand.

"France remains perhaps the single most influential flagship market for women's apparel – it is home to the brands that set the luxury goods trends and drive fashion."

The five-year global *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* campaign aims to inform a new generation of consumers – and the fashion community – about the natural attributes and benefits of Merino wool. The campaign establishes Merino wool as the fibre of choice for fine, contemporary fashion.

"The campaign most recently has been directed towards advocacy of the fibre through a presentation of the fibre story and commercial product by leading fashion apparel brands," Mr Langtry added.

"The campaign has also moved from a more traditional display format to an advertorial format, and from the use of traditional media to an increased use of rich digital and social media. It is clear from the growth in partner participation rates the advertorial approach is our future direction and is likely to generate greater impact and stronger demand growth." ◀



Pages from the feature in the September edition of Vogue Paris promoting Merino wool.

More information:

www.vogue.fr/woolmark2013

www.merino.com

Back to nature in Vogue UK

FAST FACTS

- The UK edition of Vogue has collaborated with AWI and six world renowned UK-based fashion designers to promote Merino wool in the October issue of the magazine.
- The designers, including Victoria Beckham, Alexander McQueen and Stella McCartney, present their modern interpretations of Merino wool for this Vogue feature.
- The eight-page feature titled Back to Nature is part of AWI's *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* fibre advocacy campaign.

The October issue of Vogue UK is getting back to nature, with the high-profile fashion magazine publishing an eight-page feature on Merino wool.

The UK remains one of the most important and arguably the most dynamic flagship market in fashion apparel, in both marketing and manufacturing terms.

Photographed by internationally acclaimed fashion and music photographer Yelena Yemchuk, the feature is running as part of the *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* fibre advocacy campaign and collaborates with six renowned fashion designers.

Victoria Beckham, Alexander McQueen, Roksanda Illincic, Christopher Kane, J.W. Anderson and Stella McCartney present their modern interpretations of Merino wool for this Vogue feature titled Back to Nature. Appropriately titled, Yemchuk shot Back to Nature in the great outdoors with a mob of Bowmont sheep - a British breed that is a cross between Saxon Merino (75%) and Shetland (25%) - at Westcott Farm in Devon, UK. It illustrates the farm to fashion story and places a greater emphasis on the wool fibre than what has generally been done in the past.

The garments featured capture Merino wool's versatility across different pieces of knitwear, wovenwear, outerwear and next-to-skin apparel. The text used to complement the photographs expresses Merino wool's natural properties, performance benefits and trans-seasonal usage, exemplifying the notion that style and ethics go hand-in-hand.



Pages from the feature in the October edition of Vogue UK promoting Merino wool.

As the text explains:

"Contemporary British designers know the virtues of a fabric that works with them as opposed to against. Offering unlimited fabric and design options and naturally anti-static, Merino handles like a dream when it comes to creating the end vision."

The Back to Nature feature will be distributed across both online and print mediums, with a video also accompanying the photographs.

Magazine features such as this, the Vogue Paris feature (opposite), along with Fleece Academy published in GQ UK (see overleaf), provide valuable publicity for Merino wool and the Woolmark brand, and cement the fibre's rightful place in the fashion industry and within key consumer markets across the world.

AWI Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer Rob Langtry said, "Moving into the fourth year of the five year global *Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™* campaign, we are now seeing apparel brands focusing their promotions in leading international media titles on the *ingredient fibre* of their seasonal designs. They are heavily featuring and referencing Merino sheep and the versatility and performance benefits of the fibre. The louder voice from these leading media and designer collaborations in their education of consumers is a clear indication that the communication started by AWI in 2010, when we returned to global marketing, is well on track."

More information: www.vogue.co.uk
www.merino.com

FAST FACTS

- The UK version of GQ magazine is publishing a six-page feature on Merino wool in its October edition.
- The promotional feature collaborates with top menswear designers who endorse Merino wool.
- Titled Fleece Academy, a strong emphasis is placed on consumer education and on the Merino fibre.

With London firmly cementing its place as the home of menswear, high-profile men's fashion magazine GQ UK is celebrating Merino wool in this lucrative market, with a special six-page feature paying homage to the noble fibre in the magazine's October edition.

Titled Fleece Academy, the feature collaborates with more than 15 internationally acclaimed fashion designers, some of whom also support AWI's Cool Wool campaign.

E. Tautz, Jonathan Saunders, Richard Nicoll, Lou Dalton and Christopher Raeburn all recently presented their Spring Summer 2014 range at *London Collections: Men* (see page 9), which had a strong focus on Cool Wool lightweight fabrics. Here, they return to endorse Merino wool alongside fashion heavyweights including Z Zegna, Paul Smith, Christian Lacroix and Johnstons of Elgin for the Fleece Academy.

With five stunning images against the backdrop of two English mills, the images offer readers an insight into the woollen

GQ UK:

a yarn about Merino

fibre and a garment's origins. The photos depict autumn layering of key Merino wool pieces, expressing the versatility of the fibre from knitwear to fine tailoring, and from softness to performance coatings and accessories.

Shot on location at Spectrum Yarns and Taylor & Lodge in Huddersfield, the collaborative campaign has a strong focus on education, as well as an emphasis on the grassroots of a garment. As the GQ feature explains:

"When versatility, quality and performance are needed, fashion brands buy Merino wool...from farms that have stayed in the same family for more than 100 years. Human values, as much as climate and terrain, are the foundations of these industries, and Merino wool provides the staple ingredient for the global fashion arena."

It is promotional pieces such as this which play a crucial role in educating a new generation about wool's inherent properties, as well as help place the fibre as the fabric of choice for contemporary fashion. Having internationally acclaimed designers endorse Merino wool builds on the reputation that AWI and the Woolmark brand have been working to achieve

and ultimately see the demand for wool increase in premium markets.

With consumers becoming more and more concerned with provenance stories as well the eco-credentials of a fibre, it is important to continue to spread wool's message in these markets.

GQ highlights the fact that Merino wool is a fully renewable fibre source, stating that as long as "the grass grows, the rain falls and the sun shines", wool will continue to be produced and Australia will remain at the forefront of the supply chain.

It also highlights that wool is ideal for creating richly coloured fabrics, is adaptable to innovation and has unique softness and performance attributes.

"Whether it's next-to-skin garments, fine tailoring or robust outerwear, Merino wool is the designer's choice."

Fleece Academy has been produced for cross-media distribution, with online and mobile variations created to further extend the feature's reach. GQ's website will also host video footage of the Fleece Academy photoshoot, offering viewers an exclusive behind-the-scenes look.

More information: www.gq-magazine.co.uk
www.merino.com



Pages from the feature in the October edition of GQ UK promoting Merino wool.

Wool revs up!



The Parcour Roadster, designed by Italdesign Giugiaro, uses Australian Merino wool in the concept car's interior.

FAST FACTS

- AWI has collaborated with Italian weaver Lanificio F.lli Cerruti and automobile design company Italdesign Giugiaro on a project that highlights wool's versatility.
- Australian Merino wool has been used both in the interior of a concept car and in a capsule collection of driving jackets.
- The car and jackets were unveiled at the Pitti Uomo trade show in June in front of an audience of international media and buyers.

“Wool is young. Wool has exceptional qualities that allow us to work it in new and unusual ways. It is not only elegant, but has to be eclectic, hybrid, urban and free.”

This is the maxim of Nino Cerutti, who manages Lanificio F.lli Cerruti – one of the world's most prestigious weavers which has been a symbol of elegance and the best wool products since 1881.

AWI has been working with Lanificio F.lli Cerruti and well known automobile design company Italdesign Giugiaro in a collaboration that showcases the versatility and potential of wool.

The result of the collaboration, the Parcour Roadster concept car, designed

by Italdesign Giugiaro with a Lamborghini engine and an interior of high quality Australian Merino wool fabric made by Cerruti, is a research prototype like no other. It was put on show in June for the first time at the Pitti Uomo trade show in Florence in front of an audience of international media and buyers.

Limited edition driving jackets, also made from fine Merino wool fabric from the Natural Born Elegance line by Julian Cerruti, were unveiled to complement the car. Two types of jackets were developed: one with knit sleeves for a more casual look, and one with fabric sleeves for a more polished look. Both types ensure extreme comfort and practicality making the driver feel totally at ease behind the wheel.

550 jackets were made – the same number as the horsepower of the V10 Lamborghini engine mounted in the Parcour. The jackets and the car interior both carry the Woolmark logo.

According to Nino Cerruti, the use of Merino fabric in jackets and car interiors demonstrate the fibre's versatility and is an expression of a new way of thinking.

“The precious Cerruti fabric is used in an unusual way, to create urban and unconventional pieces and to cover the seats of the latest prototype created by Italdesign Giugiaro,” he said.

“Once, it was thought that there was only one way to work with wool, a



One of the Julian Cerruti driving jackets made from Australian Merino wool.

right way and strict method to follow. Everything was defined and I have heard ‘you have to do it this way because you cannot do it otherwise’. Wool had a functional purpose for concrete needs rather than for individual desires.

“Today, I believe that duty has given way to freedom, and freedom is everything. Today, the urban environment has occupied the place of the countryside, wool is no longer a need but a desire.

“The luxury of today is comfort and the time we dedicate to ourselves in a warm and relaxing atmosphere. Whichever piece you choose, it will be unique and unrepeatable, just like your life.

“Wool is young. This is my motto.” ◀

The Wool Lab:

Seasonal trend guide for wool

FAST FACTS

- Now in its third year, AWI's The Wool Lab seasonal guide to the best wool fabrics and yarns in the world has become a well-respected and widely recognised tool for companies in the fashion industry
- The Autumn/Winter 2014/15 edition of The Wool Lab was officially launched at the Pitti Uomo trade show in June.
- To help increase the availability and reach of The Wool Lab, AWI has launched a new website dedicated to The Wool Lab and an updated version of the iPad app.

Since its launch in 2011, The Wool Lab – AWI's seasonal guide to the best wool fabrics and yarns in the world – has quickly become a well-respected and widely recognised tool for companies in the fashion industry, inspiring them to use wool in their apparel collections.

Now in its third year, the latest edition of The Wool Lab was officially launched in June at the Pitti Uomo trade show held in Florence. This latest offering presents seven inspiring themes for the Autumn/Winter 2014/15 season.

More than 250 industry members viewed The Wool Lab at Pitti Uomo, with many requesting one-on-one meetings with their local office of The Woolmark Company. AWI country manager for Italy, Francesco Magri, said the feedback from Pitti Uomo this year was clear: "Knitwear is becoming more and more important. We noticed a strong focus on more urban and young looks using more compact textiles and yarns."

This edition of The Wool Lab will continue to be exhibited at other trade shows and at workshops and seminars, as well as retail and manufacturer training sessions, all of which have proved in the past to be extremely valuable for industry stakeholders.

The collection is the result of intensive research. The fabrics and yarns in The Wool Lab have been selected by AWI from the collections of some of the world's leading textile companies. All the fabrics and yarns are commercially available and feature Merino wool products in line with the leading fashion and textile trends.

The Wool Lab includes swatches, mood boards and presentations that tell a trend story and encourage retailers and brands to view and source wool as a premium fibre.

Digital editions

While the full edition of The Wool Lab is a view-on-request guide that includes fabric samples, AWI has launched a free website dedicated solely to The Wool Lab at www.thewoolab.com to help increase the availability and reach of the guide. With a clean and open look, this new portal is

easy to navigate and the perfect starting point for those interested in discovering wool's trend forecasts.

This website complements the more in depth iPad app of The Wool Lab that is available free of charge through Apple iTunes. The app mirrors the mood boards and fabric swatches in The Wool Lab and presents the seven inspiring themes from the Autumn/Winter 2014/15 edition. Bringing The Wool Lab to your fingertips, the app allows viewers to discover the seasonal trends in more detail, and zoom in on fabric and yarns swatches.

The functionality of the iPad app has been updated. The Wool Lab Version 2.0 allows users in the textile industry to create personalised online swatch collections and then make requests for the real fabric samples from suppliers. ◀

More information: www.thewoolab.com



As well as being launched at trade events across the world, The Wool Lab for Autumn/Winter 2014/15 is available on www.thewoolab.com and as an iPad app (above).

Nurturing with nature

FAST FACTS

- AWI has reinforced its presence in the childrenswear market, highlighting its new Woolmark Nurture brand and introducing new items to its Merino Mini collection at the Pitti Bimbo trade show.
- A joint advertising campaign with Italian children's brand Il Gufo was also launched, focusing on the wool capsule collection resulting from the collaboration between the two brands.
- The partnership is a new step in educating consumers on the benefits of wool in childrenswear.

AWI's Mothers and Babies program was on show in June at the world's most important international fashion event for children and teenagers, Pitti Bimbo.

