This August 2019 publication provides woolgrowers in Queensland with some of the results of AWI investment in on-farm R&D and extension that are benefiting woolgrowers in the state. It also provides contact information for Queensland woolgrowers who want to get involved.

ABOUT AWI

Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) is a not-for-profit enterprise that conducts research and development (R&D) and marketing on behalf of Australian woolgrowers. AWI works along the worldwide supply chain for Australian wool – from woolgrowers to designers, manufacturers and retailers.

Research and development (R&D):
AWI invests in both on-farm R&D and off-farm R&D. This publication highlights some on-farm R&D investments that are benefiting Queensland’s woolgrowers.

Marketing:
Through its extensive networks spanning the international textile and fashion industries, AWI and its marketing arm The Woolmark Company highlight the premium, natural qualities of Australian wool, to increase global demand for the fibre – for the benefit of all Australian woolgrowers.

QLD WOOL INDUSTRY

Queensland’s sheep industry began in 1840 when the pioneer and grazier Patrick Leslie drove a flock of 6,000 sheep to the Darling Downs. From then on, pastoralists prospered and established one of the most successful industries for the state. Unfortunately the wool industry in Queensland is nowadays much smaller than in its prime of the 1940s, when its sheep population was 25 million. But in the past few years, there has been a sense of renewed confidence in the state’s sheep and wool industry, despite the current drought holding back sheep numbers and wool production.

SHORN SHEEP NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
<th>2019/20*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vic</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>14.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>11.9</td>
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<td>11.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tas</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qld</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>68.2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Aug 2019

SHORN WOOL PRODUCTION

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
<th>2019/20*</th>
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<tr>
<td>mkg</td>
<td>125.7</td>
<td>99.1</td>
<td>87.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>66.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vic</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>62.2</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Tas</td>
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<td>6.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qld</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Aug 2019

AWTA TEST DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qld</td>
<td>9,452</td>
<td>8,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>360,017</td>
<td>317,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greasy weight*</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(t)</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yield (%)</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VM (%)</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFD (µm)</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS (Nkt)</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>81.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL (mm)</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-break (%)</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>317,763</td>
<td>317,763</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Australian Wool Testing Authority (AWTA) *WSA

AWI is grateful for its funding, which is primarily provided by Australian woolgrowers through a wool levy and by the Australian Government which provides a matching contribution for eligible R&D activities.
**SHEEP HEALTH**

WormBoss worm control programs are available for summer rainfall and pastoral areas of Queensland.

**PEST ANIMALS**

AWI provides a grant to Longreach Regional Council for an Exclusion Fence Construction Unit for woolgrowers.

**GENETICS**

The results of the Merino Lifetime Productivity program will be of great interest to Queensland producers.

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**BREECH FLYSTRIKE PUBLICATIONS**

Publications now available include information on breeding for breech strike resistant sheep, a ‘Managing Breech Flystrike’ manual and a ‘Planning for a Non Mulesed Merino Enterprise’ booklet.

- www.wool.com/flystrikelatest

**PAIN RELIEF PRODUCTS**

Along with Tri-Solfen® (post-operative topical application), Buccalgesic® (pre-operative gel administered inside cheek) and Melacam® (pre-operative injection), which are all pain relief products for mulesing, castration and tail docking, a new product Numnuts, a ring applicator that provides pain relief for castration and tail docking, is now available.

- www.wool.com/flystrikelatest

**DEALING WITH DAG**

A factsheet and a manual for advisors that provide a guide to managing and preventing scouring and dag formation.

- www.wool.com/flystrikelatest

**QUEENSLAND HIGHLIGHTS**

**PEST ANIMALS**

**QLD WILD DOG CONTROL GROUPS**

Since 2011 AWI has supported a total of 59 Wild Dog and Cluster groups throughout Qld. Currently 3 Qld groups are being assisted out of 16 nationally. AWI has supported 15 Cluster Groups throughout Central and South West Qld with funding to employ doggers and other assistance, to clean out the Clusters. Currently AWI is supporting 2 Clusters in the Shires of Barcoo, Quilpie, and Murweh, AWI supports groups to overcome emergency pest animal challenges and lay secure foundations for sustainable long-term future pest animal control programs.

- www.wool.com/wilddogs

**QLD WILD DOG COORDINATORS**

AWI funds two Wild Dog Control Coordinator positions: Skyela Kruger in south-west Qld and Mick Schrag in central-west Qld. Their role is to assist woolgrowers and other key stakeholders to work together to lessen the impact of livestock predation by wild dogs.

