

Beyond the bale

ISSUE 102 AUTUMN 2025 PROFIT FROM WOOL INNOVATION WOOL.COM



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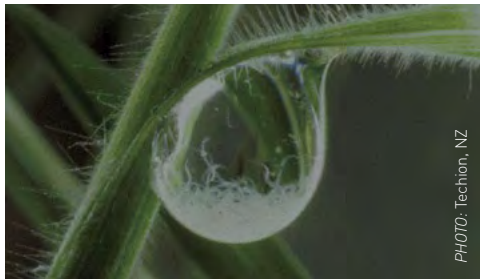
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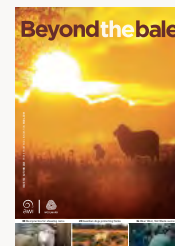
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AWI INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

-  Sheep Production
-  Marketing
-  Consultation
-  Industry Development
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AWI STATE-BASED GROWER NETWORKS

AWI-supported networks are present in each state.

- AWI Extension NSW
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- AWI Extension TAS
- AWI Extension VIC
- AWI Extension WA
- AWI Extension Qld

Find your grower network at wool.com/networks or call AWI on 02 8295 3100.



AWI is the R&D and marketing organisation for the Australian wool industry.

AWI working for woolgrowers



AWI CEO John Roberts provides readers with an overview of how AWI is undertaking R&D and marketing to address some of the key issues faced by Australian woolgrowers.

As well as being produced with extensive woolgrower and industry consultation, the new Strategic Plan will be shaped by the result of WoolPoll 2024 and the broader financial position of the company.

well-suited to land classes with low energy feed and to environments with little seasonal rainfall pattern.

These strengths helped wool enterprises attain similar or superior profits compared to other livestock enterprise types over the five-years 2018-19 to 2022-23.

Merinos also have similar strengths in mixed farming areas. They are a great risk management strategy in the wheatbelt zone and remain a great complement to cropping, especially with the increasingly variable climate.

A focus on improving the performance of a wool-growing enterprise is more likely to increase profits than moving to a different enterprise. Plus changing enterprises incurs significant up-front capital costs for, for example, new infrastructure, plant or genetics.

There are opportunities to increase productivity and profit in a wool enterprise at the farm level in areas such as reproductive performance, genetic gain, better sheep health, a more resilient feedbase, and on-farm automation.

In global markets, there are also many opportunities for wool including the trend towards sustainable fibres, the growing interest in the provenance of products, the increasing use of Merino wool as a high-performance fibre, and new product innovations such as wool footwear. The Chinese wool processing industry has invested heavily in wool in the past few years – and new processing markets, such as Vietnam which I very recently visited, are also gearing up for wool.

Despite global economic conditions not delivering the wool prices right now that woolgrowers deserve, I believe that the fundamental benefits of wool and long-term consumer trends play in wool's favour. I have a healthy optimism in the long-term future for Australian wool and AWI will continue to work hard on behalf of the producers that grow this great fibre.

John Roberts
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Wool Innovation

Consultation underway on AWI's new Strategic Plan

AWI is currently developing its next three-year Strategic Plan in consultation with woolgrowers and wool industry bodies.

Meetings were held last month with the Woolgrower Industry Consultation Panel (WICP) and the Woolgrower Consultation Group (WCG), the two key forums through which AWI formally engages with woolgrower representative groups. The WICP comprises a core group of members from the nine national woolgrower organisations. The WCG is a broader group of 28 representatives comprising state and regional production-based woolgrower groups, as well as the members of the WICP.

At these latest meetings, both the WICP and WCG provided constructive input into the key R&D and marketing priorities of these bodies and the woolgrowers they represent.

The Strategic Plan consultation process will continue with meetings between AWI and the Producer Advisory Panels (PAP) of each of the six state-based AWI Extension Networks. Each PAP comprises woolgrowers and industry stakeholders from across the state.

Further meetings will be held with the WICP and WCG to ensure industry views and priorities are incorporated into the plan before the AWI Board finalises it. The new Strategic Plan will apply from July.

Woolgrowers can provide their input to AWI through (1) the WICP or WCG by contacting their member organisation (listed at wool.com/consultation), (2) members of their state PAP (listed via wool.com/networks), or (3) directly to AWI by emailing feedback@wool.com or by writing to our Sydney office address (see page 2).

Fundamental strengths of wool-growing enterprises

When I meet woolgrowers at events across Australia, I am always struck by how passionate they are about their wool enterprises, and also resilient when faced with, for example, poor seasonal conditions. They appreciate the evidence that wool sheep are a good choice for long-term farm profitability and risk management.

Wool sheep remain the true dual purpose animal, offering production options and a reliable source of income. As Agrista's recent analysis of livestock enterprise profitability concluded, there are several strengths of wool enterprises over other livestock enterprises:

- Diversity of income – Wool enterprises have multiple income streams including wool, sheep meat and, in some cases, lamb. This diversity in income enables woolgrowers to adapt their enterprise based on market signals, resource suitability or management preference.
- Income generation during drought – Wool sheep have low maintenance energy requirements and produce a fleece of reasonable value even in a drought, meaning that the reduction in income due to drought is lower when compared to livestock enterprises dependent on meat production.
- Maternal flexibility – The Merino ewe has the flexibility to be joined to a Merino to produce progeny with high capability of growing wool, or to a maternal sire, or a terminal sire, or it can be managed as a dry sheep with lower energy requirements and higher wool production relative to a lactating ewe.
- The value of wethers and dry ewes – Wethers are a feed efficient animal because there is no reproductive demand for energy. These animals are



Dwayne Black on the board training new entrants in the industry at Rylington Park in Boyup Brook, Western Australia, in November.

AWI funds hands-on, practical in-shed training for shearers and wool handlers across the country to attract and retain new entrants into the wool harvesting industry; increase workers' productivity, skills and professionalism; and increase returns to woolgrowers through improved clip preparation practices.

Shearer and wool handler training

AWI continues to regularly fund and support hands-on practical in-shed training for shearers and wool handlers. As well as novice workshops and improver workshops, AWI also funds education programs for high school students.

AWI-funded trainers carry out wool harvesting training in New South Wales, Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania. In Victoria and South Australia, the AWI-funded training is provided by the Shearing Contractors Association of Australia Shearer Woolhandler Training Inc (SCAA SWTI).

See opposite for a list of **novice** and **improver** training scheduled nationwide for 2025 – more is planned. Programs are subject to change without notice. Keep an eye on the Facebook channels of @australianwoolinnovation (NSW, WA, Qld, Tas) and @shearerwoolhandlertraining (Vic, SA) for the latest updates.

AWI thanks all the woolgrowers who provide their facilities and sheep, and all the other organisations and individuals that lend their time and resources to help run this training.

MORE INFORMATION
wool.com/harvestingtraining



Novice workshops

These provide school leavers and new entrants to the wool industry, generally aged 16 to 25, with training geared towards gaining full-time employment in the industry.

Pictured is a novice workshop at Balmoral, Victoria.



Improver workshops

These are run to assist new entrants and learner shearers currently working in industry to improve their shearing and wool handling skills.

Pictured is an improver workshop at Teetulpa, South Australia.



Education programs

These are targeted at high school students in years 9 to 12 and have an emphasis on the variety of career pathways within the industry.

Pictured is a workshop for the WA College of Agriculture – Harvey, in Western Australia.

2025 SCHEDULED TRAINING

New South Wales

January to June 2025 – dates and locations for the latter six months of the calendar year will be advertised by the end of May.

✉ Contact craig.french@wool.com for details.

Dates	Location	Level
13–17 Jan	Bookham	Novice
24–28 Feb	Walbundrie	Novice
17–28 Feb	Cooinbill	Novice
10–14 Feb	Young	Novice
31 March – 4 April	Walbundrie	Novice
24–28 March	Warren	Improver
April (dates TBC)	Walbundrie	Improver
21–25 April	Daysdale	Improver
May (dates TBC)	Cooma	Novice
May (dates TBC)	Cooma	Novice
5–16 May	Armidale TAFE	Shearing & Wool Handling Cert II
26 May – 6 June	Glen Innes TAFE	Shearing Cert II

Victoria

✉ Contact the SCAA SWTI on 1300 787 984 or admin@swti.edu.au for details.

Dates	Location	Level
20–24 Jan	Balmoral	Novice
3–7 Feb	Gymbowen	Novice
10–14 Feb	Bendigo	Novice
3–7 March	Dookie	Novice
11–14 March	Dookie	Improver
7–11 April	Hamilton	Novice
5–9 May	Ballarat	Novice
16–20 June	Inglewood	Improver
30 June – 4 July	Manangatang	Novice
7–11 July	Omeo	Novice
18–22 August	Telopea Downs	Improver
4–8 Aug	Wycheproof	Novice
8–12 Sept	Wedderburn	Novice
13–17 Oct	Penshurst	Novice
10–14 Nov	Bairnsdale	Novice
17–21 Nov	Strathbogrie	Novice

Queensland

✉ Contact craig.french@wool.com for details.

Dates	Location	Level
May (dates TBC)	Barcardine	Novice
May (dates TBC)	Barcardine	Improver

Tasmania

✉ Contact Locky West on 0400 865 631 or email lachlan.west@wool.com for details.

Dates	Location	Level
20–24 Jan	Bothwell	Novice
5–9 May	Ross	Novice
12–16 May	Ross	Improver
28 July – 1 Aug	Fingal	Novice
4–8 Aug	Fingal	Improver
17–21 Nov	Gretna	Novice

South Australia

✉ Contact Josh Sneath on 0419 176 750 or email jsneath@swti.edu.au for details.

