

Burbidge Farms

“Connemara”

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John Roberts,
WSSR Executive Officer

Dear Sir,

I would like to make a short submission to the Wool Selling System Review.

The areas which I believe could increase profitability to the wool industry are

1. Classer Supervised Unskirted wool.

Introduce a new category within the AWEX code of practice which would be called Classer Supervised Unskirted (CSU) wool.

There have been a number of systems developed which use quality controlled unskirted wool to successfully produce high quality tops e.g. Fibre Direct. The sale of quality assured unskirted wool through the auction system would reduce costs within the shearing shed due to labour savings.

A classer is needed to supervise the preparation of unskirted wool and be the quality assurance officer within the shed. This would prevent unwanted categories such as dags, stain, cots and shanks from contaminating the unskirted wool.

Currently all unskirted wool attracts a 'D' prefix even if it is prepared by a classer taking out the undesirable categories listed above. The 'D' prefix should be kept for all non-conforming lots and the new category of 'CSU' for those unskirted lots prepared by a classer.

Another area where efficiencies could be made is in changing from conventional shearing to the use of Upright Position Shearing Platforms (UPSP). These platforms enable the shearer to easily remove contaminating wool types before shearing the rest of the fleece. The unskirted fleece can then be removed from the platform most efficiently without being skirted. Being able to sell unskirted wool with a 'CSU' status at auction would significantly assist the uptake of the UPSP method of shearing.

2. Training of Wool Classers.

Before the advent of objective measurement wool classers were the only means of trying to determine wool quality. For most types of wool this is no longer the case as measurement

can determine many aspects of wool quality. In fast paced shearing sheds it is now more critical to have quality assurance through the whole shed than have someone trying to class things which can be measured. The emphasis of training needs to reflect this and move from classer training to wool quality assurance training.

Wool classers are often preoccupied with classing to the AWEX code of practice rather than preparing wool to extract the best return for the producer. The emphasis in training needs to change to reflect the most profitable wool preparation while classing to the code of practice. This would of course necessitate the training of trainers in how to maximise producer returns.

3. Pre and post sale charges

A transparent method of showing post sale charges is needed. Combining both pre and post sale charges and either seller or buyer paying both would be simpler.

The issues I have outlined are not difficult to implement and could add to wool grower profitability.

Kind Regards

Grant Burbidge

Wool Grower