- Skyela Kruger 0429 232 089
- Mick Schrag 0437 116 875

**EXCLUSION FENCING UNIT**

An AWI-funded Exclusion Fence Construction Unit based with Longreach Regional Council is available for use by woolgrowers at a minimal cost.

- Longreach Council (07) 4658 4111
- Jeff Newton 0488 400 447

**PAPP WILD DOG BAIT**

An additional baiting option, PAPP, for reducing wild dog and fox numbers is now available to landholders across Qld.

- www.wool.com/wilddogs

**RH/DV K5 RABBIT BIOCONTROL**

A strain of rabbit calicivirus (RH/DV K5) new to Australia was released in March 2017 at 382 locations across the country. There has been a 38% observed reduction in rabbit numbers at monitored sites.

- www.wool.com/rabbits

**MERINO SUPERIOR SIREs**

This 10-year project aims to better understand how current selection approaches relate to lifetime performance and to learn more about the genetics and economic interactions, across a diverse range of Merino types delivering high quality wool, lambs and meat through life. The project runs at five sire evaluation sites located across Australia, in diverse climates with genetically diverse ewe bases. A full suite of independent visual classing and productivity traits will be assessed annually.

- www.wool.com/MLP

**MERINO BLOODLINE PERFORMANCE**

This project enables woolgrowers to compare 73 commonly used Merino bloodlines from 25 wether trials over the past ten years to identify performance differences.

- www.merinobloodlines.com.au

**SHEEP SELECTION TOOLS BOOKLET**

This 20-page booklet provides a summary of a wide range of industry tools available to woolgrowers to help achieve their breeding goals. Topics covered include sheep shows, wether trials, flock ewe competitions, Merino Sire Evaluation (and the MLP project), MERINOSELECT, Visual Sheep Scores, RamSelect, workshops, sheep classers and advisors and saleyards.

- www.wool.com/publications

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**GENETICS**

**MERINO SELECT, Visual Sheep Scores, RamSelect, workshops, sheep classers and advisors and saleyards.**

- www.wool.com/publications
**QUEENSLAND HIGHLIGHTS**

**REPRODUCTION**

Woolgrower Ben Banks from Blackall who believes pregnancy scanning can lift flock fertility by 10-15% annually.

**LIFETIME EWE MANAGEMENT COURSE**

This course provides hands-on on-farm training over a year, for small groups of producers (about 5-7) in the management and nutrition of breeding ewes to maximise reproduction rates and lamb and ewe survival. The average participant reports an increase in whole-farm stocking rate by 9.3% and lamb marking percentage by 7%, and reduced ewe mortality from 4.1 to 3.0%.

Nationally, nearly 4,000 producers have undertaken the course.

Phone RIST on 1800 883 343

www.wool.com/mobsize

**FEEDBASE**

AWI provides a range of drought management resources for Queensland woolgrowers experiencing drought.

**DROUGHT RESOURCES**

For woolgrowers going into, enduring or recovering from drought, AWI provides a range of drought planning and management resources including:

- Managing Sheep in Droughtlots;
- Stock water – a Limited Resource;
- Lifetime Wool Feed Budget Tables;
- Feeding and Managing Sheep in Dry Times;
- Managing Fodder Prices for Droughts;
- Which Sheep do I Keep? AWI also provides links to AWI state network drought resources and useful government and other external resources.

www.wool.com/droughtresources

**ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS**

**Picking Performer Ewes**

This workshop available in Queensland for woolgrowers with commercial self-replacing Merino flocks places importance on the total lifetime productivity potential and value of their Merino ewes (including fleece, meat and surplus stock).

**RAMPing Up Repro**

This workshop available in Queensland is designed to give woolgrowers the skills to improve ram health, performance and longevity in their sheep breeding enterprises.

**Winning With Weaners**

This workshop available in Queensland is designed to give woolgrowers the skills to lift the lifetime performance of their young Merino sheep and achieve 95% weaner survival to one year of age.

Leading Sheep (see back page)

**MOB SIZE AFFECTS LAMB SURVIVAL**

Research conducted at 85 sites across Australia shows that reducing the mob size of twin-bearing ewes that are in a reasonable condition at lambing will improve lamb survival. However, their stocking rate has little or no effect on lamb survival.

www.wool.com/mobsize

**HARVESTING**

Students at an AWI-funded shearing and wool handling school at Tambo in central west Queensland.

**SHED TRAINING**

Shearer and wool handler training

AWI funds training for novice to professional shearsers and wool handlers. In the past two years, through AWI-funded programs:

- shearer in-shed training was delivered for 35 days across Qld resulting in 109 trained.
- wool handler in-shed training was delivered for 10 days across Qld resulting in 30 trained.