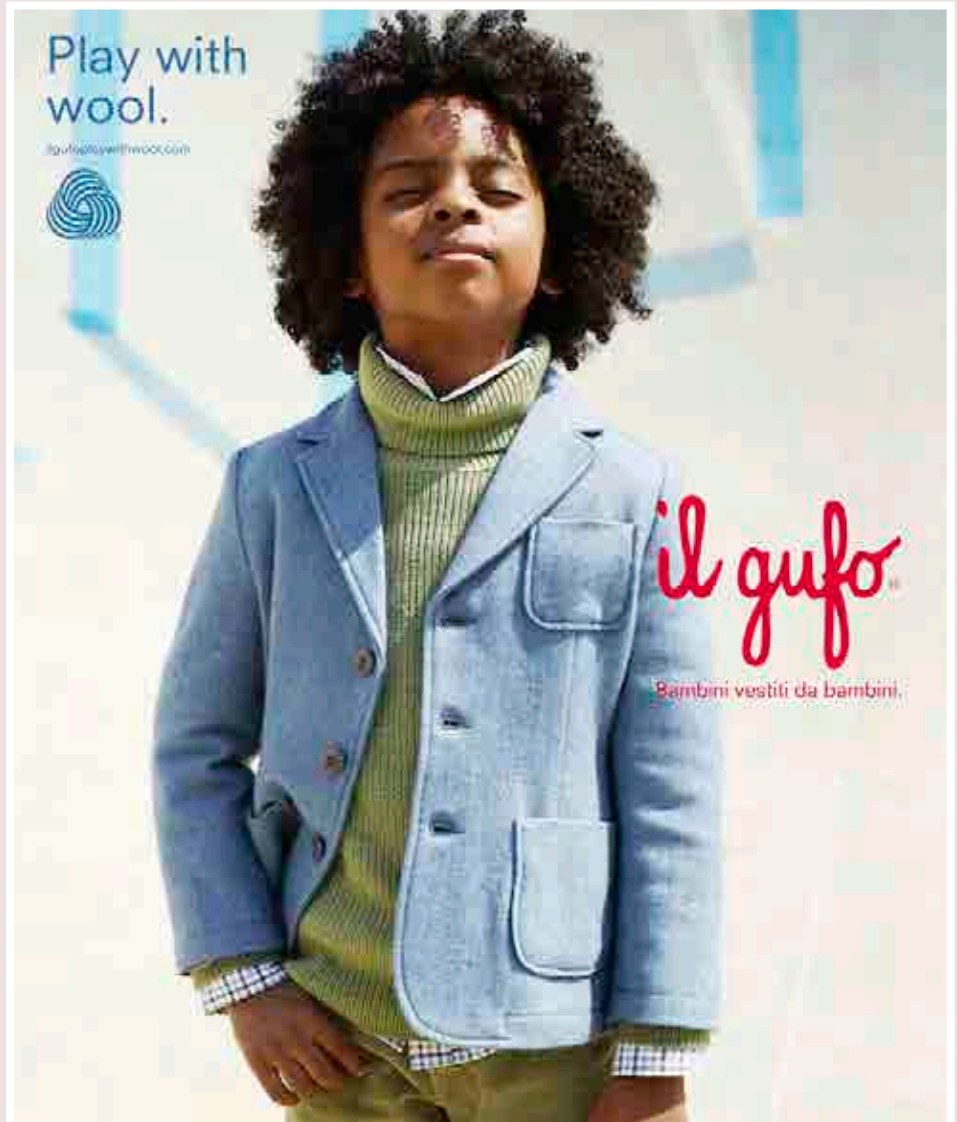
Held in Florence, the 77th edition of the show attracted 5800 global trade buyers along with 10,000 international visitors. For AWI, the show acted as a platform to launch its new brand, Woolmark Nurture, and highlight the new set of specifications associated with this brand, ensuring optimum health and wellbeing for babies and children.

AWI reinforced its presence at the exhibition with a new stand, conceived to offer a "wool experience" to visitors, mixing science and entertainment to highlight the natural qualities of Merino wool fibre and its benefits in childrenswear.

In the new booth, AWI introduced items from the Merino Mini collections which have been created by AWI to showcase product development ideas and innovations to the industry. This was through samples of jersey pieces and bodysuits, knitted pullovers and pants, blankets and other garments, produced using the finest Merino wool.

AWI also hosted an industry event on the first night of the show, building and strengthening relationships as well as connecting industry partners to key brands.

A joint advertising campaign with Italian luxury children's brand Il Gufo was also launched, focusing on the wool capsule collection resulting from the collaboration between the two brands, which started in 2012.



Advertising from the new joint campaign between AWI and Italian children's brand Il Gufo.

The partnership has seen the development of a colourful collection of 100 per cent Merino wool jumpers that showcase the natural qualities of the fibre. The campaign represents the positive values AWI shares with Il Gufo, presenting a joyful image of childhood and a modern concept of childrenswear.

The campaign was aired globally from August, supporting the launch of the collection in Il Gufo's eight flagship stores, to more than 750 wholesalers, and in four shop-in-shops, in nine countries.

According to AWI Chief of Strategy and Marketing Officer Rob Langtry, it is the common values and beliefs shared by the two companies which provide the backbone to this new campaign.

"Il Gufo is a brand with which AWI shares values of excellence, innovation and commitment to quality," Mr Langtry said.

"AWI is proud to grow the partnership with Il Gufo through the launch of a joint international advertising campaign which celebrates the beauty of Merino wool. The campaign is a new step in educating consumers about the benefits of wool in childrenswear.

"With the aim to increase the demand for wool, AWI will continue to promote wool in the Mothers and Babies category, supporting the best brands through product development innovations, and educating the supply chain from retailers to consumers." ◀

More information: www.ilgufo.com

MERINO FOR THE SLOPES AND CITY

US apparel brand Neve Designs has this year established a partnership with AWI to expand its Merino wool apparel product line.

The Colorado-based company, which became a Woolmark licensee earlier this year, is a specialty manufacturer and retailer of distinctly functional and fashionable knit sweaters, outerwear, base-layers and accessories – all with an alpine feel.

The partnership will help boost the presence of Australian wool within the American market as well as in versatile lifestyle fashion. For Neve Designs, the partnership allows the brand to continue to build upon its quality, performance and beautiful design aesthetic with premium Merino wool.

Neve Designs marketing director Jennifer Tille said the mixture of Neve's apparel designs and use of quality fibres adds strength and appeal to its brand.

"It is paramount to our company that we continue to improve the performance and durability of our apparel, while preserving its luxurious touch," Ms Tille said. "With Merino wool, we are able to use an environmentally responsible fibre that is not only extremely high quality, but also incredibly comfortable and durable."

In time for America's autumn season, Neve has unveiled a new range of men's and women's styles made from 100 per cent Merino wool, including a revamped Sport Collection, a fresh take on the timeless Classic Collection and new Outerwear Collection.

For AWI, the partnership increases the Woolmark brand's presence within the lucrative US market. Point-of-sale marketing collateral produced by AWI in conjunction with Neve Designs builds consumer awareness of wool's natural benefits as well as

the brand. This year's partnership follows on from a previous collaboration, where AWI conducted in-store training sessions for retail staff.

"Neve Designs is well-respected not only in the foothills of ski slopes, but the company's apparel is increasingly being spotted in urban cities across the USA," AWI country manager for the Americas, Michelle Lee, said.

"To coincide with the release of Neve Designs' new Merino wool range, AWI has produced three point-of-sale items. One flyer was created primarily for retail staff outlining the natural attributes of Merino wool, which will help educate them about the fibre and in turn pass this information on to their customers.

"Two consumer-facing pieces were also created, in the form of pocket size fold-outs similar in format to fold-out trail maps commonly available at ski resorts. One is for alpine dwellers, whilst the other is for those in urban cities. Each has information about Merino wool and apparel care information. The alpine one also has information on North America's top ski resorts, whilst the urban one features some of the world's most festive winter cities.

"Neve blends resort performance with city style and is a true innovator in mountain lifestyle fashion. We are thrilled to partner with a brand that is at home on the mountain but has an eye for classic style."

Neve Designs is an official partner of the US Ski Team and will provide the team with wool knit products for the 2014 Winter Olympics.

More information: www.nevedesigns.com

FAST FACTS

- AWI has partnered with Woolmark licensee and US apparel brand Neve Designs to help produce a Merino wool range for the northern hemisphere's autumn/winter season.
- Neve Designs blends ski resort performance with city style and is a true innovator in mountain lifestyle fashion.
- Point-of-sale material was also created to increase the Woolmark brand's presence in North America and promote consumer knowledge about Merino wool.



FAST FACTS

- Rebel Sport has unveiled an activewear collection made with Australian Merino wool and bearing the Woolmark Blend logo.
- The new Super Natural sports collection is available at more than 90 Rebel stores nationwide and online.

Three great Australian success stories – Merino wool, the Woolmark brand and Australia's leading sporting retailer Rebel – have united to offer Australians a unique range of sporting apparel. And with summer just around the corner, now is the time to start thinking about getting fit.

Rebel has announced Australian Merino wool is now available at more than 90 of its stores nationwide.

The new Super Natural Australian Merino sports collection for both men and women contains Woolmark Blend quality fabrics – a 50/50 fine Australian Merino wool/polyester blend that has been created using the latest knitting technology.

Rebel Sport's marketing general manager Rob Kain said using natural fibre was part of the ongoing innovation of the Rebel range.

"The Merino fibre is a winner as it offers both performance and comfort, no matter what the exercise or the season," Mr Kain said. "Merino is synonymous with Australia and the addition of a range featuring natural fibre offers Rebel a unique point of difference and underlines our commitment to offer customers the most diverse and progressive range of sporting apparel."

AWI Global Category Manager for Sports and Outdoors, Lars Ulvesund, added, "Over the past few years we have seen Merino wool gaining ground in sports apparel in Europe and the USA, so it's very rewarding to see this initiative in Australia with such a high profile and well-regarded retailer like Rebel."

More information:
www.rebelsport.com.au

MERINO IN REBEL'S SUPER NATURAL COLLECTION



Kyly Clarke, is the face of the Super Natural Merino range at Rebel Sport.

MOVER: IN WOOL WE TRUST

As Australia moves through the tail-end of its ski season, the northern hemisphere's snow enthusiasts will be



Such is Mover's faith in wool as a performance fibre that its mantra is "In wool we trust".

gearing up for their first fall of snow. And whilst Australia is more than 14,000km away from Switzerland, it is almost certain that wool grown from our paddocks will be seen on skiers and snowboarders carving their way down the Swiss Alps.

Leading Swiss snow sports apparel brand Mover, which has long believed in the benefits of natural fibres, has recently become a Woolmark licensee as the first stage in a product development and marketing partnership with AWI.

"For us, this is a very logical next step," Mover owner and CEO Nicolas Rochat said. "Innovation and high quality apparel has long been our signature trademark and partnering with AWI puts us in a position where we can further enhance the focus on this."

AWI Global Category Manager for Sports and Outdoors, Lars Ulvesund, says Mover was a pioneer in designing ski jackets and pants with wool filling instead of with synthetics or down.

FAST FACTS

- Leading Swiss snow sports brand Mover has joined the Woolmark licensing program.
- The company pioneered the use of wool in apparel filling instead of synthetics.

"By becoming a Woolmark licensee AWI is able to work closely with Mover and the two can continue to deliver the very best in snow apparel," he said.

"Innovative developments such as wool-filled jackets and pants represent the changing face of the activewear market, which is seeing an increasing number of garments made from wool. Mover has long seen the potential for wool in outdoor apparel and this is represented by the variety offered by the brand."

Mover's innovative approach to mixing wool with Gore-Tex® rids the need for synthetic insulation and offers maximum breathability and comfort no matter the weather conditions. Similarly, Mover's 2012/13 winter collection used the finest Merino wool for all base-layers and liners.

More information: www.mover.eu

Promoting wool for interior textiles

FAST FACTS

- AWI's interior textiles program specialises in building demand for wool products in the bedding, carpets and furnishings sectors.
- New marketing collateral highlighting the key benefits of wool in these sectors has been created, as well as funding for scientific studies that support marketing statements.
- The launch of The Wool Lab Interiors this year has helped put wool in the spotlight particularly for high-end furnishings.

AWI's interior textiles program specialises in building demand – from manufacturers and consumers – for wool products in the bedding, floor coverings and furnishing segments of the interiors market. These sectors support the proportion of the Australian clip that is broader micron or crossbred wool.

AWI's interior textiles program aims to showcase and inform designers, manufacturers, architects, retail staff and consumers about the benefits of the use of wool in interiors.

In recent months AWI category manager for Interior Textiles, Ingrid Oomen, has been working alongside AWI's marketing team to create a host of marketing collateral dedicated to this increasingly important category.

NEW MARKETING COLLATERAL

New pieces of collateral have been created for Woolmark licensees and their clients, as well as consumers. This includes flyers about the benefits of wool for bedding, carpets and interior textiles generally, as well as a guide that explains how to safely clean stains from wool carpets.

Presentations on the benefits of wool for bedding and carpet have also been created to help AWI staff strengthen key account relationships with manufacturers and explain the support that AWI can offer them.

With about 90 per cent of Woolmark's interior textiles licensees from the bedding sector, it is important to generate up-to-date information not only about wool's natural benefits but also report on scientific studies that support marketing statements about the beneficial aspects of wool for a better night's sleep.

"The creation of this new collateral, including new images, allows for relationships to be strengthened and for new ones to form," Ms Oomen said. "It is important we have up-to-date information on hand in this increasingly important category and ultimately we hope to boost the demand of Australian wool that is of a broader micron.

"This collateral along with AWI's presence at high-profile trade shows, such as Heimtextil in Germany at the start of year, ensures that interest in the sector continues to grow."

TRADE SHOWS

According to Woolmark licensees that attended this year's influential Heimtextil trade show, the demand for wool in the interiors sector is strengthening despite the challenging economic climate.

Heimtextil is the biggest international trade show for home and contract textiles. At the show, AWI co-hosted the Wool Arena – a focal point for the industry to promote wool. AWI, along with Woolmark licensee co-exhibitors, showcased the superior natural benefits of wool to visitors. Suppliers, buyers, designers and retailers along the wool pipeline could meet to discuss new, innovative products and technologies.

THE WOOL LAB FOR INTERIORS

To help support the market for wool interiors, AWI also this year launched the inaugural edition of The Wool Lab Interiors – a guide to the best wool textiles and the most interesting and innovative applications of wool in the furnishing and interior textile sectors.

Since the launch of The Wool Lab Interiors at Milan Design Week in April, the guides have also been exhibited at Intertextile Shanghai Home Textiles in August and will this month be shown at Decorex in London. According to Ms Oomen the launch has been a success and AWI's key account managers are establishing relationships with new clients.



Retail staff explain the benefits of Woolmark certified wool bedding products to customers.

More information:

www.woolmark.com/working-with-wool/interiors

FAST FACTS

- This year's Wool4Skool competition which had a theme of "fit for royalty" attracted a record number of more than 1200 entries from students across Australia.
- Wool4Skool offers a complete fashion design experience in the classroom, introducing a new generation of Australians to the versatility and benefits of wool.
- The AWI initiative was planned by teachers and textile experts in line with the Years 7 to 10 education curriculum.

If fashion designer Jonathan Ward says your work is good, you know you must be onto a real winner, something that is in fact fit for a royal.

And that's exactly how the leading Australian designer viewed the work of Year 10 student Sophie Aylward.

Sophie, from Kinross Wolaroi School, Orange, in the central west of NSW, was this year's winner of AWI's Wool4Skool competition with the theme Fit for Royalty.