Dates	Location	Level
20–24 Jan	Willalooka	Novice
28 Jan – 7 Feb	Konetta	Improver
10–21 Feb	Konetta	Improver
24–28 Feb	Marrabel	Novice
3–14 March	Pandurra	Improver
24–28 March	Holowiliena	Improver
7–11 April	Langhorne Creek	Novice
5–23 May	Teetulpa	Improver
12–30 May	Oakden Hills	Improver
2–6 June	Jamestown	Novice
23–27 June	Streaky Bay	Novice
7–11 July	Pinindi	Novice
4–8 Aug	Karoonda	Novice
18–22 Aug	Ki Ki	Novice
22–26 Sept	Roseworthy	Novice
13–17 Oct	Cummins	Novice
27 Oct – 31 Oct	Furner	Novice
1–5 Dec	Parndana KI	Novice

Western Australia

✉ Contact craig.french@wool.com or valerie.pretzel@wool.com for details. Specific dates in each particular month are still being finalised.

Dates	Location	Level
Jan	Boyup Brook	Novice
Jan	Narrogin	Ag college trainers
Feb	Boyup Brook	Wool pressing
Feb	Muresk	Novice
Feb	Muresk	Improver
March	Boyup Brook	Industry workshop
April	Broomehill	Novice
June	Tambellup	Improver
June	Narrogin	Train the trainer
July	Darkan	Wool pressing
July	Northampton	Improver
July	Northampton	Industry workshop
August	Muresk	Novice
August	Muresk	Improver
August	Muresk	Industry workshop
Sept	Dumbulyung	Industry workshop
Sept	Boyup Brook	Novice
Nov	Boyup Brook	Novice
Nov	Lake Grace	Improver
Nov	Lake Grace	WHW – High School
Dec	Boyup Brook	Improver

Teaching the teachers about wool

Ag teachers from WA became the students in January when they converged on Narrogin for a three-day course to ensure they were up to date in best practice wool harvesting.



The ag teachers learnt a range of wool harvesting skills at the AWI-funded workshop.

AWI shearing and wool handling trainers provide workshops during the year for students at ag colleges across WA. However, to provide the colleges' ag teachers with the knowledge and confidence to support the training throughout the rest of the year, AWI recently funded a 'train the trainer' style course for ag teachers from four of the ag colleges. This is the first time this type of training has been done in WA.

Hosted by the Western Australian College of Agriculture Narrogin, which provided the facilities and sheep, the three-day wool harvesting industry workshop was initiated by AWI's WA Training Coordinator Valerie Pretzel with support and organisation from the College's farm manager Steve Madson. The workshop was fully funded by AWI and was supported by the WA Wool Training Advisory (WoolTAG) and the Western Australian Shearing Industry Association (WASIA).

The ag teachers that attended the course are from the Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture at Narrogin, Cunderdin,

and Morawa, and the Mount Barker Community College. As well as learning about shed safety and set up, handpiece preparation, shearing, wool handling, and wool classing; the teachers had the opportunity learn about AWI resources for students related to other areas, such as animal health, and career pathways in the wool industry.

AWI's Learn About Wool kit was also presented. This kit includes real wool fibre, yarn and fabric samples, factsheets and posters, and is available for free to primary and secondary schools across Australia. Schools can order the kit via learnaboutwool.com which also hosts lesson plans, resources, and a careers hub.

The course at Narrogin was delivered by experienced and skilled AWI wool

harvesting trainers Kevin Gellatly, Mark Stanton and Amanda Davis, along with AWI Industry Relations Officer for WA, Tennille Norrish.

"The AWI-funded workshop aimed to ensure the ag teachers' knowledge about wool harvesting is up to date and give them extra confidence to teach their students about wool and careers in the industry," said AWI National Manager, Wool Harvesting Training & Careers Development, Craig French.

"The training was very successful at equipping them with the skills and motivation to engage with their students about wool, and in a language and way that is consistent with the rest of the wool industry. This will hopefully result in more youngsters being attracted into the industry.

"We aim to build on the success of the workshop by expanding it next year to include more colleges and ag staff."

MORE INFORMATION

wool.com/harvestingtraining
learnaboutwool.com

New checklist to help shearing time run smoothly

A new Wool Harvesting Engagement Checklist for woolgrowers and shearing contractors is now available to help ensure wool harvesting is conducted in an agreed and professional manner, with due care for staff, wool clip quality, safety and animal welfare.

Shearing time on the farm is the culmination of up to 12 months of hard work by woolgrowers. So it's critical to get it right.

Good communication between the woolgrower and the shearing contractor is always vital to ensure a smooth and safe wool harvesting, and a well-prepared clip. And this communication is important not only while the wool harvesting team is onsite in the shed, but also before and after.

To help facilitate a professional and efficient shearing time, the National Wool Harvesting and Training (NWHAT) Advisory Group has developed a Wool Harvesting Engagement Checklist to assist the woolgrower and the shearing contractor (or their representatives) follow best practice.

"Shearing time is an important time, an exciting time, but can also be a very busy and quite stressful time. The new checklist is designed to help the woolgrower and contractor have a proactive and practical conversation in the lead up to shearing so that any potential problems can be addressed before they become a real issue in the shed," said NWHAT Chair, Don Macdonald.

"It helps make sure the woolgrower, the contractor and the wool harvesting team are all on the same page. Everyone knows their respective responsibilities and everyone benefits."

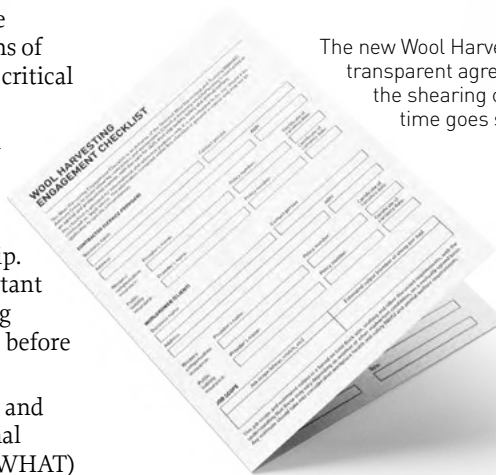
The four-page checklist has 20 items for woolgrowers and shearing contractors to consider together. The checklist specifies who is responsible for each of the 20 items; some items are the responsibility of both the woolgrower and the shearing contractor.

The checklist is also very suitable for crutching time as well as shearing time.

What does the checklist cover?

There are four sections in the checklist.

1. **Pre-shearing:** this covers topics such as the shearing shed's safety, whether a wool classer is required, additional requirements due to any integrity scheme of which the woolgrower is a member, agreement on yarding and time off water, and ram sedation procedures.



The new Wool Harvesting Engagement Checklist is a transparent agreement between the woolgrower and the shearing contractor to help ensure shearing time goes smoothly and professionally.

2. **Employment obligation:** this covers topics such as finance (pay, tax, invoicing), provision of adequate amenities, and the shearing contractor's contract with their staff on issues including work health and safety, animal welfare, drug and alcohol policy etc.



3. **Start of shearing:** this covers topics such as providing a shed safety induction, and a briefing of clip preparation requirements.

4. **Post shearing:** this covers topics such as undertaking a post wool harvesting review, a shed safety assessment, and a discussion of any concerns or issues that can be improved for next shearing time.

The checklist also provides reference to the *SafeSheds* shearing shed safety program (see page 10), the AWEX Code of Practice for the Preparation of Australian Wool Clips, and several wool integrity schemes such as the Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme (SustainaWool and ResponsiWool), RWS, ZQ and Authentico.

The Wool Harvesting Engagement Checklist is an initiative of the NWHAT Advisory Group which comprises AWI, Australian Wool Exchange (AWEX), National Council of Wool Selling Brokers of Australia (NCWSBA), Shearing Contractors Association of Australia (SCAA), WA Shearing Industry Association (WASIA), and WoolProducers Australia (WPA).

MORE INFORMATION

A hard copy of the checklist was posted to woolgrowers with this edition of *Beyond the Bale*. The checklist can also be downloaded at wool.com/shearing-preparation

New animal welfare course for shed staff

A new workshop that teaches best practice animal welfare to wool harvesting staff is being developed by SCAA Shearer Woolhandler Training Inc.

The two-hour course covers topics including animal welfare standards; identifying possible risks for animals in the shed; selection of appropriate equipment; low-stress sheep handling; assessing, reporting and treating animal injuries; practical suturing techniques; and ways to deal with non-compliance.

The course also uses AWI's four-page

Dealing with shearing cuts fact sheet, which is available at wool.com/shearing-preparation

Upon successful completion of the course, participants receive a certificate of attendance to be kept and presented on request.

A pilot of the course was run last month at AJ & PA McBride's shearing sheds.

MORE INFORMATION

SCAA Shearer Woolhandler Training Inc, 1300 787 984, admin@swti.edu.au

Shearing rams – what to consider

As part of its partnership with AWI, The Livestock Collective recently held a webinar on preparing for shearing. Considerations about shearing rams was one of several topics discussed. Kojonup-based veterinarian Dr Michylla Seal of Genstock was one of the guests on the webinar – and here we provide a Q&A summary about what she said on the topic.

How long do rams need to be off feed and water?

Rams are big animals and it's important to make sure that they're well emptied out before shearing. I recommend 18 to 48 hours off food and water. 18 hours is bringing them in around lunchtime the day before shearing, but ideally they'd be brought in 24 hours. The Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines say having sheep off food and water for longer than 48 hours should be avoided. If it is really hot weather, extended periods off water can lead to overheating of rams.

