CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL UK
In October last year, the global Campaign for Wool marked its eighth successful year in the UK with its annual Wool Week during which retail supporters created beautiful in-store installations and window displays to help sell more wool.

WOOL INTERIOR IN NEW RANGE ROVER VELAR
Land Rover’s new Range Rover Velar is available with an innovative wool blend interior which Land Rover says is the first ever non-leather premium interior option on a volume-manufactured model.

MINIJUMBUK’S HOSPITAL WOOL FLEECE
The new Hospital Wool Fleece product from Woolmark licencee MiniJumbuk has been designed to reduce the risk of bedsores and alleviate pain, particularly for hospital patients and wheelchair users.

WOOL FACTS: WOOL IS 100% BIODEGRADABLE
Wool is a natural and renewable resource. As long as there is grass to eat, sheep will continue to produce wool. When wool is disposed of, it will naturally decompose in soil in a matter of months or years, slowly releasing valuable nutrients back into the earth.

SHEARER AND WOOL HANDLER TRAINING
AWI funds training for shearers and wool handlers to attract and retain new entrants into the wool harvesting industry, build the capacity and longevity of existing staff, and increase returns to woolgrowers through improved clip preparation practices.

MARKET INTELLIGENCE: BROAD WOOL
Average monthly prices in the broader wool segment have increased over the past 12 months, especially for 25-26 micron wools. Prices have increased more modestly for 28-32 micron wools, due to the increased supply of these microns.

AWI’S BEYOND THE BALE MAGAZINE
In the following pages there are articles sourced from the latest editions of AWI’s quarterly Beyond the Bale magazine. If you would like to be put on the distribution list for Beyond the Bale (free), please email your name and postal address to richard.smith@wool.com, or visit http://beyondthebale.wool.com to view online versions.

AWI E-NEWSLETTERS
AWI produces several free online publications:
• Weekly wool market review
• AWI woolgrowers’ newsletter (monthly)
• Beyond the Bale e-newsletter (quarterly)
• Daily price reports (via sms)
Visit www.wool.com/subscribe for your free subscription.
In October last year, the Campaign for Wool’s annual ‘Wool Week’ returned to the UK for the eighth year, with 16 days of activities all shining the spotlight on the natural benefits of wool products – from beautiful interior products for the home through to wool apparel. The extended program of events encompassed 340 industry/retail/brand supporters.

Key retailers and designers once again threw their support behind the Campaign for Wool through in-store activities and shop window displays across the UK – promoting wool products including those made from wool of a broader micron. An increase in the use of Wool Week point of sale material was seen and a wider distribution reach across the UK.

Bicester Village – a luxury village-style shopping area in Oxfordshire, only an hour from London, and home to more than 130 boutiques of world-famous brands – had a complete wool-takeover and pop-up boutique, featuring more Campaign for Wool’s retail partners.

The UK Wool Week’s major event this year was ‘Wool Fusion’: a pop-up installation on Baker Street in central London, which showcased wool interiors including furnishings, fabrics and flooring as well as some of the best fashion and functional apparel. A program of workshops by artisans, talks from brand and retail experts, and special events was held throughout the exhibition.

Leading textile industry experts and 120 students from 25 universities across the UK gathered in Yorkshire for two days for the 4th annual ‘Making it in Textiles’ conference, sponsored by the Campaign for Wool. The initiative offered mill tours, detailed discussions and access to industry expertise from all sectors of the wool and textiles industries.
Land Rover’s new Range Rover Velar is available with an innovative wool blend interior which Land Rover says is the first ever non-leather premium interior option on a volume-manufactured model.

The Range Rover Velar, the highly lauded fourth member of the Range Rover family, has landed on Australia’s shores, and the car’s interior furnishings - developed with Danish technical fabric specialists Kvadrat - are available with a wool blend fabric.

Unique to the SUV segment, the Velar offers what Land Rover calls a ‘Premium Textile’ as an alternative to leather in the creation of a contemporary and beautifully crafted interior.

“Our collaboration with Kvadrat couldn’t have been more appropriate. Kvadrat shares Land Rover’s ethos and desire to continually innovate, to offer more curated customer choice and to define the future of luxury materials in our respective design industries,” said Land Rover Colour and Materials Chief Designer, Amy Frascella.

Kvadrat worked closely with Land Rover to develop the unique and luxurious wool blend upholstery. This material has been designed and created to meet Land Rover’s leading standards for premium appearance, comfort and durability.

“Land Rover approached us to do a textile for the Velar – a textile that should fit the very high-tech interior but that should also bring some warmth into the interior, and of course there were a lot of requirements in terms of quality, a lot of demands for durability, but finally we ended up with the right composition with the right blend of wool and polyester,” said Kvadrat’s Head of Design Management, Charlotte Bastholm Skjold.

“It’s really a breakthrough that Land Rover has introduced a car where you have a textile with a wool blend. It’s not normally used in the car industry.

