

This February 2019 publication provides woolgrowers in Western Australia 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 Western Australian 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.

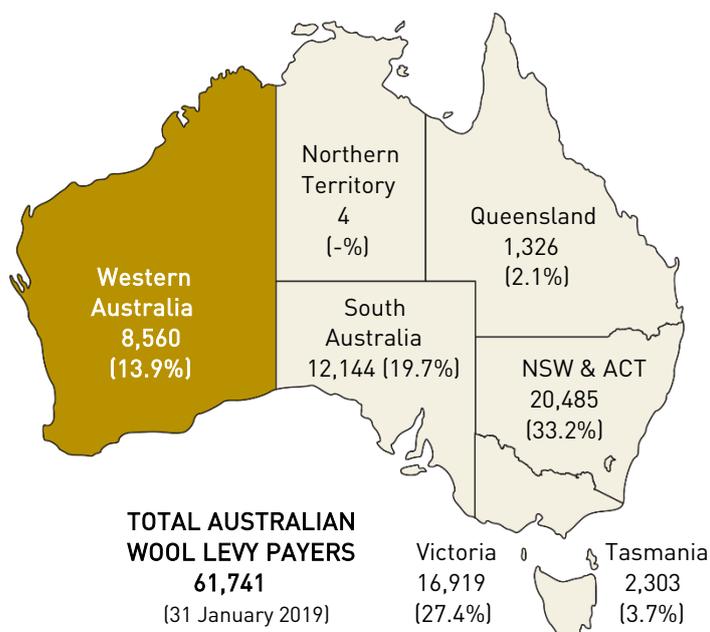
Research and development (R&D):

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 Western Australian 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.

WA WOOLGROWERS



AWI works on behalf of **61,741** Australian woolgrowers that pay the wool levy and therefore fund the company. 13.9% (**8,560**) of all wool levy payers are located in Western Australia.

At 1 January 2019, there were **6,519** levy payers in Western Australia that had paid more than \$100 in levies in the past 3 years and so were eligible to register and become an AWI shareholder. **3,355** (51%) have become an AWI shareholder and can vote at AWI AGMs.

WA WOOL INDUSTRY

WA has nearly 15 million sheep run by more than 4,500 sheep producers, located in the cropping regions across southern WA, with some grazing in adjacent rangelands. They produce high quality wool: 95% is Merino wool measuring less than 24.5 micron; about 40% is 19.5 micron or less.

WA is the third largest wool producing state in Australia, producing about 20.6% of all Australian wool. If WA was a country, it would be the fifth largest wool producer in the world behind China, NSW, New Zealand and Victoria.

The WA wool industry comprises about 60% of the total value of the WA sheep industry.

SHEEP NUMBERS SHORN

million	NSW	Vic	WA	SA	Tas	Qld	Total
2016/17	27.4	16.0	15.1	11.2	2.5	2.1	74.3
2017/18	28.3	17.2	14.8	11.9	2.4	2.2	76.8
2018/19*	25.0	16.8	14.5	11.1	2.5	1.9	71.7

Source: Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Nov 2018
* Forecast

SHORN WOOL PRODUCTION

mkg	NSW	Vic	WA	SA	Tas	Qld	Total
2016/17	126.0	67.4	71.1	57.9	9.2	8.5	340
2017/18	125.7	73.5	65.1	59.5	9.3	8.3	341
2018/19*	100.0 32.8%	70.7 23.2%	62.7 20.6%	54.7 17.9%	9.3 3.0%	7.1 2.3%	305 100%

Source: Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Nov 2018
* Forecast

AWTA TEST DATA

	2016/17		2017/18	
	WA	Australia	WA	Australia
Greasy weight* (t)	76,214	357,785	69,890	360,017
Yield [%]	64.1	65.1	63.1	64.8
VM [%]	1.2	2.3	1.7	2.5
MFD (µm)	20.1	21.0	19.6	21.0
SS (Nkt)	33.6	34.3	32.0	34.5
SL (mm)	89.0	87.9	85.1	85.8
Mid-break [%]	45.3	48.4	51.1	50.8

Source: Australian Wool Testing Authority (AWTA) *WSA

AWI gratefully acknowledges the funds provided by the Australian Government to support the research and development activities detailed in this publication.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HIGHLIGHTS

SHEEP HEALTH



A **WormBoss worm control program** is available for the Western Australian winter rainfall region.

paraboss

ParaBoss is a suite of three web-based products LiceBoss, WormBoss and FlyBoss containing detailed management information to help sheep producers manage lice, worm and blowfly risks for their sheep.