Is emptying out especially important if the ram will be sedated?

Absolutely. When a ram is sedated and if they're not emptied out, when they're

tipped up and not in their normal position, all their guts are putting pressure on their respiratory system and circulatory system. They can have difficulty breathing. This is especially the case in our larger breeds; it can put a huge impact on them. If they have been off food and water for more than 18 hours, they should be fine. We tend to find that deaths of sedated rams are usually associated with an underlying health condition or an incorrect use of the sedation.

What dosage of Acepromazine should rams be given?

The bigger the ram, or the bigger surface area of the ram, the more sedation they will need. So I recommend for British breeds 10mg (1ml of Acepromazine 10), or ram

juice as everyone calls it. Some bigger rams, such as Poll Dorsets tend to require 15mg (1.5ml of Acepromazine 10). For Merinos, I tend to do 7mg (0.7ml of Acepromazine per 100kg). It is important to check the concentration of the Acepromazine product you are using and apply the right dose as recommended by your veterinarian. We don't want an over-sedated animal because of the risks of complications. Make sure you are organised and obtain the Ace well in advance of shearing.

How and when should the Acepromazine be injected?

Give the dose intramuscular rather than subcutaneous because if you give it subcutaneous it tends to take longer for the animal to achieve adequate sedation.



Kojonup-based veterinarian Dr Michylla Seal.



There are some important things to consider when preparing for the shearing of your rams.

Preferably, give it high up on the neck in the muscle or, if animals are not destined for slaughter, then administer in the rump. I don't go lower down on the leg because if a ram jumps, moves around, you don't know whether you've given them that full dose. I like using a bottle-mounted vaccinator gun with a needle of adequate length (usually 1/2"); it makes it nice and easy rather than drawing up needles and syringes. Definitely talk to your vet about that.

It's best to inject them about 45 minutes before you start looking at shearing them, which gives the Ace a good amount of time to have an effect. If you can inject them in a race and then just slowly walk them into the shed and put them in the pens, it gives time for the drug to circulate and be effective.

What should I consider after a sedated ram has been shorn?

You very much need to consider how to manage sedated rams after they've been shorn because a sedative reduces the animal's ability to control its body temperature. So running out after shearing into yards with no shade and water, and if it's really hot: that is really going to affect them. Consider in these conditions having cool water and hay in the yards

for the rams to go onto after being shorn. I like to let them settle down in the yards in shade with access to water and then in the cooler part of the day, take them back out to the paddock. Likewise, if they've been sedated and it's really cold, they'll also have less ability to control their body temperature, so provide shelter and also water post shearing.

Acepromazine can increase the toxicity of organophosphate. So if your rams have been sedated and you're using organophosphate to treat lice, you should wait at least 24 hours before using it. If it's a hot day and you are backlining them, put your backlining chemical away in the shade between use, otherwise it can burn them. Try not to let them out into the direct heat on a really hot day; backlining them will heat them up even more – that's how people lose rams or cause rams to be infertile.

Also, think about what feed they're going out to. If any animal that's been off feed is going back onto real starchy feeds and grains, they've got to acclimatise back to that feed. We don't want them at risk of acidosis. Consider allowing rams to fill their gut on some hay prior to heading out to the paddock.

How long after shearing can rams go out for joining?

A ram takes 59 days to produce sperm from being a cell to ejaculating the sperm. So major stressors should be avoided during that period – I recommend rams being shorn at least two months before going out for joining. It also allows them to have that bit of protection of wool growth before joining and it can protect them from overheating. Another reason is because shearing cuts can get infected, increase body temperature and affect their sperm production.

Other topics discussed in the 45-minute webinar included the importance of conversations with your shearing team, curfew times for different types of sheep, managing shearing cuts, caring for stock post-shearing, and managing stock when shearing in extreme weather. Shearing contractor and President of the WA Shearing Industry Association Darren Spencer was also a guest on the webinar.

The webinar was recorded and is available free to view on demand on The Livestock Collective website and has also been converted to a podcast for easy listening on the go: thelivestockcollective.com.au/our-projects/awi-tlc-partner-program

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'SafeSheds' shearing shed safety program

The shearing shed safety program *SafeSheds*, which includes a best practice guide and safety checklists, is making the wool harvesting workplace safer for all shed workers. The resources are available for free to woolgrowers across Australia.

The cover and an example double-page spread of the best practice guidelines.



Launched in 2020, *SafeSheds* is now being used across the country by many woolgrowers and shearing contractors to help them assess the safety and conditions of their shearing sheds. This enables the woolgrower to create a program to rectify any safety hazards, improve working conditions and comply with modern workplace standards.

"The shearing industry is one of the most physically demanding occupations out there. As an industry we need to do as much as is possible to reduce the risk of injuries and accidents occurring in shearing sheds," said AWI General Manager, Grower Services & Market Intelligence, Stephen Feighan.

"As well as addressing the safety of the shearing shed and machinery, *SafeSheds* also encompasses work practices, working conditions and staff amenities. With so many alternative career options available to

young people in Australia, it is vital that the wool industry ensures the work environment in shearing sheds is as professional as possible to attract and retain wool harvesting staff.

"Not only is *SafeSheds* helping to provide safe and modern working conditions for wool harvesting staff, it also helps improve productivity."

SafeSheds is a self-assessment guide and not a formal audit or compulsory standard. It has been created to provide shearing shed operators with an understanding of the risks, and options to control risks wherever possible.

By planning and documenting improvements, woolgrowers are able to provide direct evidence of efforts in managing safety as required by relevant state workplace health and safety legislation.

Developed by AWI and WA Shearing Industry Association (WASIA), *SafeSheds* harnesses the support of industry including WoolProducers Australia, Pastoralists & Graziers WA, WAFarmers and Shearing Contractors' Association of Australia.

What does *SafeSheds* cover?

SafeSheds is available as an 80-page booklet with four sections:

1. Legal obligations of people involved in shearing
2. Guidance on how to assess their current shearing shed and manage risks
3. Detailed best practice guidelines for all areas of shearing operations:
 - Module 1 – The shearing shed
 - Module 2 – Machinery and equipment
 - Module 3 – Amenities and facilities
 - Module 4 – Work practices
 - Module 5 – General working conditions
4. Assessment checklists
 - Full assessment
 - Pre-shearing checklist
 - Induction checklist
 - Post shearing checklist.

Ideally, woolgrowers should go through all five modules and the full assessment checklist at least once a year, preferably early in the off-season as this will allow as much time as possible to make any changes and improvements before the next shearing.

The *SafeSheds* booklet is available free in downloadable PDF format in full, or in separate sections, from the AWI website at wool.com/safe-sheds. The *SafeSheds* checklists are also available via the AWI website in a handy digital, interactive format.

Shed safety signage kit

The shed safety signage kit for woolgrowers to use in their woolsheds contains 36 safety signs that are printed on UV-stabilised polypropylene for durability, with pre-drilled holes for easy installation. The kit also includes guidance notes to assist in the proper location and installation of the signs.

Developed and produced by WASIA, with support from AWI, these signs meet Australian Standards and legislative requirements in all Australian states and will help woolgrowers meet occupational health and safety obligations.

AWI sponsored the development and production of the kit and makes it available to woolgrowers at the handling and postage cost of \$25 (including GST) per kit.

MORE INFORMATION
wool.com/safe-sheds



Will you be making it home tonight?

The number of people in Australia that lost their lives due to (non-intentional) farm-related incidents more than doubled last year, with side by side vehicles and quad bikes being the most frequent causes. It is not just the young and inexperienced that need to be vigilant; more than half of fatal incidents (53%) since 2001 involved people aged over 50.

The number of (non-intentional) farm-related deaths in Australia more than doubled last year, from 32 in 2023 to 72 in 2024, according to AgHealth Australia. However, the figure for 2024 is similar to the long-term average since 2001, a period during which 1,815 people lost their lives.

In 2024, farm vehicles (38) and mobile farm machinery (21) were involved in a large majority of the 72 total fatalities. The most frequent deaths resulted from accidents involving:

1. side by side vehicles (14)
2. quad bikes (10)
3. tractors (8).

Other causes of death in 2024 involved:

- other farm vehicles: aircraft (5), ute (3), truck (3), motorbike (2), trailer (1)
- other mobile farm machinery: post hole digger (2), auger (1), excavator (1), field bin (1), front end loader (1), plastic mulch retriever (1), rock picker (1)
- other reasons: dam/creek/river (3), hay bale (2), cattle (2), horse (1), insect (1), shed (1), ground/rock/stump/hole (1), other/not classified (7).

Males accounted for 63 (88%) of the 72 fatalities in 2024. This proportion is the same as the long-term average since 2001.

In 2024, there were 19 fatalities in Queensland, 18 in NSW, 16 in Victoria, 10 in South Australia, with the other states accounting for the remaining 9 deaths.

It is not just the young and inexperienced that need to be vigilant, because older people are more likely to account for the majority of fatalities. In 2024, 45 of the 72 on-farm deaths (62.5%) were in the 45+ year category. In contrast, 11 were in the 30-44 year category, 10 were in the 15-29 year category, and 5 were under 15 years.

For further details, refer to the AgHealth Australia data funded and published by AgriFutures in the 2024 *Non-intentional Farm-Related Incidents in Australia* report on the AgriFutures website: agrifutures.com.au.

There will have also been many 'near misses' and many non-fatal injuries, small and large, that could have had an impact on farm labour, productivity and profitability, as well as personal and family stress.