In addition, novice schools and workshops, online training, and training in the Shear-Jitsu technique – the new way to perform the catch and drag – were undertaken.

Phone the AWI Helpline on 1800 SHEARS (1800 743 277) to make contact with a training organisation in your local area.

Training resources

AWI has produced a series of training videos to help advance the skills of novice, improver and professional shearsers and wool handlers – to promote better techniques and improve clip preparation practices in the industry.

www.wool.com/trainingresources

Also available on a free USB from the AWI Helpline on 1800 070 099

**GRASS & GRAZE**

The Grain & Graze website provides information, tools and calculators for mixed farm enterprises (grain and livestock) in Queensland. It covers the overall management and mix of the feedbase, grazing cereals to boost winter feed supply, the use of pastures and fodders, and pasture cropping.


**WEED MANAGEMENT MANUALS**

A range of weed management guidelines, including a new 66-page best practice management manual for silverleaf nightshade, are available.

www.wool.com/weeds

**LAND, WATER & WOOL**

The national Land, Water & Wool project developed more than 60 research-based practical information products on natural resource management R&D.

www.wool.com/environment

**QLD SHEARING COMPETITIONS**

AWI provides support in each state to local shearing competitions affiliated with Sports Shear Australia. The Queensland State Championships were supported in the 2018/19 year. The aim of the support is to promote excellence in the wool harvesting industry, encourage young people to join the industry, and encourage continued development of techniques in shearing and wool handling.

www.wool.com/competitionsupport
QUEENSLAND HIGHLIGHTS

THE NEXT GEN

Felicity Brumpton from Mt Ascot who visited Chinese manufacturers in 2018 on an AWI-organised study tour.

NATIONAL MERINO CHALLENGE

This AWI initiative encourages new entrants into the wool industry by helping students across Australia develop their industry knowledge, skills and networks. It involves demonstrations from industry professionals and the participants compete through a series of ‘mini challenges’.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Queensland woolgrowers recently supported in leadership courses and scholarship opportunities include:

- Breeding Leadership course: Benn Wilson from Dirranbandi participated in 2018.
- Horizon Scholarship: Lauren Crothers, Dirranbandi.
- Nuffield Farming Scholarship: James Walker, Longreach.
- Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture: James Walker, Longreach.

Other AWI-supported opportunities open to Queensland woolgrowers include the Australian Rural Leadership Program and Young Farming Champions initiative.

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MARKET INTEL

AWI is sending wool prices and market intelligence direct to Queensland’s woolgrowers’ mobile phones.

- Daily Wool Market Reports are available via SMS to Queensland woolgrowers’ mobile phones.
- Weekly Wool Market Reports and Prices are available each Friday via SMS, email and at Wool.com.
- Monthly Market Intelligence Reports are available as part of AWI’s monthly e-newsletter for woolgrowers.
- Wool pricing updates and reports are available quarterly in AWI’s Beyond the Bale magazine.
- Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Reports are available three times each year.
- AWI and MLA’s joint Wool and Sheepmeat Surveys of producers are conducted three times each year.

AGRI TECHNOLOGY

A fantastic turn out at Leading Sheep’s Sheep Technology Field Day at Goondiwindi in July.

- AWI Smart sheep tags are being used by different researchers to understand grazing and reproductive behaviour and to detect welfare and predation issues.
- Farmers2Founders program is supporting innovative woolgrowers to develop entrepreneurship and technology capabilities.

STUDY TOUR OF CHINA

Young woolgrowers from across Australia have the opportunity to see wool’s manufacturing process first-hand during an annual self-funded study trip organised by AWI to China. Felicity Brumpton, Thomas Perkins and Amy McIntosh from Qld attended in 2018.

INFORMATION

Beyond the Bale, AWI’s quarterly magazine for wool levy payers, is posted direct to growers across Queensland.

Woolgrowers can keep up to date via regular communications from AWI:

- Beyond the Bale quarterly magazine
  - www.awol.com/btb
- The Yarn weekly podcast
  - www.wool.com/podcast
- Woolgrower monthly e-newsletter
  - www.wool.com/subscribe
- The Broader View
  - www.wool.com/publications

Other communication channels include:

- Wool.com website
- Social media: @woolinnovation Twitter, @beyondthebale Instagram
- Events: AWI attends many sheep and wool field days and events in Qld
- AWI Helpline 1800 070 099
- Woolgrower representative groups: National, Queensland and regional

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