“The fact that you have wool in it gives it very nice properties: it’s a natural material, it’s biodegradable, it’s renewable, and if it’s very hot then you will stay cool, and if it’s very cold then you’ll actually have the warmth and the comfort of this textile. So this of course is really premium because of the benefits of the wool and also the look and feel that it gives. “What Land Rover has tried to do is really take elements of your living room, where you feel warm and comfortable, into the car; and I really see that’s a tendency that we will see coming more and more.”

MORE INFORMATION
www.landrover.com
www.kvadrat.dk
WITH an increasing amount of evidence championing the health and wellbeing properties of wool, Australian bedding brand MiniJumbuk last year released a range of new products – including fleeces for beds and wheelchairs, as well as a highly portable chair cushion – targeting hospital patients, wheelchair users, or simply office workers who spend much of the day sitting on a chair.

MiniJumbuk recently released a range of Hospital Wool Fleece products – including covers for beds and wheelchairs, as well as a chair cushion.

MiniJumbuk's new Hospital Wool Fleece has been designed to reduce the risk of bedsores and alleviate pain, particularly for hospital patients and wheelchair users.

ABOUT MINIJUMBUK

MiniJumbuk’s heritage is very much connected to rural Australia. It was back in 1975 in the small country town of Naracoorte, South Australia, that MiniJumbuk started as a cottage industry hand-crafting miniature Merino souvenir sheep – which led to the company’s unusual name ‘MiniJumbuk’, meaning ‘mini-sheep’.

In 1977 local sheep shearer Don Wray joined the business and began carefully selecting and experimenting with the best wool varieties from local farms to create MiniJumbuk’s first quilt – Australia’s first commercially produced wool-filled quilt. The company went from strength to strength adding woollen underblankets and pillows to the range.

Today MiniJumbuk is still proudly based in Naracoorte and has grown to become a global leader in the design and manufacture of premium wool bedding products. The company’s products are sold in the major department stores in Australia – Myer, David Jones, Harris Scarfe – as well as in leading homewares retailer Adairs.

Mr Turner said a commitment to excellence and a passion for wool are at the heart of the company.

‘It’s our attention to detail and quality that has given us the reputation we have today,’ he said. ‘Our staff have a genuine commitment to providing excellent customer service and top-quality products that we are truly proud of.

‘MiniJumbuk was founded on wool, and the fibre continues to be the focus of the company. We source the best possible Australian wool – much of it from the local area.”

The company has a strong presence in the domestic market, with about 90 per cent of the company’s sales in Australia, but also has a desire in due course to expand further into overseas markets.

“The Woolmark is a powerful brand and an additional symbol of quality for us. Consumers can rely on it to know they are buying a product that has pure new wool content. We have also used Campaign for Wool branding on point of sale promotions, to increase sales,” Mr Turner added.
WOOL FACTS

WOOL IS 100% BIODEGRADABLE

Wool is a natural and renewable resource. As long as there is grass to eat, sheep will continue to produce wool. When wool is disposed of, it will naturally decompose in soil in a matter of months or years, slowly releasing valuable nutrients back into the earth. Synthetic fibres, on the other hand, can be extremely slow to degrade and significantly contribute to the world’s overflowing landfills.

HOW DOES WOOL BIODEGRADE?

All materials of animal and vegetable origin have some degree of biodegradability, meaning that they are capable of being decomposed by the action of living organisms, such as fungi and bacteria.

Wool is composed of the natural protein keratin, which is similar to the protein that makes up human hair. When keratin is broken down naturally by microorganisms, the products do not pose any environmental hazard.

HOW QUICKLY DOES WOOL BIODEGRADE?

Wool biodegrades readily in as little as three to four months but the rate varies with soil, climate and wool characteristics. This releases essential elements such as nitrogen, sulphur and magnesium back to the soil, able to be taken up by growing plants. Some studies found marked weight loss after only four weeks’ burial in soils.

Research has shown that processing treatments such as dyeing and anti-shrink treatment can affect the rate of biodegradation in soil, causing an increase in the initial resistance of wool fabric to degradation. However, this is a short term effect, typically not persisting beyond eight weeks.

WOOL RETURNS ESSENTIAL NUTRIENTS TO THE SOIL

On burial in soil, wool becomes a slow-release fertiliser providing nutrients for uptake and growth by other organisms. Some have even used wool fertiliser to foster herb and vegetable growth. In contrast, synthetic textiles persist for many decades and can disintegrate to small fragments. Commonly known as microplastics, or microfibres when less than 5mm in diameter, these fragments accumulate in aquatic environments and land disposal sites where they have negative effects on ecosystems when consumed by organisms. A single polyester fleece garment can produce more than 1900 fibres per wash. Ingestion has a negative impact on organisms, sometimes causing death through starvation as plastic replaces food in the stomach. Once in the food chain, microplastics potentially also affect human health via seafood/uni consumption.