Causes of injury on the farm can also include anything from manual tasks and repetitive motion, through to incorrect and unsafe use of hazardous chemicals. Farming also often involves physically demanding tasks, frequently undertaken outdoors in all types of weather, and often working in isolated areas – these aspects of the work exacerbate the safety risks.

Refer to the *SafeSheds* article on page 10 about preventing injuries in the shearing shed.

Taking all this into account, it is more important than ever to minimise the risk of injury and improve on-farm safety. There are many national and state organisations that have a role in helping farmers and everyone



Side by side vehicles and quad bikes were the two highest causes of non-intentional fatal incidents on Australian farms last year. However, appropriate safety precautions such as rollover protection and helmets, plus careful and responsible use, can reduce the risk. PHOTOS: SafeWork NSW and WorkSafe Victoria.

on the farm (workers, family and children, visitors) improve their safety, including their health and mental wellbeing.

One such organisation is the Rural Safety & Health Alliance (RSHA), which is a collaboration of rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs) including AWI. The RSHA's vision is for everyone on farm to see health and safety as a priority, and adopt safe practices – see rsha.com.au.

One way that the RDCs work to achieve this is by showcasing farmer-facing health and safety resources that are available from national and state organisations – see below.

Safety resources for farmers

AWI and the RSHA encourage property owners, managers, workers, contractors and family members to take a look at farm safety resources provided by organisations such as:

Farmsafe Australia: A national entity that promotes awareness and adoption of health and safety practices on farms: farmsafe.org.au

AgHealth Australia: Within the University of Sydney's School of Rural Health at Dubbo (NSW), it conducts research on injury and fatality in agriculture and has a range of resources for farmers: aghealth.sydney.edu.au

National Centre for Farmer Health: A partnership at Hamilton (Vic) between Deakin University and Western District Health Service, it conducts research into risks and injury prevention for farmers, and has a range of resources: farmerhealth.org.au

State organisations – each provides farm safety resources:

- **SafeWork NSW** safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/agriculture,-forestry-and-fishing
- **Worksafe Victoria** worksafe.vic.gov.au/agriculture
- **SafeWork SA** safework.sa.gov.au/industry/agriculture
- **SafeFarms WA** safefarms.net.au
- **Workplace Health and Safety Queensland** worksafe.qld.gov.au/your-industry/agriculture,-forestry-and-fishing
- **Safe Farming Tasmania** worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/services-and-events/safe-farming-tasmania

New AWI workshop provides a refresher on repro

Are you looking for a refresher on the best ways to improve the reproductive performance of your flock? AWI has launched a new half-day workshop that is a one-stop-shop for the latest research, benchmarks, targets and tools for all things repro.

Lifting the lifetime reproductive performance of a sheep flock is a key way woolgrowers can increase the productivity and profitability of their business.

There have been many research outcomes and extension activities about repro rolled out in the past few years. So, to ensure woolgrowers are across the latest advice on repro, the new AWI Repro Masterclass™ has been created to provide an overview of the topic and point woolgrowers to resources for further information.

The AWI Repro Masterclass is suitable either for woolgrowers who've been in the industry for a long time and would like a refresher and update on repro research and on-farm targets, and also for youngsters interested in learning about this key profit driver in wool enterprises.

At AWI's new AWI Repro Masterclass, woolgrowers will hear about:

- Balancing their priorities for a productive wool-growing enterprise
- The latest research and publications
- Essential sources of information
- Critical actions, benchmarks and targets



The new AWI Repro Masterclass™ provides an overview of the key management practices that should be carried out in the lead up to joining and throughout pregnancy to help ensure optimal reproductive performance.

- Optimising performance in:
 - Ram health and performance
 - Conception rates
 - Managing weaners to first joining
 - Joining ewe lambs
 - Making scanning work for you
 - Managing twins and triplets
 - Getting live lambs on the ground
 - Year-on-year improvement
- Key timing and actions for repro success
- Where to next?

The AWI Repro Masterclass will be available to woolgrowers through the AWI Extension Networks in each state.

The first AWI Repro Masterclass was held by AWI Extension TAS in Cambell Town, Tasmania, last month, and three more are currently scheduled by AWI Extension NSW: Goulburn (11 March); Young (12 March); and Narromine (13 March). See awiextensionnsw.com/events

for details about how to register; bookings are essential.

The AWI Repro Masterclass costs \$50 and includes morning tea, lunch and resources. It runs from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm. Lunch is served from 1.00 pm and gives you the chance to catch up with other woolgrowers and the speakers, or simply grab and go.

To find out when there is an AWI Repro Masterclass near you, or to register your interest in having an event in your region, we encourage you to contact the AWI Extension Network in your state and sign up to their free newsletter. The contact details of the AWI Extension Networks are available at wool.com/networks or call AWI on 02 8295 3100.

Back Up Charlie – Flexible Sheep Movement System



What is Back Up Charlie?
Back Up Charlie is a flexible dual lane lead up race for sheep handling applications requiring consistent forward flow of sheep.



- Easily transportable
- Flexible to any sheep yard scenario
- Eliminates physically handling sheep into sheep handlers
- Can be assembled in a straight line or curved bugle format
- Creates a safe low stress environment for you and the sheep
- A labour saving system that increases sheep yard efficiencies
- The lightweight hock bars stop sheep turning around or backing up
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- Henty Machinery Field Days – 2016 Machine Of The Year WINNER!



Elanco delivers value beyond the drum

When you purchase a quality animal health solution from Elanco, you are getting far more than the contents of the drum. You are getting the full resources of one of the world's largest animal health companies.

Established in 1954, Elanco is a global leader in the research, development and commercialisation of products that improve the health and well-being of food and companion animals.

Some of its well-known brands used in the sheep and wool industry include CLiK™ Extra, Extinosad™ Pour-On, Viper™ Pour-On and Zolvix™ Plus. Many of these products are manufactured locally to world-class standards to ensure quality, uniformity, traceability and optimal performance.

Elanco employs more than 100 staff in Australia, including 20 regionally-based territory managers, strategic account managers and technical consultants. They include Senior Territory Manager, Will King, who has more than eight years' experience as an animal health advisor.

Based in Mangoplah, NSW, his region encompasses southern Riverina and northern Victoria. Equal parts animal health advisor, staff trainer, business manager and company ambassador, his role demands up to 100 nights away from home and 75,000 km of travel every year.

Will makes hundreds of on-farm and in-store visits every year, as well as participating in dozens of livestock

shows, sales, field days and industry events. "Put simply, my job is to make sure livestock producers get the most from their investment in quality animal health solutions from Elanco," he says.

"Sure, you can save a few cents per head by using a cheaper product, but you are missing out on a range of value-added services that can help you to get the best outcome.

"That starts with providing regular training for all reseller staff to make sure producers are getting the best advice when they are in-store. We also spend a lot of time on-farm discussing strategic animal health programs and best practice guidelines with producers, contractors and farm staff.

"We'll show them how to apply the product correctly and safely and ensure that their applicator is properly maintained – and then we do the first race with them to make sure everything is working properly."

Will also conducts up to 80 worm egg count, drench efficacy and drench resistance tests each year. "The amount of drench resistance out there is really quite staggering, and you'd never know if you don't test," he says.

"Some drenches, even triples, are delivering way below 98% or even 95% efficacy, which means some producers



Elanco Territory Manager, Will King.

have limited drench options. I really like the diagnostics side of the business.

"Any territory manager can say, 'Here's what you should be using'. For me, it's far more satisfying to be able to say, 'Here's the results of an objective test that shows exactly what's going on'.

"Elanco is fortunate to have a lot of great brands, so often the best solution is an Elanco product but there are times when it's not and we're happy to recommend accordingly."

Will also works with Elanco's technical consultants to follow up any time a producer experiences an outcome that was less than expected when using an Elanco product. "Elanco stands behind the integrity of our products and will always investigate any concerns for the betterment of both parties. With Elanco, you get value beyond the price of the drum," he says.



FULL VALUE
SHEEP™

Get more value from Elanco

Get more value from your animal health program with Elanco. Our comprehensive range of quality animal health solutions are scientifically-proven to improve the health and wellbeing of livestock. Our team of regionally-based advisors provide practical, on-farm advice about strategic animal health programs, best practice guidelines, application training, applicator servicing and a range of diagnostic services. Don't just treat your sheep this season – get full value with trusted solutions from Elanco.





Preparing low worm-risk paddocks

Weaners and pregnant and lactating ewes are the sheep most vulnerable to worms.

Preparing low worm-risk paddocks to prevent sheep from becoming heavily infected with worms is a key strategy in effective and profitable worm control.

A recent ParaBoss webinar (plus 30-minute Q&A session) was held to help sheep and wool producers learn about using grazing management to minimise contamination of their pastures. Titled 'Using pasture management for worm control', the webinar was presented by the ParaBoss Extension Team's Dr Fiona Macarthur, who has a long history of using grazing management for worm control. The webinar was recorded and is available free to view on the ParaBoss YouTube channel youtube.com/@paraboss3901.

The webinar examined several possible grazing management strategies for worm control. Preparation of low worm-risk paddocks is one of them; others are year-round rotational grazing (which is not necessarily viable in all regions) and Smart Grazing for southern areas of Australia.

This *Beyond the Bale* article focusses specifically on the preparation of low worm-risk paddocks.

"The preparation of low worm-risk paddocks is a really important and a relatively easy tool for worm control," Fiona said.