➔ www.paraboss.com.au

- **Monthly State Outlooks** detail the current prevalence of sheep parasites across WA.

➔ www.paraboss.com.au/news

- **Worm Control Program** for the WA winter rainfall region is available online on WormBoss.

➔ www.wormboss.com.au

- **Flystrike Decision Support Tool** on FlyBoss is tailored for your location within WA.

➔ www.flyboss.com.au/tools

BREECH STRIKE GENETICS PROJECT

This project was undertaken by DAFWA at Mt Barker, WA (and by CSIRO at Armidale, NSW). It demonstrated that breeding for breech strike resistant sheep is an achievable objective. Outcomes included the identification of new breech strike indicator traits to help woolgrowers breed indirectly for breech strike resistance.

➔ www.wool.com/flystrike

BREECH FLYSTRIKE PUBLICATIONS

Publications now available include a 'Managing Breech Flystrike' manual and a 'Planning for a Non Mulesed Merino Enterprise' booklet.

➔ www.wool.com/flystrikelatest

PAIN RELIEF PRODUCTS

Buccalgesic® (pre-operative gel administered inside cheek), Tri-Solfen® (post-operative topical application) and Metacam® (pre-operative injection) are registered pain relief products.

➔ www.wool.com/flystrike

PEST ANIMALS



Farmers getting instruction on how to lay baits at an information day at Salmon Gums north of **Esperance**.

WA WILD DOG CONTROL GROUPS

Since 2011, AWI has supported 16 groups throughout WA in the regions of the Eastern and Central Wheatbelt, Esperance and Ravensthorpe covering multiple shires and assisting many landholders. In 2018, 3 Recognised Biosecurity Groups (RBG) were supported, and currently one RBG will be receiving funding for the 2019 year. This RBG includes landholders across 7 shires in the West Midlands region. AWI supports the groups to overcome emergency pest animal challenges and lay secure foundations for sustainable long-term future pest animal control programs.

➔ Funding forms are available at www.wool.com/wilddogs

WA WILD DOG COORDINATOR

AWI funds a Wild Dog Coordinator position in WA: Meja Aldrich. Her role is to assist woolgrowers and other key stakeholders to work together to lessen the impact of livestock predation by wild dogs. Her position is helping to reduce these attacks and therefore improve on-farm productivity, rural community wellbeing and rural biodiversity.

➔ Meja Aldrich 0417 622 780

PAPP WILD DOG BAIT

An additional baiting option, PAPP, for reducing wild dog and fox numbers is now available to landholders across WA. It is designed to allow baiting to still be an option in places where 1080 use is restricted, or for land managers who would prefer not to use 1080.

➔ www.wool.com/wilddogs

RHDV1 K5 RABBIT BIOCONTROL

A strain of rabbit calicivirus (RHDV1 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 nationally following its release, based on data from 191 participating sites.

➔ www.wool.com/rabbits

GENETICS



The Merino Lifetime Productivity field day was held at the **Pingelly** site in March 2018.



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, including Pingelly in WA.

➔ www.wool.com/MLP

MERINO SUPERIOR SIRES

This initiative identifies the genetic component of diversity in sire breeding performance in the Merino flock by evaluating their progeny. There are 9 sites across Australia including three in Western Australia: Yardstick (Katanning), Pingelly and Muresk (Northam).

➔ www.merinosuperiorsires.com.au

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

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HIGHLIGHTS

REPRODUCTION



Members of the LTEM group at **Frankland** in the Great Southern Region developing their condition scoring skills.

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 a 10% increase in weaning rates and 30% reduction in ewe mortality. Nationally, more than 4,500 producers have undertaken the course, through 790 groups. At January 2019, there were 24 active groups in WA (139 participants), with 12 other groups recently completed.

➔ Phone RIST on 1800 883 343

ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS

Picking Performer Ewes

This workshop available in WA for woolgrowers with commercial self-replacing Merino flocks places importance on the total lifetime productivity potential of the ewes.

RAMping Up Repro

This workshop available in WA 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 WA 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.

➔ The Sheep's Back (see back page)

LAMBING DENSITY AND MOB SIZE

Research conducted at 85 sites across Australia, including 30 sites in WA, 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

FEEDBASE



AWI and its partners responded quickly to outbreaks of subterranean clover Red Leaf syndrome in WA.

CLOVER RED LEAF SYNDROME

Detailed guidance to help livestock producers manage the impacts of subterranean clover Red Leaf syndrome has been released.

➔ www.wool.com/weeds

FEED ON OFFER ONLINE LIBRARY

A web-based photo library of Feed On Offer (FOO) standards contains 650 images to enable producers to estimate the FOO and nutritive value of grazed pastures.

➔ www.wool.com/fo

EVERGRAZE

The EverGraze website presents regionally specific information about farming systems based on **perennials**, for producers across the high rainfall zone of southern Australia. Packaged information covers South Coast WA, including 11 case studies.

➔ www.evergraze.com.au

GRAIN & GRAZE

The Grain & Graze website provides information, tools and calculators for **mixed farm enterprises** (grain and livestock) in WA. 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.

➔ www.grainandgraze3.com.au

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

HARVESTING



AWI-funded practical in-shed shearer training under way at Rylington Park Institute near **Boyup Brook**.

SHED TRAINING

Shearer and wool handler training

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

- **shearer in-shed training** was delivered for 389 days across WA resulting in 1,305 trained.
- **wool handler in-shed training** was delivered for 204 days across WA resulting in 761 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.

➔ AWI Shearing Industry Development Coordinator, Jim Murray, 0427 460 007

Training resources

AWI has produced a series of training videos to help advance the skills of novice, improver and professional shearers 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

WA SHEARING COMPETITIONS

AWI provides support to local shearing competitions in WA affiliated with Sports Shear Australia. Eight were supported in the 2017/18 year, including the WA State Championships. 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 woolhandling.

➔ www.wool.com/competitionsupport

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HIGHLIGHTS

THE NEXT GEN



WA school teams from **Cunderdin, Harvey, Narrogin and Bindoon** were at AWI's 2018 National Merino Challenge.

PRACTICAL HANDS-ON TRAINING

Young woolgrowers from WA take part in practical hands-on training initiatives:

- **National Merino Challenge** encourages new entrants into the wool industry by helping students across WA and the rest of Australia develop their industry knowledge, skills and networks.
➔ www.awinmc.com.au
- **Sheep classing workshops** are delivered to provide practical advice on increasing flock production. AWI has run them at several locations in WA including Katanning and Southern Cross.
- **Young woolgrower initiatives** supported by AWI in WA include the Murdoch University Sheep & Wool Tour.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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

- **Breeding Leadership course:** Six participants from NSW in 2018: Stephen Chappell, Lake Grace; Daniel Dempster, Goomalling; Kyle Gumprich, Narrogin; Justin Haydock, Narrogin; Alex House, Claremont; Carl Storer, Cunderdin.
- **Nuffield Farming Scholarship:** David Cussons, Kojonup.

Other opportunities include the Horizon Scholarship and the Science and Innovation Awards for Young People.

➔ www.wool.com/leadership

MAKING MORE FROM SHEEP

This is a best practice package of information and tools for sheep producers. Ideal for young people starting out in the wool industry, the 12 modules contain useful information about the 'must dos' of managing a successful wool enterprise.

➔ www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au

MARKET INTEL



AWI is sending wool prices and market intelligence direct to WA woolgrowers' mobile phones.

- **Daily Wool Market Reports** are available via SMS to WA 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.
➔ www.wool.com/marketintelligence

AUTOMATION



Low-cost microwave technology can improve farm connectivity in WA.

- **Smart sheep tags**, capable of tracking real-time location of sheep, are being trialled on-farm by AWI.
➔ www.wool.com/smarttags
- **Products and systems for more effective wireless connections** across farm properties are being investigated by AWI.
- **Australian eChallenge Wool Innovation** program is finding technology solutions for the everyday problems woolgrowers face, such as farm connectivity.

INFORMATION



Beyond the Bale, AWI's quarterly magazine for wool levy payers, is posted direct to woolgrowers across WA.

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

- **Beyond the Bale** quarterly magazine
➔ www.wool.com/btba
- **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 WA
- **AWI Helpline** 1800 070 099
- **Woolgrower representative groups:** National, WA and regional



AWI GROWER NETWORK IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The Sheep's Back is the AWI-supported extension network in Western Australia that provides opportunities for woolgrowers to get involved in practical programs that focus on making positive changes to on-farm production and management. All WA woolgrowers are encouraged to get involved. Contact the network coordinator or refer to the website.

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www.sheepsback.com.au

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Twitter: @sheepsback