REFERENCES

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.

AWI therefore funds hands-on practical training for shearers and wool handlers in the shed, aimed particularly at increasing their productivity, skills development and professionalism.

In the 2016/17 financial year, 1,591.5 days training were delivered through AWI-funded programs across Australia (see table below), an increase of 9% from 2015/16, with the number trained rising 23% from the previous year to 5,236.

“They are key to the profitability of the industry,” AWI’s shearing industry development coordinator Jim Murray says. “The training for harvesting staff is provided through AWI’s Independent Coaching Program and also by Registered Training Organisations.”

“Training covers a wide range of experience, from learner to professional shearers and novice to professional wool handlers. It is also offered as short term, intensive workshops across a range of skill levels.”

“The delivery was a combination of in-shed training, novice schools and workshops. This year for the first time, AWI funded training in the Shear-Jitsu technique, the new way to perform the catch and drag.”

HARVESTING VIDEOS FEATURE TOP TIPS
Complementing the free in-shed training, AWI’s shearing and wool handling video tutorials continue to be in constant demand, with all 200 being available on USB and also on YouTube.

The short online tutorials are a complete reference guide for shearers, wool handlers, woolgrowers, instructors and students working in various areas of wool harvesting. Packed with tips, hints and practical advice, the tutorials include advice from experienced shearers, wool handlers and wool classifiers such as Shannon Warnest, Dwayne Black and Rachael Hutchinson.

People working in shearing sheds have traditionally learnt their skills ‘on the job’ by being shown; these videos use the same approach,” Jim says. “Available on USB, they are a great way of getting information to people working in the industry as the videos are suitable to be watched in the shearing shed on laptop computers.”

Also available on YouTube is the new series of four training videos that highlight the Shear-Jitsu technique that shearers utilise to help them prevent injury and increase the longevity of their careers.

More information www.wool.com/shearertraining

2016/17 SHEARER AND WOOL HANDLER TRAINING ACTIVITIES

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In this edition of *The Broader View*, we look at the current market situation in the broad wool segment. Average monthly prices have increased over the past 12 months, more so for 25-26 micron wools than 28-32 micron wools.

We reported in the previous edition (June 2017) of *The Broader View* that, since the market peak of May 2015 caused by the double-faced fabric hype in China, broad wool prices had gone in two directions: wools of 25 and 26 micron remained at consistent price levels, while demand for 28-32 micron wools was subdued.

Since June 2017, there has been a pick up in the demand for these broader wool types. Although the changes in broad wool prices have not been as large as the price changes experienced by the finer wool types over the past year, a market correction to arrest the downward trend has nevertheless occurred.

During the past 12 months, average monthly prices for 25 and 26 micron wools have climbed from $10.40/kg and $9.20/kg respectively in February 2017 to $12.55/kg and $10.97/kg in February 2018.

For 28, 30 and 32 micron types, the story has been more modest, although the 28 micron monthly average price has still climbed by 99c over the past year to $7.77/kg. For 30 micron wool ($5.78/kg compared to $5.38/kg a year ago) and 32 micron wool ($4.05/kg compared to $4.04/kg), the relatively consistent prices do indicate a growth in demand as quite a significant increase in wool volume has passed through AWTA this season compared to last. So far, this season, AWTA has tested an extra 19% of 28.6-30.5 micron wool compared to this time last year, while an extra 27% has been recorded for microns 30.6+. From a simple demand vs supply analysis, the data indicates an apparent growth of demand for the broader fibre.

With continued growth in outdoor and global fashion trends increasingly choosing to use natural fibres, wool is positioned as the premium fibre. China’s double-faced fabrics will pose an interesting player as continued success of these products will demand a large amount of wool to fulfil these orders. With this, the ability of processors to now create blends of different wools for ‘fake fur’ products is another future growth area for wool, as it pulls more and more wool through the pipeline in the future.
AWI GROWER NETWORKS
PRODUCERS LEARNING FROM PRODUCERS

• AWI grower networks are present in each wool-growing state.
• They aim to increase the long-term productivity and profitability of producers.
• All woolgrowers are encouraged to get involved.

AWI-supported extension networks provide opportunities for producers to get involved in practical programs that focus on making positive changes to on-farm production and management practices.

Be involved as little or as much as you like: sign up for newsletters about local issues, attend local field days and workshops.

The networks are fundamental to:
• the spread of new ideas
• continuing education
• the adoption of best practice
• giving AWI a direct link to what is happening on-ground.

Ongoing strong partnerships with state departments of agriculture, private providers and woolgrowers help ensure the grower networks continue to generate increased participation and reported benefits by woolgrowers.

To learn more about the networks and how to get involved, refer to the website of your state network, or contact the network coordinator below.

NEW SOUTH WALES
Coordinator: Megan Rogers
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TASMANIA
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