With the expansion into Years 7 and 8, this year's Wool4Skool competition attracted more than 1200 entries from across Australia, with students taking part in the real-life fashion design experience and learning about the versatility and potential of Australian Merino wool.

Planned by teachers and textile experts for the Years 7 to 10 education curriculum, Wool4Skool offered a rewarding design experience without students actually having to make the garment. Entrants were aided by fabric samples and extensive educational resources developed in-line with the Design and Technology curriculum.

Content creator and judge for Wool4Skool 2013, Katrina Wheaton-Penniall, said it was encouraging to see how many teachers had picked up the competition and embedded it into their classroom teaching.

"This was evident in the quality of entries that were submitted from a broad range of schools from across the country," she said. "The standard and variety of entries was outstanding and I hope everyone enjoyed being involved."

Student winners were chosen across each year level and there were finalists in each state, but it is Sophie's design which will be brought to life by Jonathan Ward and feature in a photoshoot in *Girlfriend* magazine.



Wool4Skool winners crowned

Wool4Skool Year 10 winner Sophie Aylward from Kinross Wolaroi School, Orange.

PHOTO: Steve Gosch, Central Western Daily

Mr Ward, who grew up on a property near Tottenham and has been executive designer at R.M. Williams for more than 10 years, said he was very much looking forward to working with the winning design.

This entry involved a strong creative statement about the qualities of wool," he said. "The student had researched the fabric and style of garment likely to be worn by the Duchess of Cambridge, formerly Kate Middleton. It ticked all the boxes."

And, according to the lucky winner she had indeed carried out extensive research before submitting her final entry.

"I did lots of research on what kind of clothes the Duchess of Cambridge wore and what suited her," Sophie said. "All her clothes are very elegant and beautiful."

Sophie participated in Wool4Skool as part of her Textiles and Design class and learned about wool's properties. She said it made her think differently about wool and exposed her to the fibre's versatility.

"I didn't know wool could do this. When I thought of wool I thought of knitted clothes.

"I worked under the theme 'The love of Will and Kate' and my final design is for Kate to wear on her two-year wedding anniversary.

"The bodice is made from wool devoré, which has the pattern of the lace from Kate's wedding dress burnt into the wool. The full-length pedal skirt is from finely woven Merino wool."

More information:
www.wool.com/wool4skool

2013 Wool4Skool winners

- **Year 10:** Sophie Aylward, Kinross Wolaroi School, Orange, NSW.
- **Year 9:** Lian Koh, St Andrew's Cathedral School, Sydney, NSW.
- **Year 8:** Maggie Catalano, Loreto Mandeville Hall, Toorak, Vic.
- **Year 7:** Sophie Capoccia, St Dominic's Priory College, North Adelaide, SA.
- **Teacher winner:** Nicole Koinuma from Noosa District State High School, Noosa, Qld



COMPASS POINTS TO WOOL

Gilbert Davidson from Roberts Ltd with Nigel Leow from Malaysian-based Compass Wool Processors who was recently on a fact-finding trip to Australia.
PHOTO: Australian Broadcasting Corporation Library Sales

FAST FACTS

- A new early-stage wool processing plant has opened in Malaysia, offering a “one-stop shop” for customers.
- Compass Wool Processors estimates it will scour about 250,000 bales each year, with Australia being the primary supplier.
- The opening of the plant is a demonstration of confidence in the future of the global wool industry.

When one thinks of wool and its production, Malaysia is generally not the first place that springs into mind.

But this is about to change, with the opening of an early-stage processing plant offering a “one-stop shop” for scouring, topmaking and shrink resist treatments.

The opening of Compass Wool Processors (CWP) shows there is confidence in the future of the global wool industry, and as CWP business manager Stefan Bernerius says, the plant aims to be an integral part of the supply chain by late-2014.

“Our first wool bales have already arrived from Australia and we plan to have regular commercial production by the fourth quarter of 2013,” Mr Bernerius said. “By the same time next year we are

aiming to be at full capacity.

“Our customers are an integral part of the world supply chain and we will give them a real option of where they can process their wool with integrity, quality and service at competitive costing.”

CWP is a subsidiary of Singapore’s NK Ingredients, a major buyer of wool grease for lanolin, which was having difficulty with a consistent supply of high quality wool grease. And so the concept of CWP was born, with the aim of building a high-quality wool processing plant that would be attractive to the world’s topmakers and spinners, and according to Mr Bernerius will act as an alternative to China and India.

“Logistically, it made sense to set up in Malaysia. It is a central hub for both the origin countries and the consumer countries; there is a stable government, energy and costs; no VAT, duty, customs or quarantine issues; and Malaysia’s warm and humid climate is perfect for wool processing.”

By the end of 2014 it is estimated that 250,000 bales – or 45 million greasy kilograms – of wool will be scoured each year at CWP. Mr Bernerius estimates that 60-70 per cent of the wool will come from Australia, with the main type being Merino wool of 17.5 to 25 microns.

“We will also plan on processing fine wool of 14 to 17 microns, crossbreeds of about 26 to 32 microns, and carpet wools of a broader 34 to 40 microns will also be considered.”

With Australia being CWP’s major supplier, it makes sense to have someone with a wealth of knowledge about Australia’s wool industry at the plant’s helm.

“I worked in the Australian wool industry for about 25 years, from the shearing shed all the way through to yarns and fabrics and everything in between,” Mr Bernerius said. “I value the importance of connecting and engaging with Australia’s wool producers at a grassroots level and we have been travelling to Australia every three to four months to see potential customers and partners.

“We would like to show that we are not only processors in Asia, but we are working with and helping the entire supply chain at all levels, helping it develop and grow.”

AWI General Manager for Product Development and Commercialisation, Jimmy Jackson, recently visited the new multi-million dollar processing plant on a recent trip to South-East Asia, along with AWI Chairman Wal Merriman and board member David Webster.

“It is great to see significant investment in new factories, which can clean and comb our wool,” Mr Jackson said. “An investment like Compass bodes well for the future of the Australian woolgrowing industry and cements faith in the efforts of woolgrowers across Australia.”

More information: www.compasswool.com

Wool: a Turkish delight

FAST FACTS

- AWI has increased its resources in Turkey to provide the country's manufacturing industry with support to develop and promote high quality Australian Merino wool products.
- In particular AWI has been working to educate the Turkish industry in the crucial stages of dyeing and finishing Merino wool.
- Wool was also a key feature at this year's annual Fashion Apparel Conference hosted by the Turkish Clothing Manufacturers Association in Istanbul.

With Turkey's growing domestic market becoming increasingly sophisticated and with the country boasting a strong local manufacturing industry, AWI has been investing both time and resources in rebuilding the presence of Merino wool within Turkey.

Turkey already boasts a relatively strong manufacturing base – aided by its proximity to both the east and the west – and so AWI has spent the past few years working closely with Turkish manufacturers. Added to this there is a growing importance for retail – with an increasing number of international brands exploring Turkey.

The past year in particular has seen the wool industry in the country enjoy a resurgence, with many European retail markets renewing their interest in sourcing products from a base closer to home than from further afield regions such as Asia. The added benefit of this is that both parties on the supply and demand chain are helping reduce their carbon footprint.

"Turkey already has an established manufacturing base, particularly in the circular knitting sector," AWI General Manager for Product Development and Commercialisation Jimmy Jackson said. "Yet their strength lay predominately with cotton and synthetic fibres.

"What this meant for us is that we did not need to teach them the basics, but rather how to apply their skills to Merino wool – with the crucial part being in the dyeing and finishing stage. We have about half a dozen jersey knitters

who are strong in their field, and AWI Technical Manager (Dyeing and Finishing) Brenda Yang visited Turkey to educate the manufacturers on how to dye and finish fabric from Merino yarns."

The result of this technical transfer means there are now six Turkish knitters with enough confidence to offer Merino wool fabrics in their range, which have been tested against Woolmark standards.

Four flatbed knitters were also targeted, with these manufacturers competent in working with wool, but generally with machine washable yarn.

"We introduced four other AWI innovations to these flatbed knitters, focusing on Mercerised Merino, Vintage Merino, Merino Retract and Sculptured Merino. Great success was found with Mercerised Merino and Merino Retract, which now allows these knitters to expand their Merino wool range."

So strong is AWI's belief in the future for Turkey that it recently increased its number of staff in the AWI Turkey office, headed by country manager Mahmut Kocak.

AWI CEO Stuart McCullough said, "We view Turkey as a significant manufacturing market with growing importance for retail. We have recently invested in a new office and to grow the team in Turkey, which is a significant step forward in providing the Turkish industry with support to develop and promote high quality Australian Merino wool products locally and internationally."

With retail and apparel enjoying such a strong presence in Turkey, and coinciding with the success of AWI's technical and innovations transfer, AWI brought together UK-based Alexander McQueen CEO Jonathan Akeroyd and famed fashion journalist Colin McDowell to talk at the annual Fashion

Apparel Conference in Istanbul about the increasing demand for textile innovation and luxury natural fibres such as Merino wool.

More than 800 people heard about a wide range of topics from the economic landscape for manufacturers and brands/retailers, to new product innovations, trend forecasting and beyond, at the conference hosted by the Turkish Clothing Manufacturers Association and opened by His Excellency Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Mr Akeroyd said the conference highlighted just how big a component wool is within Alexander McQueen collections, adding there was great benefit in communicating the way the brand innovates with textiles and luxury fibres such as wool.

"It's not only the quality of the garment make but also what it is made out of that makes a point of difference for a brand," Mr Akeroyd said.

"We already use Turkey as a resource for manufacturing, but there is definitely more scope and expertise here that we as a business can tap into. It has been interesting to see how seriously the fashion and textile industry is taken here, and I am interested in how we can explore this further in the future." ◀



AWI brought together Alexander McQueen CEO Jonathan Akeroyd and famed fashion journalist Colin McDowell to speak at the annual Fashion Apparel Conference in Istanbul about the increasing demand for luxury natural fibres such as Merino wool.

Bush heritage inspires new label

FAST FACTS

- Australian knitwear label Jude pays homage to its designer's bush heritage and passion for Australian wool.
- Woolmark licensee A&B Knitwear manufactures Jude apparel in Melbourne.
- Jude designer and founder Ali Wanchap has built the brand's ethos around being "Australian Made" and hopes to bring wool back into everyday life.

A childhood spent exploring the family farm, of watching her beloved grandmother knit her own collection of popular woolly jumpers and developing a true passion for Australian wool has seen Ali Wanchap launch fine knitwear label Jude.

Available online, Jude specialises in women's and children's wear as well as home furnishings and evokes a wholesome and idyllic way of life, encompassing Australian heritage throughout the label.

The young designer said she had been craving to create high-quality products with Australian wool for years. It is a way she can pay homage to her bush heritage and has been inspired by elements of her family history – with the brand's products named after people, places and even beloved horses. Even the label's name Jude has a personal meaning.

"Jude is a personal pseudonym of my grandfather, Rex Purvis-Smith," Ali said. "It is incredible when your greatest inspirations in life have been with you since the day you were born. I have been privileged enough to be surrounded by creative, hard-working people in my family, feet firmly planted in the dirt of the Australian bush. Out of this proud bush heritage has blossomed my great love for wool and has set me on this journey of passion."

Her passion for wool started at a young age, when throughout the 1980s she would watch her grandmother who,

along with her sister-in-law, ran her own hand-spun and hand-made knitwear label called Shirbaa from her wool property near Tenterfield in northern NSW.

And so it seems that Ali's love for wool is entrenched firmly in her blood, with the young designer following in her grandmother's footsteps.

"Jude as a concept has been in the works for about six years, ideas ticking away in the back of my mind," Ali said.

"From an early age, I always wanted to design, however my career path to date has led me through the marketing and public relations sectors. After seven years in PR I decided to take the plunge and start my own creative business – and last year saw me begin to turn my ideas into reality."

Woolmark licensee A&B Knitwear manufactures Jude apparel in Melbourne. Not only does this mean Jude clothes can proudly sport the Woolmark logo, but the fact that the clothes can be made

in Australia is something that Ali is very passionate about.

"The importance of keeping Jude local is absolutely imperative. Jude's entire ethos is built around the Australian made element and I am extremely passionate about manufacturing in this country. I want Jude to be a brand that champions the simple things, and of course Australian wool and Australian made products."

A key motivation behind Jude is to help reinvigorate the perception of wool, not only on a level of luxury, but bring it back into everyday life, and to contribute – if only a little – to keeping Australian farmers producing wool.

"I would like woolgrowers and their families to see Jude products as fresh and exciting, that are of an outstanding quality and that reflect a modern lifestyle. I would be thrilled if they saw Jude as a deserving representation of their world class fibre.

"And for city people, I would like them to see Jude knitwear as a wardrobe staple, garments that are modern, yet classic. I would love for them to get acquainted with the beautiful quality of Australian wool and to experience the benefits of it as well. I would love Jude to contribute to bring good quality Australian wool back into everyday life of all Australians."

More information: www.judeaustralia.com



Founder of the Jude knitwear label, Ali Wanchap, wearing the 'Clarence' jumper named after her great-grandfather Clarence Purvis-Smith who was the creator of the horse sport of campdrafting.



From farm to fashion

Renowned fashion designer Collette Dinnigan at the Australian Sheep and Wool Show with Andrew Davis of Harden, NSW and Peter Lette of Berridale, NSW.
PHOTO: The Land.

FAST FACTS

- Fashion designer Collette Dinnigan was guest of honour at this year's Women of Wool "High Tea" event at the Australian Sheep and Wool Show in Bendigo, Victoria.
- More than 200 people packed the event to listen to a question and answer segment about Ms Dinnigan's career and see garments which she showed at Paris Fashion Week.
- AWI sponsored the event and also showed its Runway 101 kit which includes wool garments from leading Australian designers and brands.

Celebrating the women who grow and work with the world's premium natural fibre, the Women of Wool "High Tea" event at the 136th Australian Sheep and Wool Show in Bendigo was a show highlight.

Leading Australian fashion designer Collette Dinnigan was guest of honour at the AWI-sponsored event, speaking to more than 200 women about her romance with wool, before having a meet and greet with some of

the country's finest Merinos – similar to the ones which produce wool for her garments.

Ms Dinnigan has introduced consumers from across the world to the natural beauty of Australian Merino wool through her internationally renowned collections. Having worked with wool for much of her distinguished career, Ms Dinnigan is a strong advocate of Australian wool and is an AWI ambassador.