"Essentially, it involves, firstly, allowing time for most of the existing worm eggs and larvae on the pasture to die and, secondly, preventing more worm eggs from contaminating the pasture.

"As well as reducing the overall exposure of worms to the animals, it also

reduces reliance on chemical drenches, which is important for slowing down the development of chemical resistance.

"It's important to know the species of worm you have and what conditions support their survival and their die off. You can get a lab to do a larval differentiation which will identify the types of worms present and their proportion. This will help you know how to manage them."

Which sheep are most susceptible to worms?

The gold standard is to have all sheep on low worm-risk paddocks. But that is not always feasible, so Fiona advises to try and ensure at least the most vulnerable stock – young sheep and pregnant and lactating ewes – are on paddocks that are as worm free as possible.

"Weaners should be your priority. They have never been exposed to worms and therefore haven't had a chance to build up their natural immunity, so it's important that the weaning paddock is a low worm-risk paddock," she said.

"The next priority is your pregnant and lactating ewes. Their own resources are being used to grow their lambs rather than maintaining their own immunity, so lambing paddocks should be as free from worms as possible.

"Be mindful that your rams are also susceptible during times of high

reproductive pressure. Dry ewes and wethers are generally more robust when it comes to worms."

Allow time for most of the existing worm eggs and larvae to die

A very large proportion of the worm larvae on a paddock must die before being considered low worm-risk – this is generally about 95% from when a pasture is moderately to heavily contaminated. While an 85–90% reduction in larvae survival sounds substantial, it is not enough for this strategy to be effective, irrespective of the initial level of contamination.

"Preparing low risk paddocks is all about being proactive, not reactive. It involves forward planning," Fiona said.

"In Australia, it can take up to six months for 95% of larvae to die, depending on your location and climatic conditions. This can sometimes be reduced to a two-month period in very hot, dry locations."

Figure 1 shows the rate at which barber's pole worm larvae die, but it is quite similar for scour worms. Choose the temperature line that fits your location in the few months prior to when the low worm-risk pasture is required and find where larval survival (left side of graph) drops to 5% to show the number of days required for 95% larvae to die.

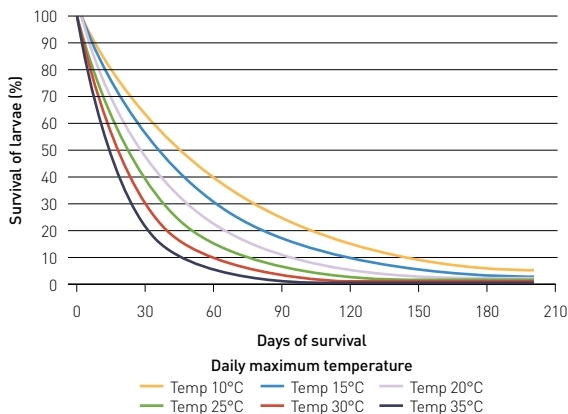


Figure 1. Survival of barber's pole worm infective larvae on pasture at various daily maximum temperatures and 60% relative humidity

Source: Modeled from death rate of the L3 population in 'Simulation of pasture larval populations of *Haemonchus contortus*' by IA Barger, PR Benyon & WH Southcott. Proceedings of the Australian Society of Animal Production (1972) 9: 38

The ParaBoss WormBoss Worm Control Program for your region will describe the times required in your region to prepare a paddock. Access it at tools.wormboss.com.au/sheep-goats/programs/sheep.php.

Prevent more worms from contaminating the pasture

While the larvae on the paddock are dying, further contamination must be prevented. The simplest and surest way to do this is to exclude sheep (and goats and alpacas) from the pasture during the preparation period so no new worm eggs can be deposited.

"Containment areas are a good option. You might already be using containment areas and not realise the worm control benefit you're getting," Fiona said.

Simply spelling to let pasture regrow is a good option. However, leaving the paddock empty might not be affordable, nor the best use of the paddock. There are other ways to use the paddock during the preparation time without further contaminating the paddock with worm eggs.

Fiona says **cattle** can be grazed freely on the paddock.

"Grazing with cattle will utilise the feed and mop up any larvae that might be on the pasture as well. Sheep parasites are effective in sheep, goats and alpacas, so there isn't any cross-contamination with cattle," she said.

"Using the paddock for **growing a crop**, making hay or silage, or establishing new pasture are other great ways of utilising the paddocks and keeping worms out."

You can graze the paddock with sheep (or goats or alpacas) under very specific conditions when they are not depositing worm eggs.

"You can graze for a short period of time with sheep following an effective **short-acting drench** and then remove the stock. Wethers are really useful for this because they have strong natural immunity," Fiona said.

"But I would use caution here. First, know what an effective short acting drench is on your property by doing a faecal worm egg count reduction test (WECRT). It's really important to find out what drenches are still working on your property and what level of resistance you have."

If a **long-acting drench** is used, grazing can be longer (in line with the actual amount of persistence the product provides on your property). You should monitor worm egg counts (WEC) to identify what persistent length of protection you actually achieve.

"Grazing with sheep with a correctly used long-acting drench is definitely something that people utilise when they don't have any other option, when they can't keep sheep out of the paddock. But use the long-acting drench properly, which is with an effective priming drench, and then an effective tail cutter (exit) drench," Fiona said.

For the sheep with the short-acting or long-acting drench, do regular WEC testing so you know if the sheep in the paddocks you're trying to clean up are carrying worms or not.

"For those in barber's pole worm areas, Barbervax® is certainly a good tool to have in your toolbox; it lowers the larval pasture contamination by keeping the sheep at a lower infection level," Fiona added.

"Longer term, and what definitely can't be underestimated, is selecting rams that have a low worm egg count ASBV."

Monitoring low worm-risk pastures

Once you've prepared a low worm-risk paddock and moved your sheep in there, you should WEC test the sheep after 4–6 weeks to check their worm burden.

The WEC should be substantially lower than in the past (before using extra grazing management) or compared to a similar current mob that have not been grazing a low worm-risk paddock.

If the WEC results are not as good as expected, review your procedures. For example, was a mob of wormy sheep moved through this paddock on the way to the yards for drenching? It may also be that the starting level of worm larvae was very high and you will need longer to gain better control.

Woolgrowers are urged to use ParaBoss certified WEC providers to ensure they receive accurate WEC results.

MORE INFORMATION

- **Recording of the webinar:** youtube.com/@paraboss3901
- **ParaBoss WormBoss Worm Control Program for your region:** tools.wormboss.com.au/sheep-goats/programs/sheep.php
- **Contact details of ParaBoss certified WEC providers and ParaBoss Certified Advisors:** paraboss.com.au/find-an-advisor
- **WormBoss: Grazing management:** wormboss.com.au/tests-tools/grazing-management-sheep
- **WormBoss: Testing drench effectiveness:** wormboss.com.au/tests-tools/testing-drench-effectiveness-with-a-drenchtest
- **WormBoss:** wormboss.com.au



Tap into best practice parasite management at paraboss.com.au

Collectively, the three Boss websites – **WormBoss**, **LiceBoss** and **FlyBoss** – promote best practice for the management of sheep parasites at the farm level, developed by a community of veterinary experts and parasitologists from across Australia and supported by the sheep industry.

Use combination drenches to slow drench resistance

To slow the development of drench resistance in sheep worms, it is now considered best practice to use drench groups in combination rather than the traditional approach of rotating drenches.

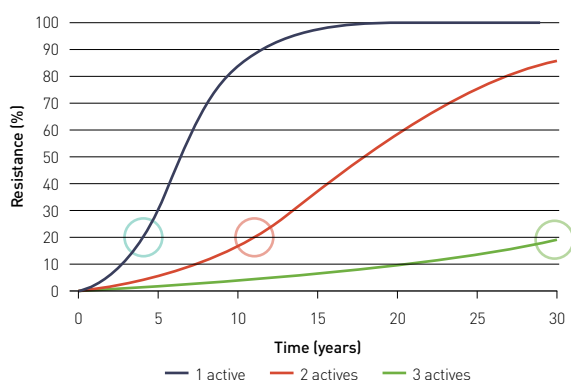
When it comes to managing worms in sheep, combination drenches are one of the most valuable tools in your toolkit. However, often the questions 'but why is this the case?' and 'if I use a combination drench, won't the worms develop resistance to all the actives in the combination?' come up.

The traditional approach of rotating drenches is no longer considered best practice, with recent research advances noting that rotation itself will not delay the development of resistance.

Using drench groups in combination has a much greater effect in slowing the development of resistance and is recommended best practice.

This is somewhat dependent on your starting point in terms of efficacy of the actives in the combination on the worms in your sheep. The key here is not to start using combinations containing single actives which are not effective on your place.

A drench is considered effective if it controls >98% of the worms present. Once you have any level of ineffective single actives, your starting point is adjusted.



The development of resistance is slowed when multiple actives are used in combination products. Source: ParaBoss

The graph above illustrates the development of resistance over time. The green line (a three active combination product) shows a much longer delay in the development of resistance when compared with single or dual active products.

This is not the 'green light' for using the same product or group of actives for the next 30 years! Rather, using knowledge and information is key here.

How does this work?

The genes that make worms resistant to different chemical groups/actives are different. Using a combination of actives means that less worms survive as the chance of a worm having resistant genes to several groups/actives is much lower than to just a single group/active. Therefore, the likelihood of the combination product being effective is greater, because if one active doesn't kill them, the other will.

It is important to note that some available products contain more than one active but are not combination drenches. These are the products that contain actives that target different types of worms – one active might target roundworms, and the other active targets tapeworms – so they need to be considered as single actives because resistance to and effectiveness of chemical actives is on a worm-by-worm basis.

Key steps in minimising the onset of drench resistance

Whilst a complex topic, there are several simple steps you can take to reduce the risk of developing resistant worms in your flock:

1. **Know your enemy** – what worms are present and what are you targeting? Use worm egg counts (WEC) to quantify what burdens are present, and larval differentiation to identify which species are present and when. Regular WEC testing is important. Worm species present may differ at different times of the year.
2. **What is your threshold for different classes of sheep by worm type?** Check out the ParaBoss Drench Decision Guides for your WormBoss region at paraboss.com.au/tools.
3. **Calibrate your drenching equipment and ensure it is always in excellent working order.** Under-dosing leads to accelerated development of resistance and over-dosing is simply costly and may lead to residue issues or toxicity.
4. **ALWAYS follow the label directions** – including drenching to the heaviest in the mob to avoid under-dosing. If there is



Choosing and using drenches wisely is an important part of a sustainable and effective worm control program.

a large variation in weights in the mob, split the mob into heavies and lights. Use scales to be accurate in your dosage. Check withholding periods and export slaughter intervals, along with the special instructions that pertain to the product you are using – e.g. time off feed, stress, etc.

5. **Follow up drenches with a WEC test 10–14 days after treatment to ensure your drench was effective.** This is an economical way to be sure your efforts have achieved what you set out to do. It also gives you an early heads-up if the drench has not worked, before further production losses occur.
6. **Know the drench resistance status of single actives on your farm.** This can be then used to calculate the rate of effectiveness of the combinations. This is done by doing a Worm Egg Count Reduction Test (WECRT, also called a fecal egg count reduction test, or drench resistance test). The combination-drench efficacy calculator can be accessed at paraboss.com.au/tools.
7. **Use all opportunities to minimise worm challenge to susceptible stock.** Prepare low worm-risk paddocks (see pages 14–15) and, where available, select rams with genetic resistance to worms (negative WEC ASBV).

Effective worm control can be tricky, as no two seasons are the same; the worms are invisible or difficult to see and can cause invisible production losses or, in extreme situations, widespread ill health or death in sheep. It is strongly recommended to seek the advice of an experienced advisor who understands worm control, along with local production details.

This article was written by AWI Extension NSW Project Manager, Megan Rogers, for the February edition of the AWI Woolgrower e-newsletter. Articles written by AWI Extension Project Managers will regularly feature in the e-newsletter. To subscribe to the e-newsletter, head to wool.com/subscribe.

MORE INFORMATION
wormboss.com.au

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Unlocking genetic potential: the importance of quality raw data in breeding

The quality of raw data from parents and their progeny remains fundamental to assessing the genetic merit of sheep. The MLP project adhered to data collection protocols needed to assess sheep classing and breeding value outcomes.



MLP Quick facts

The AWI-funded MLP project is a \$13 million (\$8 million from AWI plus \$5 million from project partners), 10-year venture between AWI, the Australian Merino Sire Evaluation Association (AMSEA), nominating stud Merino breeders and site partners.

- **Balmoral, Vic**
Partner: Tuloona Pastoral
Committee: Balmoral Breeders Association
- **Pingelly, WA**
Partner: Murdoch University/UWA
Committee: Federation of Performance Sheep Breeders (WA Branch)

- **MerinoLink, Temora, NSW**
Partner: Moses & Son
Committee: MerinoLink Limited
- **Macquarie, Trangie, NSW**
Partner: NSW DPIRD
Committee: Macquarie Sire Evaluation Association
- **New England, NSW**
Partner: CSIRO
Committee: New England Merino Sire Evaluation Association

The MLP project has tracked the lifetime performance of 5,700 ewes as they proceeded through four to five joinings and annual shearings.

A full suite of assessments has been taken on the ewes including visual trait scoring, classer gradings, objective assessments of a range of key traits and index evaluations along with a DNA genotype at the start and end of their lives.

A unique and extensive dataset has been created that is being used to enhance existing Merino breeding and selection strategies, for both ram sellers and buyers, to deliver greater lifetime productivity and woolgrower returns now and into the future.

To stay up to date with the latest MLP findings, visit wool.com/MLP. Subscribe to MLP updates via merinosuperiorsires.com.au/contact-us

In the world of Merino breeding, there is an important distinction between raw data, visual scores and Breeding Values. **Raw data** (both measured and visual) is an assessment of the performance of an individual animal relative to the mob. While **Breeding Values** are a predictive assessment that estimates how an individual animal's progeny will perform relatively across sites. Yet visual assessments (scoring or classing) and breeding value assessments both rely on good management and data protocols, so any assessment reflects as much as possible the genetic differences between animals.

Breeding Values are calculated using genetic models that at minimum incorporate raw data, but if available also include pedigree records, adjustment factors such as birth date, birth type and rear type, and genomic results. The assumptions used in creating these Breeding Values have been validated with parent and progeny data and continue to be refined to provide the most accurate indicators of how progeny will relatively perform (genetic potential).

Critically, the success of Breeding Values depends on quality protocols, as do classing outcomes.

The significance of accurate raw data collection

Raw data must be collected under strict management and protocol guidelines to maximise its value. The closer these protocols are followed, the more valuable the raw data becomes for any form of assessment. Relative assessments become more repeatable across years, they are more indicative of lifetime performance, and they directly influence the predictive accuracy of progeny performance. If past assessments (either classing or Breeding Values) fail to align with the current performance or actual progeny performance, the first step should be to review whether quality assessment protocols were properly followed.

Key protocols to obtain quality assessments, either raw data, classing or Breeding Values, include:

- a structured five-week joining period, the shorter the better
- measuring the entire drop or as close to it as possible
- distinguishing between maiden and mixed-age dams
- recording birth and rear type (single or twin)
- maintaining large management groups with as few as possible sub divisions (that are linked).

Conversely, common failures in assessment collection protocols include:

- failing to account for mob management differences
- preferential feeding or long lambing periods (e.g. AI and ET progeny)
- measuring at very young ages
- short wool growth periods (less than six months)
- inaccurate weight measurements due to poor taring of scales
- culling too many animals before raw data collection or classing
- incomplete or incorrect pedigree records or tag reading.

Poor protocols impact the reliability of raw data, visual classing and Breeding Values.

The relationship between heritability and Breeding Values

The relationship between raw data and Breeding Values is influenced by **heritability**, which measures how much of a trait's variation in progeny is due to genetic merit of the parents. For example, when protocols are followed:

- **Fibre diameter** has a heritability of 60%, meaning 60% of the variation in progeny is due to the genetic merit of the parents, while 40% is due to unknown environmental factors.

Table 1. Correlation between lifetime average raw data and lifetime ASBV of the 5,700 MLP ewes across five sites (0 = no correlation, 1.0 = a perfect correlation)

MLP site/drop	ACFW	AFD	ASS	AWT	WR
Balmoral 2015	0.78	0.92	0.57	0.80	0.65
Balmoral 2016	0.76	0.91	0.66	0.76	0.59
MerinoLink 2016	0.79	0.94	0.49	0.66	0.66
MerinoLink 2017	0.79	0.94	0.69	0.71	0.62
Pingelly 2016	0.74	0.92	0.62	0.78	0.62
Pingelly 2017	0.76	0.91	0.60	0.72	0.64
Macquarie 2017	0.81	0.92	0.53	0.67	0.64
Macquarie 2018	0.77	0.93	0.52	0.69	0.65
New England 2017	0.75	0.95	0.58	0.68	0.66
New England 2018	0.73	0.94	0.57	0.68	0.64
Ave	0.77	0.93	0.58	0.72	0.64

- **Fleece weight** has a heritability of 35%, indicating moderate genetic influence.
- **Weaning rate** has a much lower heritability of 5%, meaning only 5% of the variation in progeny is due to the merit of the parents and 95% is due to unknown environmental influences.

If protocols are not followed, heritability quickly declines, making classing and Breeding Values less reliable. For example, if protocols are not followed, only 5% to 10% of the variation in progeny fleece weight may be attributed to the genetic merit of the parents, compared to 35% when proper protocols are in place. This impacts the rate of genetic gain across generations.

While highly heritable traits offer faster genetic gains, progress can still be made in lowly heritable traits when there is significant variation to select from.

MLP results are showing that rising 2 year old Breeding Values are more accurate than 1 year old Breeding Values; similarly, visual classing results are more accurate at rising 2 year old than at 1 year old, but both come with additional costs. Understanding these dynamics allows breeders to prioritise traits and balance genetic improvement with practical, on-farm realities and optimise genetic gain.

MLP project insights

The MLP project adhered to **high-quality data collection protocols**, allowing an assessment of how raw performance data contributes to Breeding Values.

Table 1 above shows the correlation between the average raw lifetime performance data of Clean Fleece Weight (CFW), Fibre Diameter (FD), Staple Strength (SS), Body Weight (WT), and Weaning Rate (WR) with the MLP ewes' Adult (A) Breeding Values (ASBVs). The ASBVs were calculated using all available data from the project along with genotypes.

The findings showed a strong correlation between ewes' average raw lifetime performance and their Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBVs).

Age and lifetime performance predictions

Previous research has demonstrated that raw fleece data and Breeding Values

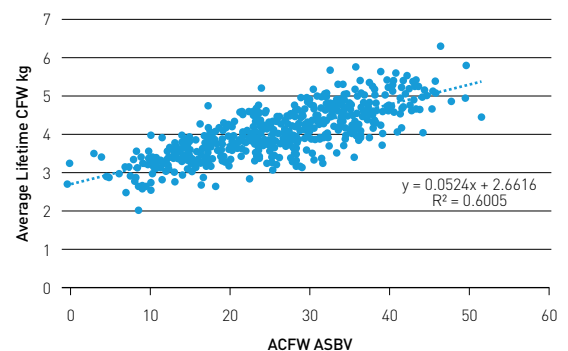
collected at one and preferably two years of age can be good indicators of lifetime fleece performance and progeny performance. However, exceptions arise (see Graph 1) – particularly among later-maturing animals, where early performance metrics may not fully reflect their genetic potential. Addressing this challenge is a key research focus within the MLP project, aiming to refine predictive models for such animals so that Breeding Values created from young raw data can be better predictors of how progeny will perform for as many animals as possible.

The first step toward genetic gain

The journey to achieving optimal genetic progress begins with collecting high-quality raw data, both measured and visual. By adhering to rigorous data collection and assessment protocols and understanding the nuances of heritability, breeders can optimise both the power of visual classing, raw data and the predictive power of Breeding Values. **This, in turn, ensures more effective selection decisions using all assessments, leading to improved livestock performance and greater overall genetic improvement.**

Graph 1 shows an example of a scatter graph comparing MLP ewes' actual lifetime average fleece weight with their ASBVs for the Macquarie 2018 drop ewes. While the correlations are strong there are outliers which the MLP project is trying to address.

Graph 1. Macquarie 2018 Drop: 453 ewes, Ave CFW 4.7kg pa Correlation 0.77



Tribute to Professor Andrew Swan

The success of Sire Evaluation and the MLP project owes much to the contributions of Professor Andrew Swan, who tragically passed away on 14 December following a road accident while cycling near Armidale. A highly respected geneticist, Professor Swan – or Swanny, as he was affectionately known – played a pivotal role in shaping genetic evaluation methodologies, ensuring the robustness of site results, and laying the

foundation for whole-MLP project analysis. His expertise, passion, calm clear thinking, straight talking and unwavering commitment left an indelible mark on the field of genetic evaluation and on all who had the privilege of working alongside him. Swanny's legacy will continue to inspire genetic improvement in Merinos for generations to come, and he will be deeply missed.



Guardian dogs protect flocks from predators

Maremma dog guarding the Merino flock at 'Glenorie' – see the case study overleaf.

When used in combination with other predator control methods, livestock guardian dogs can be very effective at helping prevent attacks on sheep flocks by wild dogs and foxes. However, it takes a lengthy investment in time to train and bond them with the flock, plus ongoing investment in their management, feeding and husbandry.

Livestock guardian dogs are medium to large sized dogs that live permanently with livestock in the paddock to protect them from predators.

In the Northern Hemisphere, where guardian dogs have been used for centuries, the dogs are usually accompanied by shepherds. In Italy, where Maremma Sheepdogs originated, the sheep are herded to summer grazing in the mountains and valleys in the presence of shepherds who assist in warding off any predators.

Similarly, in the US, the larger sheep ranching properties take their sheep up into the summer forest grazing leases. These sheep are also accompanied by guardian dogs of various breeds and shepherds that live with these mobs 24/7 during the spring and summer.

Guardian dogs in the Northern Hemisphere protect sheep from predators like wolves, bears, coyotes and mountain lions. Here in Australia, the main predators they deal with are dingoes, foxes and roaming domestic dogs.

Unlike in the Northern Hemisphere, guardian dogs in Australia are not assisted by humans or shepherds to protect livestock.

Guardian dogs regard the sheep as their social companions, protecting them from anything that they see as a threat. They have been bred to be non-threatening to sheep in their appearance and behaviour. This allows the guardian dogs to integrate themselves with groups of sheep, be accepted by them and live amongst them. They make their own decisions and work unsupervised and independent of humans.

Guardian dogs should not be confused with herding dogs, even though both are working dogs. Herding dogs work by gathering livestock in groups and moving them from place to place. Guardian dogs protect livestock but do not herd them on command.

Bonding, training and management

In Australia, there are a limited number of available breeds of livestock guardian dog. The Maremma Sheepdog is by far the most numerous. Maremmas weigh 30–45 kg and stand 60–74 cm tall.

If properly bonded to livestock, Maremmas will spend most of their time with their charges without wandering. During the day, they tend to rest among their livestock or they may seek an elevated spot from which to keep watch. Maremmas are most active at night, making their presence known and confronting predators if needed. They are fast, agile and strong dogs but use no more force than is necessary to see off a predator.

Bonding and training of guardian dog pups, or even integrating a pre-trained mature guardian dog into a property, takes a significant investment in time. Sourcing trained adult guardian dogs can be difficult, so it is usual to start off with pups. For guardian dogs bought as pups, it can take two years for them to properly bond with livestock to enable them to become an effective guardian. Even then, their first experiences with serious predators must not be overwhelming; the guardian dog needs to gain confidence in its ability as it matures, which can take another two years.

Established guardian dogs are not a “set and forget” option; there are ongoing time and financial considerations including feeding, maintenance and healthcare.

Guardian dogs in Australia protect sheep without the help of humans. Therefore to be effective, the number of guardian dogs needed to adequately protect livestock depends on various factors including the size of the main predator (e.g. wild dog vs fox), number of predators (e.g. pack of wild dogs vs single wild dog), type of livestock (e.g. lambing ewes vs wethers), size

of area (e.g. large paddock vs small paddock), terrain (e.g. hilly and/or timbered vs flat paddock), and other control measures (e.g. fenced vs unfenced paddock).

In most cases, other wild dog and fox control methods will still need to be used. The use of guardian dogs has been most successful in areas fenced off to reduce predator pressure (and prevent guardian dogs wandering off).

How do guardian dogs protect livestock?

Because predators are more likely to attack when there are no people present, most confrontations between guardian dogs and predators are not observed. However, it is thought that guardian dogs protect stock from predators primarily through disruption and confrontation.

Disruption is caused by the presence and behaviour of the guardian dog interrupting the hunting behaviour of the predator. Most guardian dog breeds are large with a deep bark, and they become noisy and active when any unfamiliar animal approaches. In most cases, the predator chooses to withdraw and seek different prey elsewhere.

Confrontation involves the guardian dog directly confronting a predator that is attacking, chasing or approaching livestock, in an attempt to force it to withdraw. If necessary, the guardian dog will attack and fight off the predator. However, violent interactions between guardian dogs and wild predators are generally rare.

Best practice manual on guardian dogs

The *Best Practice Manual for the use of Livestock Guardian Dogs*, published in 2010 by the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (now the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions) is the go-to guide for anyone considering buying and using guardian dogs.

The 137-page guide covers the following topics:

- Obtaining, bonding and training guardian dogs
- Guardian dog management
- Livestock management
- Common problems and how to prevent and solve them
- Case studies

MORE INFORMATION

The guide is available free to download as a PDF file from the PestSmart website pestsmart.org.au

TURN OVER FOR A CASE STUDY ABOUT GUARDIAN DOGS →



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Guardian dogs help protect the flock at Glenorie



Maremma dogs guarding the flock at 'Glenorie'.

The Crook-King family at Morven in south west Queensland has been successfully using guardian dogs as part of a multi-pronged strategy to reduce predator attacks on its flock, although the first few years were a massive learning curve for the family.

Merino woolgrower and veterinarian Julie Brown, her parents Peter and Marie Crook-King and brother Bill, use livestock guardian dogs on the family's 30,000 hectare property 'Glenorie', 85 km south of Morven in the mulga country of south west Queensland. The extensive property is scrub and semi-open pulled country with some areas heavily timbered. Although wild dogs are the main predator of livestock in region, 'Glenorie' is also affected by foxes, feral pigs and eagles.

In 2010-2011, the property saw a significant increase in the wild dog population resulting in devastating wild dog attacks and catastrophic sheep and lamb losses from 2012 onwards. In the 2013/14 financial year, the family lost 900 adult sheep and most of the lambs that were born on its property. The only lambs that survived that year were 50 poddy lambs that were raised by hand.

The attacks and losses not only resulted in suffering for the family's sheep, but also affected the family's emotional well-being and their business's financial bottom line.

The family decided on a three-pronged attack to try to limit wild dog damage: building an exclusion fence in a cluster group with neighbours, trapping, and investing in Maremma guardian dogs for their sheep.

Maremma guardian dogs

The family's decision to use Maremmas began with reading the *Best Practice Manual for the use of Livestock Guardian*



Maremma dog guarding the flock at 'Glenorie'.

Dogs (see the previous page), and an initial visit to Ninian and Anne Stewart-Moore of 'Dunluce', Hughenden, to see their guardian dogs in action. In 2012, the family travelled to Victoria to buy nine grown Maremma dogs and five pups.

The Maremmas are managed mainly by Marie and Julie. Julie admits the first few years were a massive learning curve.

"Learning the techniques of how to bond the Maremmas with our sheep took some time. It's important to get it right and we had some problems in the early years with poor bonding and destructive behaviour," Julie said.

"Also, the wild dog numbers exceeded the capabilities of the Maremmas that we had. The density of Maremmas in our paddocks was simply not high enough.

"However, once the cluster fence was finished (although it wasn't perfect) and the Maremma behavioural problems were sorted out, we had a very effective livestock

guardian team of more than 25 Maremmas with others in training."

Predation was virtually eliminated. As a result, sheep losses dropped and lambing percentages massively improved. This not only had positive economic impacts for their business, it also resulted in improved sheep and human welfare.

"For us, wild dog predation is only prevented when Maremmas are physically present. It is important to maintain an experienced and mature livestock guardian dog team, although not too old because their effectiveness decreases with age," Julie said.

"We prefer the guardian dogs to be two to three years old before they can be trusted to guard the flock, as younger animals tended to sometimes 'play' with the sheep, or stray from the mob.

"It's also important that wild dog pressure does not exceed the capabilities of the guardian dog team; smaller paddocks and higher Maremma densities improves their effectiveness. Fencing and trapping inside the fence are other control techniques that also help prevent large numbers of wild dogs and foxes from overwhelming our guardian dogs."

Creating a strong bond to livestock

Julie says anyone considering investing in Maremmas for wild dog control must be completely committed, because guardian dogs require a big investment in time and effort to ensure they're properly bonded with their flock.



Developing trustworthiness in the bonding pens at Glenorie.

Julie Brown with a Maremma pup at 'Glenorie'.



To create a strong bond to the sheep, the Maremma guardian dogs at Glenorie live with stock from birth in special pens for several months, although they are fed away from the sheep. The pens are hygienic, well-shaded, sheltered and have good drainage. Importantly, they are escape proof.

The Maremmas are tethered each night and monitored closely during the day until they can be trusted.

“It takes time for the pups to bond with livestock, and patience and persistence to prevent misbehaviour. It’s a gradual process. Destructive behaviours can develop quickly during a Maremma’s adolescence. They must be 100% trustworthy because we cannot watch them when they are in the paddock guarding independently, and they must also be mature mentally and physically to successfully confront a group of wild dogs,” Julie said.

“Guardian dogs must be able to be led, caught and put on a chain, and they aren’t encouraged to make friends with visitors or contractors. They are not pets. We constantly check them in the paddocks and if a guardian dog leaves its mob, we will bring it back in and confine the dog to the bonding pens again.”

When it comes to mustering, the Maremmas generally know the ‘Glenorie’ kelpies and don’t worry too much about them, although some will ‘arc up’ at the herding dogs. The kelpies tend to ignore the guardian dogs.

Julie can recognise each Maremma in the paddock, and she says they all have their quirks.

“They’re very funny – some are very friendly and let out a few excited yelps when they see me but others stand back and bark menacingly, or will try to push the sheep away,” she said.

Husbandry and maintenance

While Julie has no preference whether the Maremmas are male or female, she is adamant that they must all be de-sexed by 12 months old, to prevent them from fighting amongst themselves, wandering and mating with wild dogs.

Julie is a veterinarian, so she herself vaccinates the guardian dogs for distemper, parvovirus, canine hepatitis, leptospirosis and canine respiratory disease. The dogs get a broad spectrum worming tablet – hydatids are a human health risk, and treating hookworm is especially important for young dogs. They also get a Bravecto spot-on or chew for protection against fleas and ticks.

Julie recommends to include the examination and care of guardian dogs in a vet’s regular on-farm visits.

The coats of her guardian dogs need clipping in spring, in readiness for the hot and humid Queensland summers, or when required.

“Otherwise the coats can get very dirty and full of grass seed. The dogs are constantly cooling off in troughs and dams. Without clipping, the guardian dogs can be prone to skin infections. Toenails need to be clipped too,” she said.

The need to feed the adult Maremmas decreases when they are in the paddock due to their habit of scavenging, but there are several feeding stations containing dog

biscuits. However, since the pig population has learnt how to get into the dog feeders, the family has had to implement once a day feeding.

“There must also be consideration for the care of older and retired dogs. We owe them a good retirement for their service. Succession planning is vital; you should have young dogs in bonding pens to replace your older dogs who want to retire and are becoming less effective with age,” Julie added.

No silver bullet

The La Niña event of 2020-2024 caused a significant wild dog population increase in the region. This is because the increased kangaroo population supported more wild dogs and there was greater wild dog pup survival.

“This resulted in increased wild dog pressure on the existing cluster fence. Plus, the heavy rainfall events, wet ground and wash-outs made incursions more likely. So the Maremma presence is very important within the fence to prevent predation,” Julie said.

“We currently have only eight working Maremmas, which is inadequate to cover all the sheep due to wild dog predation once again being a significant problem. So we are rebuilding the team and planning our next litter. We are continuing with trapping and planning more fencing.”

In November, Julie presented at the first national Livestock Guardian Animal Forum, hosted by the National Wild Dog Action Plan in Canberra. The event explored the role of guardian animals in managing the impacts of wild dogs across Australia and was attended by landholders, researchers, veterinarians and government.

“For me, the event reiterated that there is no silver bullet to predator control, especially in extensive grazing situations when properties are large and livestock are spread out,” Julie said.

“Livestock guardian animals are incredibly effective when they are implemented well and when predator pressure does not exceed their capabilities. They are best used in combination with other tools, namely fencing and lethal predator management, which keep predator populations under control.

“Knowledge and support are also required to effectively implement livestock guardian animals – there must be information and resources available for producers to reduce the failure rate of using livestock guardian dogs.”

The best time to undertake integrated rabbit management is before the pests start breeding.
PHOTO: John Schilling.

The best time to combat rabbits is now

Best practice rabbit control should involve a sequence of multiple control methods which, in southern Australia, is best carried out in late summer-autumn, prior to their breeding. Land managers should not view the rabbit haemorrhagic disease virus (RHDV) biocide as a 'silver bullet'.

Infesting two-thirds of Australia, and almost all wool-growing regions, rabbits cost Australia on average \$197 million a year in lost farm productivity. They affect wool-growing productivity due to lower stocking rates and/or reduced sheep weight gains, wool cuts and birth rates.

Rabbits are also implicated in greater lambing losses through supporting increased fox populations and lamb predation rates, and livestock leg injury or breakage in rabbit burrows. They can be a host for parasites and diseases, and are linked to increases in weeds.

Rabbits are the single biggest menace to threatened native species; they are a key threat to 322 nationally listed threatened species of native plants and animals. Their digging and browsing can also result in slope instability and soil erosion.

Effective management of rabbits is essential to protect agriculture and the environment. Since the early 1970s, integrated pest management (IPM) has been recommended as a means to not only efficiently reduce rabbit numbers, but also achieve their complete elimination at local scale, reducing the need and cost to frequently reapply control.

IPM is not just about applying multiple controls; they must be applied in a sequence and at a time of the year that makes economic and ecological sense.

Apply multiple control methods in sequence

The sequence of control methods is critical for achieving a high level of rabbit management.

Furthermore, the control methods should be applied in as short a time sequence as feasibly possible, although sufficient time must be given for the first applied control method to have impact before the second control method is applied.

1. Population knockdown

The first step is to reduce the rabbit population from medium-high densities down to a manageable level. This is usually done by biological control (via natural outbreak or deliberate release) and/or chemical control (e.g. a poison baiting program) during the non-breeding season.

Although myxoma virus is no longer produced commercially, myxomatosis is still important for rabbit control in Australia.

RHDV is the current biological control and can be deliberately released in some areas, subject to state and territory legislation.

If RHD or myxomatosis are already present, then poison baiting should be delayed to allow the disease to reduce rabbit numbers. If rabbit density is low then extensive control can be started straight away.

2. Extensive control

The next part of the control program should destroy all source areas (where rabbits are living) and reduce rabbits to very low numbers. Control activities include warren ripping and destruction/removal of harbours which provide rabbits with shelter, such as fallen logs, building debris or dense vegetation. Where the

Did you know?

- European rabbits are Australia's most widespread and destructive agricultural and environmental vertebrate pest.
- In general, about 9–12 rabbits/ha is equivalent to one DSE (dry sheep equivalent).
- With no control, one pair of rabbits may become 184 pairs in just 18 months in good conditions.

use of heavy machinery is not an option for warren ripping, alternative techniques such as explosives may be used.

Extensive control ensures that the rabbit population cannot recover quickly but it must be done thoroughly to ensure success. If any warrens or harbour are not destroyed, rabbit numbers will simply build up again. Sometimes rabbits can also dig back in and 're-open' warrens if ripping is not done thoroughly (deep or wide enough) and the collapse of the warren structure is inadequate.

3. Mop-up activities

There are usually small numbers of rabbits that survive extensive control, so advanced control is necessary for long-term management. This is where follow-up techniques such as warren fumigation, shooting and trapping are used in rabbit-active areas.

Timing is crucial

Applying control activities at the right time of the year is as important as the sequence through which controls are applied.

The implementation of integrated rabbit management in **late summer-autumn (February-May)**, immediately prior to breeding and before winter rains begin, is a well-established recommendation for rabbit control.

This is consistent with when rabbit numbers are naturally at their lowest in their annual cycle and food is short, making rabbits more likely to consume baits treated with RHDV, pindone or 1080. This timing also facilitates effective warren ripping in light soils by improving the flow of soil into burrows to ensure their collapse.

It is important to note that RHDV should only be released when young rabbits are not present. This is because they do not develop acute disease and are immunised rather than killed by RHDV infection, thereby exacerbating Australia's rabbit problem.

Therefore, **RHDV should NOT be released across southern agricultural Australia between July and December** (i.e. when young rabbits are likely to be present) unless land managers are confident rabbits are not breeding and young rabbits are not present. The optimal time of release is generally considered to be the end of summer or start of autumn (February, March, April), before any major autumn rainfall that might kickstart rabbit breeding.

TURN OVER FOR MORE ARTICLES ABOUT RABBIT CONTROL →



The AWI co-funded, 36-page **Glovebox Guide for Managing Rabbits** provides useful information on best practice rabbit management for farmers and other land managers. