This August 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 WOOL INDUSTRY**

WA is the third largest wool producing state in Australia, producing about 21.8% 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.

82% of WA sheep producers manage a flock of more than 500 sheep. Breeding ewes make up more than 50% of the flock. Sheep producers in the medium rainfall zone and the cereal sheep zone account for most of the sheep production in the state, with the producers in the medium rainfall zone running larger flocks than those in the cereal sheep zone.

**SHEEP NUMBERS SHORN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>million</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019/20*</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Aug 2019
* Forecast

**SHORN WOOL PRODUCTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>mkg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017/18</td>
<td>125.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018/19</td>
<td>99.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019/20*</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Aug 2019
* Forecast

**AWTA TEST DATA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017/18</th>
<th>2018/19</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>69,890</td>
<td>65,534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>360,017</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.
WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HIGHLIGHTS

SHEEP HEALTH

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

PEST ANIMALS

With key equipment provided by AWI, work is under way on the Esperance extension to the State Barrier Fence.

GENETICS

A Merino Lifetime Productivity field day is held each year in Western Australia at the Pingelly site.

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.

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

BREED FLYSTRIKE PUBLICATIONS

Publications now available include information on breeding for breech flystrike 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 Metacam® (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

WA WILD DOG CONTROL GROUPS

Since 2011, AWI has supported 22 groups throughout WA in the regions of the Eastern and Central Wheatbelt, Esperance, Ravensthorpe, Carnarvon and Meekatharra. In 2019 AWI supported the West Midlands Recognised Biosecurity Group which includes landholders across 7 shires. AWI has supported the groups to overcome emergency pest animal challenges and lay secure foundations for sustainable long-term future pest control programs.

- www.wool.com/wilddogs

EXCLUSION FENCING UNIT

An AWI-funded Exclusion Fence Construction Unit is helping the WA DPIRD undertake the long-awaited Esperance extension to the State Barrier Fence (SBF). When not busy with the Esperance extension, the unit is trucked to other sections of the 1950 km long SBF for repairs and complete replacement in some sections.

- Craig Robbins 0427 198 224
- Matt Stadler 0409 107 200

WA WILD DOG COORDINATOR

AWI funds a Wild Dog Coordinator position in WA: Meja Aldrich. Meja’s role is to assist woolgrowers and other key stakeholders to work together to lessen the impact of livestock predation by wild dogs.

- 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.

- 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 at monitored sites.

- www.wool.com/rabbits

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 current 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), MERINOCHECK, Visual Sheep Scores, RamSelect, workshops, sheep classifiers and advisors and saleyards.

- www.wool.com/publications
MOB SIZE AFFECTS LAMB SURVIVAL
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

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. At June 2019, there were 24 active groups in WA, with 15 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.

www.wool.com/weeds

CLOVER RED LEAF SYNDROME
Detailed guidance to help livestock producers manage the impacts of subterranean clover Red Leaf syndrome.

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/food

EVERGRAZE
The EverGraze website presents regionally specific information about farming systems based on perennials, for producers. Package 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.

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.

www.wool.com/weeds

TIMERITE
Timerite® predicts the best date for spraying in spring to control redlegged earth mites (RLEM) the following autumn on any particular property.

www.wool.com/weeds

WOOLGROWER SPOTLIGHT
Case studies of environmental land management undertaken by Australian woolgrowers, providing insights for retailers and consumers.

www.woolmark.com/about-wool/woolgrowers

REPRODUCTION
A RAMping Up Repro workshop held in July at Frankland in the Great Southern Region of WA.

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

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 450 days across WA resulting in 1,857 trained.
• wool handler in-shed training was delivered for 226 days across WA resulting in 766 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

WA SHEARING COMPETITIONS
AWI provides support to local shearing competitions in WA affiliated with Sports Shear Australia. Nine were supported in the 2018/19 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

HARVESTING
AWI-sponsored Under 21 shearing competition at Boddington Shears in south-west WA.
THE NEXT GEN

The team from the WA College of Agriculture – Cunderdin at AWI’s 2019 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 WA 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

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/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 WA
- AWI Helpline 1800 070 099
- Woolgrower representative groups: National, WA and regional

AGRI TECHNOLOGY

An AWI ‘Smart tags and future of wool production’ workshop at Esperance on the south coast of WA.

- AWI Smart sheep tags are being used by different researchers to understand grazing and reproductive behaviour and to detect welfare and predation issues.
  - www.wool.com/smarttags
- Farmers2Founders program is supporting innovative woolgrowers to develop entrepreneurship and technology capabilities.
  - www.farmers2founders.com

INFORMATION

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.

Coordinator: Andrew Ritchie
andrew@sheepsback.com.au
(08) 9736 1055
www.sheepsback.com.au
Facebook: @sheepsback
Twitter: @sheepsback

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