Master of Ceremonies was ABC Central Victoria breakfast presenter Jonathan Ridnell who conducted a question and answer segment with Ms Dinnigan, covering a wide range of topics, from her time spent on the South Australian Wool Board during the early-1990s, through to her strong dislike of wire coat hangers!

Ms Dinnigan explained how her passion for wool stems from her upbringing on the land and of her knowledge of working with wool throughout her career.

During the event, six Collette Dinnigan garments that showed at Paris Fashion Week were modelled for the audience.

"I am very proud to be an ambassador for Australian Wool Innovation," Ms Dinnigan said. "I was honoured to have its support for

my recent show in Paris where Australian wool was prominently used.

"Wool is so accessible now to people. What they need to know is how easy it is to wash and it's not scratchy underwear; you can have great, fine wool. It breathes and it's natural."

AWI's Runway 101 Kit, which includes wool garments from leading Australian designers and brands including Alex Perry, ELLERY, Josh Goot, Ginger & Smart and camilla and marc was a hit at the Show's fashion parade.

Australian Sheep Breeders Association president Peter Baker said the show was a significant event in the industry's calendar.

"It is an exciting event which celebrates the very best the industry has to offer. This year we also honoured executive committee member Robyn Russell with a lifetime membership for her role in developing the Women of Wool event." ◀

More information:

www.collettedinnigan.com.au

To learn more about Collette Dinnigan's romance with wool, visit <http://www.woolmark.com/working-with-wool/fashion>

YOUNG FARMING CHAMPIONS

BRIDGING THE RURAL-URBAN DIVIDE

FAST FACTS

- Four hard-working and dedicated young women have been selected by AWI to represent the wool industry as 2013 Young Farming Champions.
- The four Young Farming Champions educate their generation about the wool industry and aim to bridge the gap between city and country.
- Two advocates have grown up on sheep farms, living and breathing agriculture since they were born; the other two come from the city, but for various reasons have loved and embraced the Australian wool industry.

The wool industry's Young Farming Champions are breaking the stereotypes of the conventional farmer, as well as helping to bridge the gap between city and regional areas across Australia.

Take Jo Newton for example. Growing up in the suburbs of Melbourne she was more often than not surrounded by soy lattes rather than sheep. In fact, it wasn't until high school that Jo got her first taste of agriculture with her school's on-campus farm. It was here as a young student she developed her interest in sheep, which led to her eventual tree change.

"During school I got some of the best career advice I have ever received," Jo said. "I got told to work out what I loved doing and then work out how to turn it into a job."

Jo's fascination with sheep and the agricultural industry saw her move to Armidale in the New England region of NSW and study Rural Science (with Honours).

"To me it made sense to study an ag-related degree at a regional university and I can honestly say moving to Armidale was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I am now undertaking a PhD, looking at some of the factors influencing early reproductive performance in sheep. I love asking questions and I have a desire to keep learning. I hope to pursue a research career in sheep genetics when I finish my studies."

Jo said that upon her move to Armidale there was a host of local graziers who were quick to offer advice and work experience opportunities to a young girl with a thirst for learning as much about sheep as possible.

"In particular Tim Bower of 'Stanley Vale' taught me how to work sheep in the yards and took me under his wing by showing me what it was like to work on a property. Tim made the decision about 12 months ago – probably after listening to me talk on and on for the past three years – to get into ASBVs (Australian Sheep Breeding Values) for his sheep. Now the shoe's on the other foot. After spending years learning stuff from Tim, now Tim's learning from me."



Jo Newton moved from Melbourne to Armidale to study Rural Science – and hasn't looked back.



Bessie Blore outside the shearing shed on her 70,000 acre slice of paradise.



2013 Young Farming Champions sponsored by AWI: Jo Newton, Bessie Blore, Adele Offley and Cassie Baile.

As a Young Farming Champion, Jo is one of four young advocates for the Australian wool industry. She is joined by Bessie Blore, Adele Offley and Cassie Baile in a network of young people who share a passion about teaching others the pivotal role that Australian farmers play in feeding and clothing the world.

Co-sponsored by AWI, Young Farming Champions is a program initiated by Art4Agriculture which pairs students participating in Art4Agriculture's school programs with a young farmer. The young farmers promote positive images and perceptions of

farming, providing a pathway to get these messages across to their audiences. The young farmers demonstrate enthusiasm for their industry while providing real life examples to young people who may have never considered a career in agriculture. Because they are young they can relate to students and are adept at breaking down stereotypes of farming and agricultural careers.

"I am a real life example that you don't have to live on a farm, or even be from the country, to get involved in farming," Jo said.

"I hope to increase awareness of the wool industry in schools and make people stop and think where their food and natural fibres are from. I am living and breathing

agriculture because I took a leap of faith and followed my dream of working with sheep. If I can inspire school children by telling my story so far, that would be awesome."

Fellow Young Farming Champion Bessie Blore has a similar story. A journalist by trade she's happy to admit she does not come from a farming background. But five

years ago as she sat on a bus in Darwin she probably had no idea her life was about the change forever.

"I sat next to a devilishly handsome man - Shannan - who I ended up falling in love with," Bessie said. "Shannan grew up on 50,000 acres

of sheep grazing country in far-western NSW where his family still live and work. Eventually, his family bought up a few more properties and Shannan and I moved to one of them in 2011."

Since then Bessie has embraced all aspects of living remotely and everything involved with running a wool and prime lamb enterprise. She said that coming from a city life meant she had little knowledge about how meat and wool were actually grown.

"I now work full-time beside my husband Shannan on our 70,000 acre slice of outback paradise and have developed a huge passion to try and bridge that divide in a way that relates evenly to both city

and country."

It is that city-country divide which both Jo and Bessie are so passionate about addressing, and can put the wheels in motion via the Young Farming Champions program. This next generation of wool champions shows the industry that its future remains prosperous and bright. It also allows for city school children to be exposed to regional life - agriculture - in an interactive learning environment.

Both Adele Offley and Cassie Baile were born and raised on woolgrowing properties, so whilst they

may have had a more traditional entry into the wool industry, both fully appreciate the skills and knowledge gap which divides city and country.

Hailing from the southern tablelands of NSW, Adele's interest in wool started at a young age when she would help out in the shearing shed.

"I learnt more about wool every year and with the current skills shortage I would love to get the word out about the many occupations available throughout all sectors of agriculture," Adele said. "I strongly feel we need to educate the younger generation, so there is at least some level of praise and acknowledgment for our Australian farmers."

As a fifth generation farmer from NSW's northern tablelands, Cassie - who now works as a wool technical support officer for Elders - says her upbringing fuelled her interest in the many agricultural industries, particularly wool, within Australia.

"I believe that wool is a very important natural fibre and through education and spreading awareness, this knowledge of the need to support the wool industry is very important," Cassie said.

"Educating and involving younger generations to recognise the importance of supporting the agricultural industry is key to the success and continuation of each field of production."

More information: <http://www.art4agriculture.com.au/yfc/yfc2013.html>
Bessie Blore hasn't given up her passion for writing, check out her blog 'Bessie at Burragan' here: <http://journobessatburragan.blogspot.com.au/>



Participants and staff at the fully booked training day organised by Riverina TAFE at "Banoon" near Mullengandra.

FAST FACTS

- The inaugural Kinross Woolshed Shearing Challenge is a new competition in which shearers had to shear a single crossbred sheep, and were judged on both productivity and quality.
- This is a new concept in training and benchmarking shearers' skill and performance.
- The competition was preceded by a training day, supported by AWI, which focused on strong wool sheep.

Competitors and spectators flocked to the first Kinross Woolshed Shearing Challenge at Albury, NSW in June to watch the shearing equivalent of Twenty20 cricket.

The competitors had to shear a single crossbred sheep, and were judged on both productivity and quality. With 53 shearers (7 female) taking part in the competition, sponsored by AWI, there wouldn't have been time for them to shear more than one sheep each anyway!

Many of the competitors had taken part in a training day organised by Riverina TAFE earlier in the day at "Banoon" near Mullengandra. The shearing day, which focused on strong wool sheep, was fully booked out.

AWI provided six leading trainers for the day who delivered training in all key facets of crossbred shearing: shearing techniques, grinding and sharpening, nutrition/fitness/health and competition judging. AWI also providing funding to bring high profile Victorian trainer Roger Mifsud up for the day – a "new face" in southern NSW and a top notch trainer – who proved to be a huge success.

The "Banoon" training day also featured one of Australia's first female shearing trainers. Andrea Froom from Bunnaloo in the NSW Riverina was very well regarded by participants and has a bright future in shearing training. Andrea was also one of seven female competitors, three of whom made it through to the semi-finals.

The second stage of the training day was the test of new found skills through the competition at the Kinross Woolshed Hotel.

Having shorn between 80 to 110 sheep in a day the field of 15 shearers in the Novice category, encouraged by the TAFE trainers, battled their nerves in front of a 650 strong enthusiastic crowd, in what was for many their first shearing competition. Yanco Agricultural High School student Royce Johnston was the eventual winner, with Culcairn shearer Jarrod Heaphey second.

The Intermediate shearers brought a faster pace to the competition, with locally based Irish shearer Aidh Doyle dominating the early rounds of competition. But it was Holbrook shearer Sean Galvin shearing his one sheep in just over one minute, one second slower than the Irishman but with pure quality, who became the Intermediate champion.

Roger Mifsud and local lad Kaleb Artridge battled out the Open category. Kaleb shored his finals sheep in 42 seconds, and with his combined score of 63 he became the first Kinross Woolshed Shearing champion.

The "single sheep" Twenty20 format is unique in that, like its namesake cricket competition, it attempts to bring the full entertainment value of the long form of the game/profession to spectators in the space of a few hours. And whilst shearing

a single sheep might not be considered by some to be particularly representative of "shed shearing", the strong emphasis put on quality points – board and pen – balanced the advantage of speed.

"You will always get some discussion about the best balance between quality and speed, but we think that with a bit of fine tuning this format will give the shearing industry a great way to show off its skills to the public," said training day host and experienced competition judge Peter Artridge.

One retired shearer commented: "I cannot believe the shear talent these young competitors have displayed here tonight. This unique first time competition which matched quality with speed shearing one crossbred lamb is a delight to see." ◀



Yanco Agricultural High School student Royce Johnston, winner of the Novice category at the AWI-sponsored Kinross Woolshed Shearing Challenge.

Yanco Agricultural High School Shearing Competition

Royce Johnston, winner of the Novice category at the Kinross Woolshed Shearing Challenge, is a Year 12 student at Yanco Agricultural High School (YAHS) and along with his mother Kerrie was instrumental in organising the inaugural YAHS Shearing Competition held in March.

The day began with Peter Artridge – the only shearer known to have represented Australia at world championship level in both blade and mechanical shearing – conducting a judging workshop for all competitors. While the 27 competitors – the vast majority being YAHS students – had previous shearing experience, most had never competed in a shearing competition before.

The winners of the competition, supported by AWI, were John Polsen (Novice), Glenn Young (Intermediate) and John Evans (Open).

To finalise a great day of participation, Peter Artridge gave a blade shearing demonstration, including a commentary on the history of blade shearing, and then proceeded to shear a sheep blindfolded – which left the crowd in awe!

Opportunity was then given for anyone who might not have even held a handpiece before to come forward and “have a go”. Several youngsters seized the opportunity and it was very rewarding to see the smiles on their faces as they left the board.



◀ Sibling rivalry! Royce Johnston's sister and brother, Deanna and Bryce, go head to head.

Increased Shearer and Wool Handler Training

Adequate numbers of highly skilled professional staff to harvest and handle a high quality Australian wool clip in a timely manner are key to the profitability of the Australian wool industry.

In 2012/13 AWI funded training for shearers and wool handlers across a range of skill development activities. These included from learner to professional shearers and from novice to professional wool handlers. Provided by registered training organisations, the training focused on shearers and wool handlers in the shed, particularly on increasing their productivity and skill development. Training was also offered as short term, intensive “schools” across a range of skill levels.

1571 shearers and 983 wool handlers were trained directly through AWI-funded programs across Australia in the 2012/13 financial year, with an additional 786 participants who attended crutching and other shearing and woolhandling workshops. These workshops serve an important role in providing a range of training services to the wool industry – from an introduction to wool harvesting and basic skills for new shearers and wool handlers, through improver to advanced and professional workshops for continued development of wool harvesting professionals.

In addition to these training numbers, 1370 high school students received an introduction to wool harvesting as a career option through in-school and in-shed demonstrations by AWI-funded trainers.

In 2012/13, AWI increased investment in both promotion and recruitment of shearers and wool handlers, as well as training and this was reflected in significant increases in numbers trained at all levels. ◀

More information: www.wool.com/shearertraining

FAST FACTS

- In the 2012/13 financial year, AWI increased investment in both promotion and recruitment of shearers and wool handlers, as well as training, and this was reflected in significant increases in numbers trained at all levels compared to last year.
- 1571 shearers and 983 wool handlers were trained directly through the AWI shearer and wool handler training program.
- An additional 786 participants attended crutching and other introductory workshops, and 1370 high school students received an introduction to wool harvesting.

SHEARER AND WOOL HANDLER TRAINING ACTIVITIES		NSW	WA	VIC	SA	QLD	TAS	2012/13 TOTAL	2011/12 TOTAL
In-shed shearer coaching	Days	206	85	107	60	30	45	533	442
	Number trained	599	315	337	178	59	83	1571	1304
In-shed wool handler coaching	Days	116	35	83	60	29	36	359	338
	Number trained	279	113	321	170	47	53	983	886
Crutching schools; Novice, improver S&WH workshops; Shearing industry vocational education in schools; Advanced shearing schools; Industry funded enrolment assistance	Number of schools/days	70	89	50	27	20	49	305	125
	Number of attendees	128	327	186	62	24	59	786	422
Total training days provided		392	209	240	147	79	130	1197	905
Total number coached/trained		1006	755*	844	410	130	195	3340	2612

* Plus 1370 school students in WA were provided with an introduction to the wool harvesting industry by AWI-funded coaches through in-shed or at school demonstrations of shearing and woolhandling.

FAST FACTS

- AWI runs workshops for the trainers of shearers and wool handlers to provide consistency in the way training takes place and to promote best practice across the wool industry.
- Wool handler and shearer trainer workshops have been held across the country in the past few months bringing together the very best trainers from across the industry.
- Workshops in Katanning, WA and Wagga Wagga, NSW were attended by more than 100 trainers.



Training for the trainers

Shearer and wool handler trainers at the Wagga Wagga train-the-trainer workshop.

Each year AWI funds training for shearers and wool handlers across a range of skill development activities. In 2012/13, 1571 shearers and 983 wool handlers were trained directly through AWI-funded programs across Australia, with an additional 786 participants who attended crutching and other shearing and woolhandling workshops (see previous page).

But as with all education, it is important to ensure that the trainers themselves are applying their skills effectively. Consequently, AWI runs training sessions for wool handler and shearer trainers across the country to standardise the way training takes place and to promote best practice across the wool industry.

Workshops have been held in Katanning, WA and Wagga Wagga, NSW in the past few months bringing the very best trainers from across the industry together to share ideas about how to best train those who will be looking after the national clip for decades to come.

Health, fitness, nutrition, recovery and injury prevention are crucial areas of training for shearer and wool handler trainers and AWI has brought in specialist physiotherapists to teach and advise how to best approach these areas.

AWI Shearing Industry Development Co-ordinator Jim Murray said there are plenty of young people keen to enter the industry but providing consistency in this type of training across the country is vital to maintain and strengthen its

professionalism. Jim likens shearer and woolhandler trainers to trainers of high performance athletes.

"Shearers use as much energy in a day as a marathon runner and do so day-in and day-out," Jim said. "A young person today could be in a shed at Esperance (WA) this week, Burra (SA) next month and then head to Tasmania or even overseas not long after that. While travel and income have always been great strengths of the industry, that same person may be getting different advice on fitness and injury prevention at each place so it's important for us all to

be on the same page to keep those young minds and bodies healthy and productive."

Another issue increasingly discussed by woolgrowers is the use of "cover-combs" or "snow combs" which leave more wool on the sheep. This can have significant welfare advantages when shearing in adverse weather conditions. Mr Murray said it was relatively new issues such as this one that were addressed during the recent train-the-trainer days.

"There are some tremendous people training wool handlers and shearers across the country. Many are the best in their field and we are lucky they have such a strong commitment to handing on their expertise. Sharing knowledge has always been one of the great aspects of this part of the wool industry."

The national wool handler and shearer trainer workshops had over 100 trainers attend, and each of the trainers agreed that they would like to see the profile of people working in the industry lifted and highlighted.

The skills of our top shearers is slowly becoming more recognised with statues of our two time world champion Shannon Warnest gracing a number of airports around Australia, and some great stories about the physical endurance of multiple world record holder Dwayne Black featured in international magazines. There is also some great work being done in this area at a number of the major agricultural events and shows around Australia by a lot of the coaches.

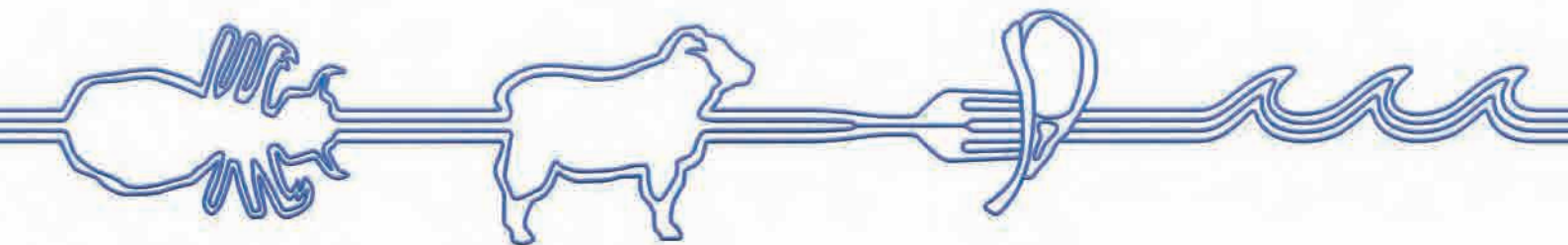
"An area of concern and one which trainers feel deserves greater promotion is the highly skilled and professional nature of our wool handlers. These highly skilled people working either on their own or in a team have the ability to significantly increase woolgrowers' profits when given the opportunity," Jim added. ◀



AWI's Jim Murray (right) training in best practice shearing technique.



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NEXT GENERATION FLOCKS TO THE NATIONAL MERINO CHALLENGE

Picton High School student Katie Burton trying her hand at fleece throwing.



FAST FACTS

- AWI's inaugural National Merino Challenge (NMC) was a success, with more than 50 students from across Australia heading to Dubbo to compete in the educational initiatives.
- The NMC connected the future of the wool industry with industry professionals, highlighting an array of careers which involve working with wool.
- Yanco Agricultural High School was the Champion Team in the secondary school division, whilst University of New England was the Champion Team in the tertiary division.

More than 50 students from 10 schools, colleges, universities and TAFEs from across Australia last month met for the inaugural National Merino Challenge (NMC) in Dubbo, NSW.

An AWI initiative, the NMC involves presentations and demonstrations from industry professionals to allow young people to develop their industry knowledge, skills and networks. Students participated in seven 'mini-challenges' across two days, testing their knowledge of Merino fleece, production and breeding and selection.

The mini challenges were:

1. AWEX typing
2. Wool valuing
3. Visual score assessment
4. Condition scoring
5. Calculate ewe nutrition and feed budget
6. Ewe selection
7. Ram selection

Techniques from several well-known industry initiatives, such as MERINOSELECT, Lifetime Ewe Management, Bredwell Fedwell and Visual Sheep Scores, were used throughout the NMC, giving students a realistic and practical insight into the tools available to growers to make more informed decisions.

Tom Tourle, from Dubbo's TAFE Western Institute, was one of many students who enjoyed the weekend of learning.

"It has been a great weekend, we've learnt so much about Merinos and wool which has been very valuable," Tom said. "Before this event I was interested in a career in the wool and sheep industry, and the NMC has convinced me of it."

Competition was fierce across both the secondary school and tertiary divisions, with Samuel Barnes from Yanco Agricultural High School winning the secondary school division and Nicola Turner from University of New England (UNE) taking out the tertiary division. Yanco Agricultural High School was the Champion Team in the secondary school division, whilst UNE came out on top in the tertiary division.

Participating schools, TAFEs and universities were: All Saints' College, Bathurst; Bombala High School, Bombala; Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga; Picton High School, Picton; TAFE Riverina Institute, Wagga Wagga; TAFE Western Institute, Dubbo; University of New England, Armidale; WA College of Agriculture, Harvey; Woodleigh School, Langwarrin; and Yanco Agricultural High School, Yanco.

A highlight of the program was the National Merino Challenge Industry Dinner held on Saturday night at Macdonald & Co Woolbrokers and attended by more than 130 people. Adding to the atmosphere of holding a Merino industry dinner in a wool store, there was excitement in the air as the participants had the chance to meet woolgrowers, woolbrokers and researchers.

AWI would like to thank the 2013 NMC supporters – TAFE Western, Macdonald & Co Woolbrokers, Avington Farm, Future Farmers Network, Advanced Farm Systems, Haddon Rig, Australian Wool Network and Roseville Park – for making this event possible, as well as the dedicated volunteers who donated their sheep, time and expertise to the 2013 NMC. ◀

More information:
www.wool.com/NMC

SECONDARY SCHOOL DIVISION AWARDS

Champion	Samuel Barnes, Yanco Agricultural High School
Second Place	Veronica Hartmeier, Bombala High School
Third Place	Jack Moran-Turner, Yanco Agricultural High School
Champion Team	Yanco Agricultural High School
Top Performer in Wool Section	Veronica Hartmeier, Bombala High School
Top Performer in Breeding Section	Samuel Barnes, Yanco Agricultural High School
Top Performer in Production Section	Harry Carey, Yanco Agricultural High School



Yanco Agricultural High School was the Champion Team in the secondary school division: From left - Jack Moran-Turner, Bailey Taylor, trainer Ellie Quinn, Jessica Johnston and Samuel Barnes.

TERTIARY DIVISION AWARDS

Champion	Nicola Turner, University of New England
Second Place	Nicole Henley, TAFE Western Cert IV
Third Place	Laura Kemmis, Charles Sturt University
Champion Team	University of New England
Top Performer in Wool Section	Nicola Turner, University of New England
Top Performer in Breeding Section	Ben Simmons, TAFE Western Cert III
Top Performer in Production Section	Peter Brooker, TAFE Western Cert III



Champion Team in the Tertiary Division was won by the University of New England: From left - Teresa Hogan, Michelle Egan, trainer Rachelle Hergenhan, Felicity McLeod and Nicola Turner.



Two of last year's Young Farming Champions Lauren Crothers and Stephanie Grills were on site championing the future of the wool industry.



Students taking part in an activity at the National Merino Challenge.



Yanco Agricultural High School student Jessica Johnston was one of 60 students whose passion for the sheep and wool industry was visibly evident.



Students learning about ram selection.



LTEM helps deliver 110% lambing percentage

Doug Hart and Peter Groat of the Rankin Springs – Lake Cargelligo LTEM group condition scoring maiden Merino ewes.

FAST FACTS

- The Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) program being run across Australia enables woolgrowers to better understand ewe nutrition and to develop a successful and productive animal production system.
- Woolgrower Doug Hart of the Rankin Springs – Lake Cargelligo LTEM group in central west NSW improved the lambing percentage in his Merino maiden ewes from 65 per cent in 2011 to 110 per cent in 2012.
- Mr Hart attributes this increase to the ewes being on a paddock that had excellent pasture growth and a safer paddock in relation to pig predation.

Doug Hart of “Merrylands”, at Lake Cargelligo in Central West NSW, was one of five producers who signed up for the Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) course when a LTEM group started in the Rankin Springs – Lake Cargelligo area in February 2012.

In the first year, he improved the lambing percentage in his Merino maiden ewes from 65 per cent to 110 per cent.

“One of my main issues that I wanted to focus on with the LTEM course was improving our maiden ewe weaning percentages,” Mr Hart said. “We had been experiencing issues with predation, pigs

and foxes, which had resulted in lambing percentages of around 55-65 per cent. These figures are unsustainable for my business.”

Over a 12 month period the LTEM group monitored their own ewe condition and assessed and discussed pasture and paddock allocation based on the ewes’ requirements for each property. A number of group members started pregnancy scanning moving from pregnant or not pregnant (wet/dry) to singles and twins. This has given more flexibility with decision making when it comes to paddock allocation and supplementary feeding requirements.

“I was able to implement changes that we had learnt in the LTEM course with my maiden ewe mob in 2012,” Mr Hart said. “We were able to allocate the better pasture paddocks to the maidens. The paddock the maidens were allocated was also known to have less predation issues.

“The improvement in lambing percentage in my Merino maiden ewes was outstanding. We went from 65 per cent in 2011 to 110 per cent in 2012.”

Mr Hart attributes this increase to the ewes being on a paddock that had excellent pasture growth and a safer paddock in relation to pig predation.

LTEM courses are being run across Australia and are now becoming established in NSW. The Rankin Springs – Lake Cargelligo group was initiated by John Sutherland of Pooginook Merino Stud, who embarked on assisting clients interested in improving the reproduction performance of their flocks.

The Rankin Springs – Lake Cargelligo LTEM group has five producer members, in an approximately 100km radius of one another, managing 20,000 hectares and running 9,000 sheep. They all run slightly different operations, however they have a common goal: to improve their breeding ewe flocks’ reproduction performance. The group is managed and led by consultant Sally Martin who delivers the technical and practical skills of the LTEM course. At each meeting the group inspects at least two mobs of sheep and paddocks (pasture or crop) and has discussions around the seasonal conditions, livestock requirements and how they can be managed using the principles of LTEM.

At the beginning of the course each group member was asked what they would like to improve. Responses ranged from improving weaning percentages in maiden ewes, reducing ewe mortality during lambing and increasing weaner growth and survival.

In 2013, Mr Hart was not able to achieve as good a result as he had in 2012, however it was still better than before the LTEM course.

“The season cut out quickly for us this year,” Mr Hart explained. “The pasture we assessed in February 2013 for lambing went very quickly due to the lack of rain and hot temperatures. We started having to feed prior to lambing and then the ewes had to be moved when the feed cut out. We managed to mark 87 per cent, which is still up on our long term average.”

Mr Hart also had mixed age mobs that were in two different paddocks. One mob was supplementary fed all the way through lambing and had an 80 per cent marking percentage. The other mob had sufficient pasture up to three weeks into lambing when they started to be supplementary fed, and had a marking percentage of 100 per cent.

This comparison highlights the potential mismothering and lamb losses that occur due to both lack of paddock feed and the disruption when the feed cart comes out when the bulk of lambs are hitting the ground (first three weeks of lambing).

Mr Hart plans to split his ewe mobs into heavier and lighter condition groups rather than age groups to allow the lighter ewes an opportunity to put on more weight prior to the 2014 joining.

"LTEM does not fix everything at once; it is about fine tuning our systems and gradually expanding the management and technology changes across the whole flock and farm," he said.

"The positive thing about LTEM is you see the sheep and pastures over time. We need to make our decisions based on what we have in front of us, pasture and livestock condition - this is not going to be the same each year or season. The LTEM program helps us to be adaptable and the group discussions and interaction is great."

More information: www.wool.com/LTEM
If you are interested in learning more about LTEM and participating in a course in your local area contact Priscilla Cuming, the LTEM Administration Officer at the Rural Industries Skill Training (RIST), on (03) 5573 0943 or pcuming@rist.com.au



Doug Hart weighing and condition scoring maiden Merino ewes: "The improvement in lambing percentage in my Merino maiden ewes was outstanding."

LIFETIME EWE MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) is a nationally accredited, two-year course, developed and run by RIST (Rural Industries Skill Training) and supported by AWI.

LTEM training provides hands-on on-farm training for small groups of producers (average five), under the guidance of a professional facilitator, in the management and nutrition of breeding ewes to maximise reproduction efficiency.

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

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

- Weaning and preparing ewes for next year's joining
- Setting up for joining: when and what to feed ewes to optimise ewe condition
- Linking ewe condition at joining

- with lambing potential
- Mid-pregnancy: managing nutrition for single and twin lamb survival
- Late pregnancy: optimising lamb survival and the future wool production of progeny
- Economic analysis of different feeding strategies.

On-going evaluation of LTEM group members continues to show significant benefits to participants through improving net reproduction rate. Lamb marking percentage increased by an average of 11 per cent; the number of lambs weaned increased by 15 per cent, and ewe mortality decreased by 44 per cent.

In the 2012/13 financial year, 39 AWI-funded groups completed LTEM; 53 groups commenced training in all states. In total AWI funding has supported 120 groups completing LTEM training.

Strong demand for LTEM training continues.



Doug Hart, Peter Groat, Tom Groat, and Richard Argent-Smith of the Rankin Springs - Lake Cargelligo LTEM group inspecting a vetch crop paddock on Richard Argent-Smith's property. Ewes and lambs have been running on this paddock.

MERINOSELECT search

FAST FACTS

- A range of criteria can be used to select animals on the Sheep Genetics website.
- Key differences exist between the sires of different wool types for the breech traits.
- Indexes may offer a drafting gate to shortlist potential sires, but take a wide cast.
- Understanding how genes are expressed at home is an important step for sire selection.

The animal search function on the MERINOSELECT website makes it easier to search for animals that meet a range of criteria a ram breeder may be interested in. A search of the top 10 sires by wool type with more than 100 progeny gives the results in Table 1 below.

The results show clear differences in fleece weight, micron, fertility, breech wrinkle and breech cover between the sire type averages selected on the three indexes. It shows greater breech wrinkle, breech cover and dag scores for the leading Super Fine type sires (greater than 0.0) and why breeding to reduce breech strike risk is slower for Super Fine sheep types. If a selection criteria for curvature is set at a minimum of +9 degrees per mm, the breech scores of the new top 10 sires remains similar as does the micron but the fleece weight falls from +3% to -3%.

The average of the top 10 Medium sires have lower fleece weight but higher fertility and lower breech wrinkle than the average of the top 10 Fine type sires. Yet there are individual sires in the top Fine and Medium type sires that have high fleece weight, low breech wrinkle and high fertility. (Individual ram data not listed.)

The percentile table (Table 2 opposite) for the 2011 drop puts the breeding values in Table 1 into perspective for the Merino breed. Note the reduced range in dags compared to wrinkle. Breeding for low dag takes longer than low wrinkle, a significant issue for breeders and their clients in high dag country with Super Fine types.

The impact of adding additional search criteria listed in Table 3 opposite can be compared with averages in Table 1. The additional criteria have reduced the average indexes but not by much. The same criteria was used across all wool types for simplicity which has led to a variable impact on the indexes. The 10 sires within each type are more balanced for the traits where the criteria was applied and highlight the importance of focusing on individual traits as well as the relevant index where greater predictability is required or individual traits are more or less important than in the index.

In practice, the search criteria should vary between sheep types, indexes, environments and personal views on future markets. 30-50 sires should also be chosen to better find the "curve benders",

prior to culling on the many traits not in the index, ie polls, wool quality, availability of semen, conformation and constitution etc.

As always, actual production varies across sites and between years, due to the interaction between genetic potential and the environment, ie between high wrinkle and low wrinkle country, high dag and low dag country, high micron and low micron country and between seasons.

Understanding how genes are expressed at home is an important step for sire selection.

A sire -2.0 for fibre diameter can produce progeny with 17 micron wool in low micron country and 20 micron wool in high micron country. Similarly in high wrinkle country, sires may need to have a breech wrinkle ASBV of -0.5 for progeny to have breech scores of 2 or less, but in low wrinkle country sires can be as high as -0.1. Importantly the rankings of sires remain consistent across sites.

More information:

The Animal Search function, explanation of ASBVs and Indexes (Pocket Guide, Understanding ASBVs etc) and a list of genetic service providers ready to assist are available on the Sheep Genetics website: <http://sgsearch.sheepgenetics.org.au/?dataset=5>
www.sheepgenetics.org.au/Resources/Brochures-and-fact-sheets
www.sheepgenetics.org.au/Service-providers

Table 1. Average ASBVs for the top 10 sires with more than 100 progeny.

Trait	Adult Wt	Year Fat	Year EMD	Adult Flc Wt	Adult FD	Adult Curv	Adult St Lgth	Adult St Str	Year WEC	No Lbs Wean	Breech Wkl	Breech Cover	Breech Dag	FIBRE PROD +	MERINO PROD+	DUAL PURP +
Wool Type	(kg)	(mm)	(mm)	(%)	(m)	(D/mm)	(mm)	(N/Kt)	(%)	(%)	Score	Score	Score	Index	Index	Index
Super Fine	-1	0.2	0.1	3	-3.0	3	-1	3	-18	2%	0.2	0.2	0.2	164		
Fine	9	0.0	0.0	15	-1.4	-5	9	3	3	13%	0.0	-0.2	-0.2		204	
Medium	9	0.1	0.6	11	-0.1	-6	6	2	-11	17%	-0.5	-0.3	0.1			197

Note: Super Fine type sires were selected on Fibre Production Plus Index, Fine type sires were selected on the Merino Production Plus Index and Medium type sires were selected on the Dual Purpose Plus Index.



website

Table 2. Merino percentile table for each ASBV for the 2011 drop.

Percentile	Adult Wt	Year Fat	Year EMD	Adult Flc Wt	Adult FD	Adult Curv	Adult St Lgth	Adult St Str	Year WEC	No Lbs Wean	Breec Wkl	Breec Cover	Breec Dag	FIBRE PROD +	MERINO PROD+	DUAL PURP +
Top 1%	10	-	2.6	20	-4.0	15	15	7	-86	13%	-0.8	-0.6	-0.4	154	176	177
Top 5	8	0.3	1.9	15	-3.1	9	12	5	-55	9%	-0.6	-0.4	-0.3	146	162	161
Top 20	5	0.2	1.2	10	-2.1	3	8	3	-33	5%	-0.4	-0.2	-0.2	136	149	145
Top 50	3	0.0	0.4	4	-1.2	-3	4	0	-10	1%	-0.1	0.0	-0.1	125	135	131
Top 80	0	-0.1	-0.3	-3	-0.4	-8	-1	-2	18	-2%	0.2	0.1	0.1	115	121	118

Table 3. ASBV averages for the top 10 sires by type with added search criteria: Super Fine lower than -2.5 FD, Fine between -2.4 and -0.5 FD, Medium higher than min of -0.6 FD. Fat > -0.2mm, Muscle > -0.4mm, Staple strength > -3N/Kt, WEC < +20% and breec wrinkle < -0.1Sc.

Trait	Adult Wt	Year Fat	Year EMD	Adult Flc Wt	Adult FD	Adult Curv	Adult St Lgth	Adult St Str	Year WEC	No Lbs Wean	Breec Wkl	Breec Cover	Breec Dag	FIBRE PROD +	MERINO PROD+	DUAL PURP +
Wool Type	(kg)	(mm)	(mm)	(%)	(m)	(D/mm)	(mm)	(N/Kt)	(%)	(%)	Score	Score	Score	Index	Index	Index
Super	-1	0.6	0.8	-7	-3.0	6	1	1	-22	3%	-0.3	-0.1	-0.1	145		
Fine	8	0.2	0.8	14	-1.4	-5	12	4	-20	7%	-0.3	-0.6	-0.2		194	
Medium	9	0.7	1.7	6	0.3	-5	8	3	-18	14%	-0.7	-0.5	0.0			184

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EverGraze regional packages for producers

Regional Information about local soils, climate, pastures, livestock systems, environmental issues, livestock issues and benchmarks.

Easy-to-read evidence-based recommendations for practice change options to address issues relevant to each of five regions:

- North West Slopes NSW
- Central Tablelands NSW
- North East Victoria, Southern NSW and South West Victoria (Upper)
- South West Victoria (Lower)
- South Coast WA



Tools and calculators available on the site include the EverGraze products such as the Feed Budget and Rotation Planner and the Pasture Improvement Calculator, as well as relevant products from other programs such as Lifetimewool.

Training and Events relevant to each region.

On Farm Options provides information on pasture species, grazing management, livestock systems, soils, feed budgeting and tactical management.

Demonstration and Case Studies from each region which tell the stories of how farmers have integrated EverGraze principles and practices into their management, and the resulting impact on their business.

Research provides research findings compiled into messages which explain what they mean to on-farm decision making, including analysis of costs and benefits to profit, risk management and environmental management.

The new EverGraze website is now live at www.evergraze.com.au

FAST FACTS

- A new EverGraze website has been launched that presents regionally-specific information about farming systems based on perennials, for producers across the high rainfall zone of southern Australia.
- The EverGraze project has demonstrated that substantial increases in profitability can be achieved while improving environmental management.
- The program has engaged over 14,000 farmers and advisors and achieved practice change on more than 4000 farms and at least 200,000ha.

For the first time, the results and recommendations from EverGraze research have been presented as regionally relevant information packages to help producers across the high rainfall zone of southern Australia manage their pasture and livestock systems.

The information quantifies the productivity, economic, environmental, risk and lifestyle impacts of implementing changes on farm.

The regional packages are available on the new EverGraze website (www.evergraze.com.au) and are a fitting legacy from the research carried out across six large-scale farm systems research sites (Proof Sites) and more than 60 on-farm demonstration sites in NSW, Victoria, WA, SA and Tasmania between 2004 and 2013.

The new packages cover five regions: North West Slopes NSW; Central Tablelands NSW; North East Victoria, Southern NSW and South West Victoria (Upper); South West Victoria (Lower); and South Coast WA.

Within the regional packages, information is provided according to each region's soils, climate, pastures, livestock systems, and key production and environmental factors. Producers from other regions across the high rainfall zone of southern Australia will also find the tools and information useful.

National EverGraze Project Leader, Kate Sargeant (DEPI Victoria), believes the website will be a fantastic legacy for

EverGraze and a valuable resource for farmers in the years to come.

"In developing the website, the team has concentrated on providing recommendations from EverGraze research and related projects, and we are still working on completing the story," Kate said.

"EverGraze has produced over 300 resources, including case studies, fact sheets, conference papers, research papers and newsletters, and all will become available as the website continues to be populated.

"Importantly, relevant information from the previous website has been migrated to the new site so the whole EverGraze picture is presented. Also, information from new research will be incorporated over time, and packages for new regions will be developed."

More information: www.evergraze.com.au
Kate Sargeant, National EverGraze Project Leader, Department of Environment and Primary Industries Victoria, (03) 5761 1598, kate.sargeant@dpi.vic.gov.au

Key Messages from the EverGraze Proof Sites

Three “High Input” sites located at Hamilton, Wagga Wagga and Albany designed and tested farm systems based on sown perennial species. Four “Low Input” sites located at Orange, Tamworth, Chiltern and Holbrook worked with existing native perennial pastures. The key messages from these EverGraze Proof Sites are:

HAMILTON

- The EverGraze principles of *Putting the Right Plant in the Right Place for the Right Purpose with the Right Management* can extend the growing season, increase profit, reduce risk, reduce salinity, maintain ground cover and make perennials persist.
- Achieving greater profits from perennial pastures balances stocking rate and lambing date to consume more of what is grown. The aim is greater product (wool and meat) per hectare.
- Lucerne reduces risk, provides options for livestock and prevents salinity.
- Shelter from perennial grass hedgerows significantly improves lamb survival in south west Victoria.
- Summer active tall fescue provides autumn feed in poorly drained soils.
- EverGraze systems have potential to reduce salinity risk in the Wannon catchment.

WAGGA WAGGA

- Flexibility in livestock systems is important for risk management in variable climates.
- More lucerne increases production and profit.
- Right plant, right place and sustainable grazing management leads to persistent pastures.
- Flushing on green feed increases lamb marking percentages.
- Shrub belts planted at the break of slope do not significantly reduce recharge or waterlogging. Lucerne is a more effective option where it can be planted.
- Shelter from perennial grass hedgerows or shrubs can improve lamb survival, especially for lambs born as twins or triplets. However the benefits are lower in areas with low risk of chill.

ALBANY

- Adding 25 percent perennials to farm systems on the south coast of WA will give the highest gross margins.

- Deep-rooted summer active perennials kikuyu, lucerne and chicory extend the growing season and reduce the need for supplementary feed in summer and autumn compared to annual based pasture systems in south coast Western Australia.
- Kikuyu, chicory and panic persist through dry seasons.
- Chicory and lucerne extend the growing season and provide quality feed in a lamb finishing system.

ORANGE

- Landscape variability can be identified, mapped and managed.
- Composition of pastures with a high native perennial component is stable under managed grazing.
- Increasing the number of paddocks and implementing rotational grazing can result in higher stocking rates, higher per hectare production and higher gross margins, even though per head production is lower. Return on investment depends on required additional infrastructure.

TAMWORTH

- Integrate native grass based pastures with forage oats and lucerne or provide adequate protein and energy supplements to achieve high weaning percentages for spring lambing ewes.
- Lucerne-grass mixtures provide high ground cover, and reduce runoff and erosion on the North-West Slopes of NSW; lucerne-tropical grass mixtures are a productive summer forage option for grazing systems on the North-West Slopes of NSW.
- Conservation of Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands on the North-West Slopes of NSW is best achieved through on-farm management of high quality remnant patches.

CHILTERN AND HOLBROOK

- Integrating the management of native and improved pastures into one system to support a ewe/lamb enterprise is more profitable than running separate flocks of wethers on native country and ewes on improved country.
- Native pastures can support a store lamb production system.
- In native pastures with a high density of perennial species and low clover composition, rotational grazing and

fertiliser have limited influence on pasture production and composition if critical destocking benchmarks for ground cover (70%) and herbage mass (800 kg DM/ha) are in place. Productivity of native pastures and the response to increased fertility is, in part, reliant on the presence of legumes and annual grasses.

- The native grass *Microlaena* can spread by stolons (above-ground stems), rhizomes (below ground stems), as well as tillers arising from corms located beneath the soil surface. The rhizomes and corms may protect the plant from grazing. The stolons can facilitate rapid spread under favorable conditions. Seed production, viability and germination is not competitive with annual species, so it's important that existing plants are protected to maintain composition.

More than 60 EverGraze on-farm demonstration sites have complemented the EverGraze Proof Sites. These demonstration sites have played an integral role in supporting groups of producers to try new grazing practices and perennial systems to increase profitability and improve environmental outcomes.

Productivity benefits have included reduced input costs, increased pasture growth, increased stocking rates and improved soil fertility. Environmental benefits have included increases in ground cover, reduced weeds, increased perenniality of native pastures, persistence of sown perennials and reduced soil loss.

For further information look under the *Research and Demonstration and Case Studies* tabs at www.evergraze.com.au

About EverGraze

EverGraze is a Future Farm Industries CRC research and delivery partnership between Australian Wool Innovation, Meat and Livestock Australia, the Department of Environment and Primary Industries Victoria, Department of Primary Industries NSW, Department of Agriculture and Food WA and Charles Sturt University. The Federal Government Caring for Our Country project and local NRM and CMA boards also provided input into EverGraze Supporting Sites.



Case study: Managing hill country – the challenges and benefits

Local graziers see for themselves how production from native pastures increased at Mark McKew's property.

Strategic grazing is proving successful for boosting native pasture content and maintaining ground cover in steep hill country for EverGraze supporting site host Mark McKew who runs Merinos on his 600ha property at Warrak in south west Victoria.

"The results of our change in grazing management from set stocking to strategic and rotational grazing are encouraging, even though I realise major change is a long-term exercise," Mark said.

"I can see the potential to increase productivity and our stock are in better condition throughout the year. They also produce more wool, which is cleaner and stronger along the staple.

"The grazing systems make sense on our low-input native pastures."

Mark's property is on country that consists of cleared steeper hills with grassed gullies. The soils are shallow clay-loams with low water-holding capacities, which become shallower as the country rises, with rocky outcrops on spurs.

There is a diverse range of native pasture species on southerly aspects, including about 40-50 per cent native grasses – mainly weeping grass, common wheat grasses, wallaby grasses and spear grasses. The other 50 per cent are annuals, mostly silver grass with some onion grass and yorkshire fog. The northern aspects have more onion and wallaby grasses.

Traditionally Mark set stocked large paddocks, mainly due to limited watering points. This led to under-utilisation of the valleys and slopes and overgrazing of the hill tops.

Continuous grazing pressure reduced the perennial pastures, allowing unwanted species to invade.

INVOKING CHANGE

During 2007, Mark established an EverGraze Supporting Site to try and increase the density of the perennial native species and improve the pasture productivity and utilisation in the marginal, steep hill landscapes. He also hoped to maintain ground cover above 80 percent and increase production.

He chose a site across two paddocks, to compare a combination of rotational and deferred grazing with set stocking.

To allow rotational grazing he fenced a

EverGraze
More livestock from perennials

FAST FACTS

- Strategic rotational grazing can reduce the seed set of annual species and encourage perennial species in steep hill pastures.
- Rotational grazing is more labour intensive than set stocking, but can improve stock and feed allocation.
- The challenge is to have enough stock and big enough mob sizes to effectively use the feed, and the extra investment in water and fencing infrastructure.

100ha paddock into six smaller paddocks, based on land classes and hill aspects. A watering system using poly pipe, holding tank and solar pump system was set up to deliver stock water and two active erosion gullies were fenced out and rehabilitated.

He applied 'optimised deferred grazing' using Merino wethers together with the rotational grazing practices across the two innovation paddocks.

An adjoining 70 ha, which contained wallaby grasses, weeping grass, fog grass, introduced annual grasses and onion grass, was used as the 'control paddock'. He set stocked this paddock with autumn-lambing Merino ewes and cattle at about 2.6-4 DSE/ha.



Mark McKew watches on as EverGraze supporting site co-ordinator Julie Andrew identifies native grasses on his property.

OPTIMISED DEFERRED GRAZING

From December 2007, wethers rotated through the innovation paddocks. But in early spring 2008, Mark increased grazing pressure when annual grass weeds set seed. Then he de-stocked the paddocks as the perennials started to set seed during late spring to mid-January.

This crash grazing, with stocking rates as high as 28 DSE/ha, allowed him to target annual grass weeds such as silver grass. There was still sufficient ground cover when he removed the sheep four weeks later.

Stock returned to the paddocks for a week during late summer to provide some soil-seed contact. This promoted the germination of the newly-dropped native grass seed.

Following the initial optimised deferred grazing during spring 2008, sheep rotationally grazed the paddocks after the autumn break during 2009. Sheep grazed each paddock for about 7-10 days and were removed for 5-6 weeks.

PERSISTENCE

"The native perennials have persisted well to date in all six paddocks in the rotation," Mark said.

"There has been a marked increase in perennial coverage and more feed compared with the control paddock.

"The capeweed has all but disappeared, probably as a result of low nutrient levels and rotational grazing, although onion grass is still a problem.

"Between June 2008 and 2010 the control paddock had a higher stocking rate, but there was between 50 per cent and 120 per cent more feed in the innovation paddock."

After reviewing stocking rates and feed-on-offer in the innovation paddock, Mark planned to increase grazing pressure during spring 2010. However the wet conditions made managing spring feed difficult and he couldn't maintain high enough stocking rates. Plus his solar pump and panels were stolen, so he stopped rotational grazing to allow access to the only dam in the paddock.

"Despite the challenges, the results have shown we can increase the perennial pasture component and maintain groundcover," Mark said.

"It also demonstrated that an increase in feed-on-offer delivers potential productivity benefits. But we need to weigh up the extra infrastructure costs for fencing and water on the hill country and the cost of additional stock."

NEW STRATEGY FOSTERS A KEEN EYE

"In the past, our sheep often lacked condition at shearing in August - but the new grazing strategy keeps stock in better condition year round and offers greater marketing options," Mark said.

"While the regular stock moves are labour intensive, they allow us to closely monitor pasture and animals. I can quickly adjust numbers to improve native pasture content, maintain groundcover and increase pasture utilisation.

"And through more regular monitoring, rotational grazing also helps us stay on top of flystrike."

More information: Refer to the full eight-page case study, including economic analysis, on www.evergraze.com.au



The EverGraze website includes case studies from each region that tell the stories of how farmers have integrated change into their management, and the resulting impact on their businesses.

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Students looking for careers in agriculture

FAST FACTS

- The Discover Agriculture 2013 program, supported by AWI, is helping students from Tasmania and Victoria learn about the diverse range of career opportunities available in agriculture.
- The residential program is aimed at people with an interest in a career in agriculture, but aren't necessarily sure what career pathway they might take or what their options are.
- Participants return to their schools as "champions for agriculture" and inform other students of the wide variety of careers available.

High school students from across Tasmania and Victoria are being given the opportunity to visit a range of agricultural businesses to help them determine which career in agriculture they would like to pursue.

The Discover Agriculture 2013 program, run by Rural Skills Australia and Tasmanian Life Long Learning and supported by AWI, aims to provide students with a greater understanding of the diverse career and training opportunities in agriculture.

The residential program also aims to provide participants with a great

experience so they will return to their schools, become "champions for agriculture" and inform other students of the wide variety of careers available.

In March, seventeen Year 9 and 11 students from eight schools across Tasmania participated in a three-and-a-half day residential camp in the south of the state as part of the program. The March camp complements an intensive six-day program being run this month in the north of the state. A six-day program was also held in Victoria during July.

Education and Training Adviser with Rural Skills Australia, Roger Tyshing, said participants at the March camp visited 10 different businesses involved in all aspects of agriculture: farms, orchards, greenhouses and agricultural service businesses.

"Students had a go at a range of hands on activities from drafting sheep and wool handling, through to pasture and weed identification. Everyone we met had a story to tell. The key message from the three-and-a-half days was that there are vast opportunities for young people in agriculture and, although often requiring hard work and commitment, working in agriculture could be very rewarding at a number of levels.

"All our hosts encouraged the students to get into the industry with enthusiasm. The passion with which our hosts spoke

about their businesses and industry was recognised and commented upon by the students."

Student Sarah Birch said she really liked working with the sheep at Chris and Ronald Gunn's 'Glen Quoin' property near Tea Tree.

"I am really interested and set on becoming a wool classer," Sarah said. "Over the past few days I have heard a lot of people say that there is a big demand for wool classers and shearers. This helped me because before the course I thought that I probably wouldn't get a job as a wool classer, but at least now I know I have a pretty good chance, once I'm qualified.

"The people that we talked to over the four days gave us a lot of information and answered all the questions that we had for them. There are a lot more jobs and careers involved in agriculture than I thought. I would definitely suggest to other people who are interested in a career in agriculture, or aren't sure what they want to do, to go on this program."

While the program does not offer vocational work placements, many of the businesses visited as part of the program express interest in offering work placements and contact students' schools.

"Without the support of organisations, such as AWI, willing to commit to encouraging young people into the industry, programs such as Discover Agriculture would not continue to grow and achieve tangible outcomes," Roger added. ◀

More information:

Roger Tyshing, 0438 514 560,
rogert@ruralskills.com.au
www.ruralskills.com.au



High school students learning about Merinos at Chris and Ronald Gunn's 'Glen Quoin' property near Tea Tree, Tasmania.

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Managing climate variability



Mustering on Wakefield Station in western Queensland. Semi-arid regions such as this are already at the forefront of managing climate shifts.

FAST FACTS

- Young Climate Champion woolgrower James Walker from Queensland has modified his production practices in response to climatic and seasonal variability.
- James has provided more watering points for his sheep, and harvests grass during times of peak production to capture quality feed while it is available.
- James is also using dynamic weather forecasting models to help predict rainfall patterns.

On 24,000 hectare Wakefield Station, 90 kilometres south of Longreach in western Queensland, Young Climate Champion woolgrower James Walker runs about 12,000 sheep under semi-arid conditions.

“Our sheep numbers fluctuate quite a bit depending on the season,” James says. “Currently, the mobs of sheep we’ve got are about 4000 ewes and 5000 wethers. The ewes are joined in that bigger mob for rotational purposes and then when they’re lambing out we’ll disperse them into smaller mobs.

“We get about 17–18 inches (about 450 mm) of rainfall a year here, but it varies a lot: I have experienced up to 40 inches and

down to five inches. One year we might have an abundance of feed, the next year only limited amounts; we’re managing for that all the time.”

As an AWI Young Climate Champion woolgrower, James regularly showcases to other woolgrowers the practices and farming systems he uses to manage climate variability.

LIVESTOCK WATERING

Until recently, Wakefield Station had traditional grazing and watering systems. Livestock had to walk in excess of 5–10 kilometres away from water to eat. But James has now introduced many more watering points, which limit the distance the sheep have to walk to feed to about two kilometres, so the animals are a lot healthier.

“At Wakefield, there are permanent surface water dams and they were the only water supply that we had for livestock,” James explained. “Traditionally, at the start of the season all the dams were full, but towards the end of the season the water quality had petered off and the livestock weren’t handling the conditions. To add to low water quality, the livestock were walking in excess of two kilometres from water to feed. In this situation they were metabolising the energy they’d grazed to walk back to water.

“So we improved reticulation and the number of watering points. I drew two

kilometre-radius circles on a map of our property and fitted them together. Then through the circle centres, I drew a line, and we got a total of 63 kilometres of poly pipe that we’d need to accommodate that 2 kilometre-spacing.

“So the animals can drink and graze not too far from water, and once they’ve consumed that feed then we can keep rotating them around. So we’ve got a lot more useable acreage. From a central point, the water is reticulated through two loops, which creates more volume and pressure of water for the livestock.

FORECASTS

James says the variable rainfall in this semi arid region creates a boom and bust cycle for his business. The more information he can get on rainfall patterns and potential forecasts, the better he can manage his business and the more money he can make.

As a part of the Climate Champion program James has learnt about a dynamic forecast model, Predictive Ocean Atmosphere Model for Australia (POAMA), developed by the Bureau of Meteorology and the CSIRO.

“Last year I noticed, for our region, that POAMA was in a neutral pattern with no strong conviction either way for rainfall. If it became a positive pattern, that would be fine, but I need to make decisions based on what I’m seeing at the moment.



Round dam on Wakefield Station fed by poly pipe.



Woolgrower James Walker checking water supply pressure in poly pipe.

“Because it was neutral, the potential downside was quite significant: if it swings to a downside, there’s a fairly steep slope where you can run out of feed and grass and water very quickly.

“So I decided that I would sell down most of the cattle in our enterprise. We actually did end up getting the rain, but most of this region and most of north-western Queensland didn’t.

“Now we’re, fortunately, in a position where we’ve got an abundance of feed but nobody else does. A lot of their cattle had to be sold or agisted because of the lack of grass, the market has been flooded, but we avoided loss in capital within our livestock enterprise.

“We haven’t made a big move like that before, based on the forecasting, but I had a lot of confidence in the system because it’s dynamical forecasting, not historical modelling. It wasn’t the only thing that I used to form a view, but they’re the sort of indicators I use to make a decision.”

James also uses an app, Australian CliMate, produced by the Federal Government’s Managing Climate Variability R&D program, which provides recent weather data and likely climate probabilities. It is the first app to ‘interrogate’ long-term weather statistics using a set of decision-makers’ questions. A web version is also available.

“The CliMate app helps me access and understand past climate statistics and upcoming seasonal predictions,” James adds.

HAY BALING

James has diversified his business in several ways including haymaking with native grasses, capturing the opportunity of the abundance of grass while it’s there. He has been doing it for four or five years, and it’s now a big part of his business.

“Five years ago we had abundance of feed so we started baling a bit of hay,” he

said. “By the end of the first year we had 10,000 baled and sold. Now we’re into our fifth year, we’ve sold about 60,000 bales.”

He advises that it’s important to have the right land type, contractor to do the work and shed storage to do hay.

“We make sure the contractors leave enough grass in the system to keep the plants healthy. We do it in the middle of the wet season, then those plants can regenerate if there’s rain during our wet season. And now [March], since we harvested the hay, it’s almost ready to bale and harvest again due to six inches of rain. This year, though, we’ll just preserve that grass for livestock.

“It’s about managing that abundant feed, to harvest it in good seasons, and to secure a bit of cash and capital for the poorer times and to manage through a drought.”

LEADING ADAPTATION

James says for producers in semi-arid regions to run their enterprises successfully, they really have to be on top of managing climate.

“The one factor that varies in our business is rainfall and it’s a very important aspect of our business to be able to manage that. Semi-arid regions are already at the forefront of managing climate shifts because we get a huge variance in rainfall from year to year already: from 40 inches of rain one year to five inches the next.

“Climate change will be an evolution. It’ll not catch people by surprise and, least of all, farmers. Farmers are very resilient and I believe that they’re already adapting to it.

“We’re sticking with Merino sheep. After all, when it’s dry, you’re guaranteed to get wool off your sheep. It’s a reliable source of income.”

More information: Contact James Walker directly on phone (07) 4658 2141, mobile 0428 583 336, email james.jumbuck@bigpond.com, or post: “Camden Park” Longreach Qld 4730. For the full case study, visit www.climatekelpie.com.au POAMA: <http://poama.bom.gov.au> CliMate: www.australianclimate.net www.wool.com/climate



Baling native Mitchell grass when there is an abundance of feed.

Community baiting brings calm

FAST FACTS

- A coordinated community baiting program involving several adjoining landholders has reduced wild dog and fox activity in and around sheep properties in Glenaladale in Victoria.
- AWI offers funding for communities affected by wild dogs to implement their own coordinated baiting programs.
- Local knowledge (ie reports of wild dogs being seen and/or heard) is essential for developing an effective community baiting program.

Landholders involved in an AWI-funded community baiting program in Glenaladale, near Bairnsdale in south east Victoria, are already noticing significant changes in and around their properties. Wild dog and fox activity has fallen; there appears to be an increase in native wildlife and many people are reporting a sense of 'calm' both on-farm and in the bush.

Trevor Howden, who runs Merinos, crossbreeds and beef cattle on a 900ha property on the fringes of the Mitchell River National Park, says the relief he feels as a result of participating in the program is immense.

"It has taken a lot of stress off me, knowing I'm doing something proactive rather than waiting for the next attack," he says. "The sheep are relaxed too, instead of bunching up in a tight group, they are lazing all over the paddock."

Trevor looked into community baiting after a series of wild dog attacks last winter. He lost more than 200 sheep and lambs in four weeks and resorted to shedding a small mob to protect them from a large pack of wild dogs that had become established in the area.

Although Wild Dog Controllers (WDCs) from the Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) controlled and removed the pack, Trevor wanted to prevent other dogs moving in.

"One of our biggest challenges is the amount of habitat around here for wild dogs," he says, citing parkland, plantations and native bush on both his and nearby properties as examples. "I realised we had to involve everyone in the community - not just the WDCs and sheep industry - if we were going to be able to head the dogs off in the future."

Unfortunately, there was (and in many communities, still is) a lack of awareness amongst landholders about the extent and impacts of the wild dog problem.

"There are not many sheep farmers left

around Glenaladale so a lot of landholders do not have experience with wild dogs," says Trevor. "Also, many people assume you are talking about dingoes, and therefore do not recognise a wild dog if they see one."

Trevor began taking photos to build awareness and help landholders identify wild dogs. This triggered a valuable flow of information from members of the community, many of whom recalled seeing 'stray' dogs that at the time had not seemed particularly noteworthy. "Once we started talking to people, we discovered how the dogs were moving across the landscape," Trevor says.

Soon, there was enough support for the Landcare group to apply for a grant through AWI's Wild Dog Control Initiative to run its own community baiting program.

Trevor, AWI's community baiting coordinator Brian Dowley, and the local WDC, then worked together to develop the baiting program.

So far, three bait runs have taken place, one month apart. A total of 1800 wild dog baits were laid across 10 properties covering approximately 5000 hectares by participants holding a 1080-endorsed Agricultural Chemical Users Permit (ACUP).

While it's likely foxes took many of the baits, the reduction in wild dog activity and anecdotal increase in wildlife suggests wild dogs were successfully targeted.

"I've seen a lot more native animals, especially babies, and even a lyrebird, over the past few months," says Trevor.

His neighbour, Jack Malecki, agrees. "It's hard to describe, but the bush is calmer and more relaxed since the baiting program took place," he says. "The animals don't seem as stressed or worried. The sense of danger has diminished."

Jack (who lost many of last year's lamb drop to wild dogs) and Trevor are grateful for AWI funding. "The fact that AWI is funding the program is fantastic," says Jack. "A practical outcome like this means a lot to us."



Wild dog and fox activity was reduced after the implementation of community baiting, according to woolgrower Trevor Howden of Glenaladale in south east Victoria

More information:
www.wool.com/pestanimals



Strong Australian interest in South African conference

A pre-conference tour will provide an opportunity to explore and learn about the South African Merino industry.

FAST FACTS

- The Australian Association of Stud Merino Breeders (AASMB) invites you to join its South African Trade Mission in April 2014.
- The Trade Mission will incorporate the 9th World Merino Conference, preceded by a two-day Merino Expo.
- Pre- and post-conference tours of varying lengths are also being offered.

Expressions of interest in Merino 2014 – the 9th World Merino Conference, have been very strong according to Australian Association of Stud Merino Breeders (AASMB) coordinator for the Australian delegation, Carol-Ann Malouf.

“To date over 140 Australians and New Zealanders have requested further information when it is available from conference and tour organisers,” she said.

“A final figure of even half this number will ensure excellent representation of our Australian Merino industry and great camaraderie on-tour.”

Robert Ashby, president of the World Federation of Merino Breeders (WFMB), under whose auspices world Merino conferences are held every four years, is most enthusiastic about the 2014 venue and host country, South Africa.

“It will be a tremendous celebration of the Merino through a rich mix of farming, fibre and culture,” he said.

“This is a not-to-be-missed opportunity for passionate producers to share and learn

all aspects of the Merino and see a little of this very special part of the world at the same time.

“Woolgrowers often work alone or in small teams, so an opportunity such as this, to travel and see the world through the eyes of other farmers, is always a great experience.”

Stud and commercial sheep and wool producers, geneticists, scientists, wool brokers and industry figures from throughout the world, including the 13 member countries of the WFMB, will gather in the historic town of Stellenbosch from 29 April to 1 May.

The two-day conference, titled “Merino Breeding: Sustainable Enterprise – Cherished Lifestyle”, is to be preceded by a Merino Expo during which there will also be a joint session with IWTO whose annual congress is to run concurrently in Cape Town.

Bookending the conference are tours travelling with Springbok Atlas, one of South Africa’s most established and best-known travel and tour management companies. For over six decades they have moved millions of travellers safely and reliably across South Africa.

The pre-conference tour heads out of Johannesburg just over a week prior to the conference.

Aimed at showcasing the beauty of South Africa and the diversity of its magnificent landscape and people, the tour

will also afford the opportunity to explore and learn about the local Merino industry as it passes through the Golden Gate Highlands National Park to Bloemfontein, Gariep Dam and Graaff-Reinet.

Visits to some of the top sheep farms in South Africa will be included as the tour continues on to game drives and luxurious accommodation at Shamwari, the world’s leading safari and game reserve and conservation company.

The final day on the road will be at Port Elizabeth, the centre of the South African wool trade, where the group will be hosted by Cape Wools.

Flying then to Cape Town, there will be the opportunity to explore the historic and scenic delights of the region with a number of mini-tour and day trip options that include Robben Island, Cape Point, Table Mountain or one of the multitude of wineries in the Cape area. For many, shopping at the Waterfront or visiting its large array of restaurants and bars, may suffice.

Accommodation in Cape Town will be at the 5-star Radisson Blu, situated on the beach next to the Waterfront with magnificent views of both Table Mountain and Robben Island.

While accommodation throughout the tours will have a minimum 4-star rating, the exchange rate ensures that the all-inclusive tour packages will be very moderately priced for Australian and New Zealanders.

A seven-day post-conference tour, to depart on Friday 2 May, will explore the Western Cape Province, travelling from Stellenbosch and overnighting in Matjiesfontein, Oudtshoorn, Knysna and

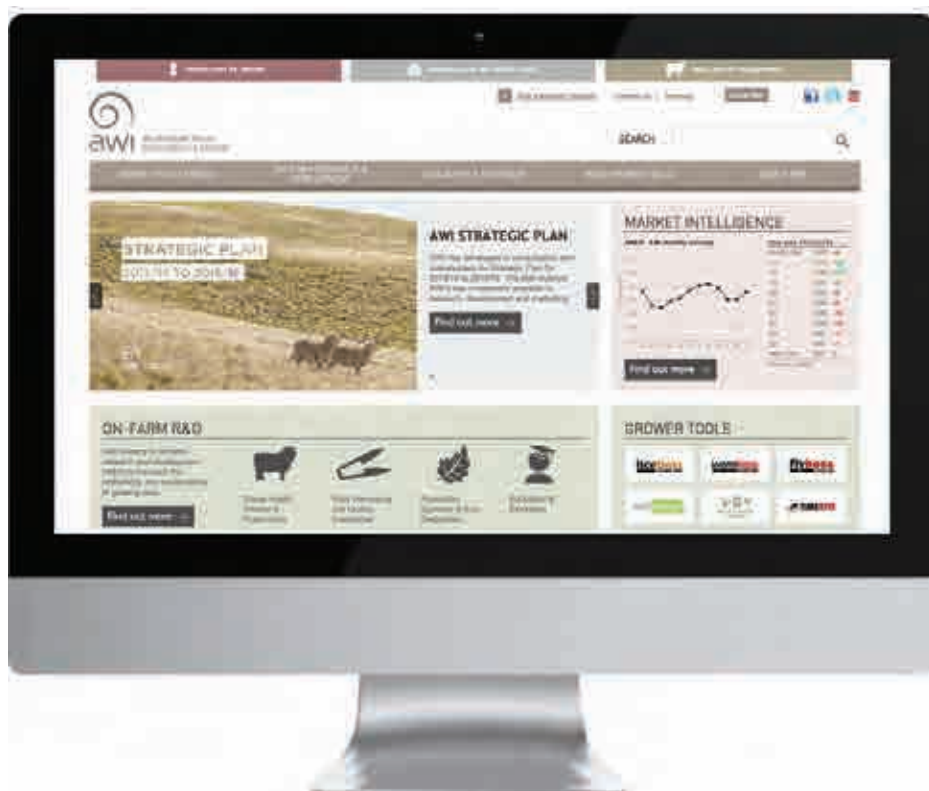
Arniston before two nights at Sanbona. This exclusive park has won numerous awards and is regarded as the premier reserve in the Western Cape. As is the case at Shamwari, game viewing includes the Big 5.

The AASMB, with the support of AWI, is offering the only official tour (including travel, tour/s, conference registration) to Merino 2014.

Interested persons may register an expression of interest with Carol-Ann Malouf, coordinator of the Australian delegation to Merino 2014. Travel, conference and tour itineraries and costs will be available from late September.



More information: Carol-Ann Malouf,
(02) 6895 2274, 0427 119 535,
Carol-Ann.Malouf@wool.com



New AWI website for woolgrowers

With a stronger focus on market intelligence and on-farm tools to lift profitability, the new Wool.com is now open and ready for business.

The major rebuild of the wool portal is now complete with Wool.com easier to navigate with a cleaner more open look. The site is fully searchable and aligned with the priorities of AWI's new Strategic Plan.

Wool.com is designed specifically for woolgrowers seeking information on lifting profitability. The site provides access to AWI publications and reports together with information of where woolgrower levies are invested.

New features on Wool.com include localised weather forecasting, daily wool market information and market intelligence on the home page for quick reference. Navigation around the site has been simplified and users have multiple ways of accessing the information they need.

Wool.com complements AWI's other two main websites: Woolmark.com website for trade and designer audiences, and the consumer-focused Merino.com website.

All three sites will continue to evolve with dedicated resources constantly updating the digital content for these sites at AWI.

Head of On-farm R&D at AWI Dr Jane Littlejohn said the revamped Wool.com was the result of a significant amount of reworking and updating of information and will play a crucial role in the ongoing electronic communication by AWI to woolgrowers.

AWI E-NEWSLETTERS

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

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

To subscribe, visit www.wool.com/subscribe

More information: www.wool.com

FAST FACTS

- AWI has launched a totally revamped Wool.com website with information and tools to help woolgrowers increase their on-farm profitability, and inform them of where AWI is investing their wool levies.
- Wool.com complements AWI's other two main websites: the Woolmark.com website for trade and designer audiences, and the consumer-focused Merino.com website.
- AWI produces several (free) e-newsletters to which woolgrowers can subscribe and receive by email including: Weekly wool market review, AWI woolgrowers' newsletter (monthly) and the Beyond the Bale e-newsletter.



The Beyond the Bale e-newsletter.

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. The photos could portray any feature, be it humorous or poignant, informative or provoking, gritty or beautiful.

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

1. EXPERTLY SHEARING A SHEEP BLINDFOLDED

Kerrie Johnston of Naradhan, NSW sent in this photo of Australian shearing team member Peter Artridge expertly shearing blindfolded a sheep in front of an awe-struck crowd during a demonstration at the inaugural Yanco Agricultural High School Shearing Competition held in March.

2. TRAPPING WORKSHOP POPULAR AT ST GEORGE

Adrian and Ellen Smith of "Tralee" near St George, Queensland, who say the area has "suffered horrific losses to wild dogs in the last couple of years" sent in this photo of a wild dog trapping workshop hosted on their property on behalf of their local feral dog control group. More than 70 local producers attended the workshop.

3. SHEARING TIME AT PEKINA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Dianne Duffy of "Garden Hill" at Pekina near Rororo in the mid-north of South Australia sent in some photos of mustering and shearing at the beginning of July.

4. AWI AWARD WINNER HANDS ON WITH AUSTRALIAN WOOL

Jamie and Kylie Baulch of Cavendish, Victoria showed 2012 AWI Key Account Manager of the Year Ingrid Oomen (left) around their property on her recent visit to Australia. Ingrid is AWI country manager for Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg.



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Reference: 1. Hosking, B.C., Kaminsky, R., Sager, H., Rolfe, P.F. and Seewald, W. (2010) A pooled analysis of the efficacy of monepantel, an amino-acetonitrile derivative against gastrointestinal nematodes of sheep. Parasitology Research 106:529-532.

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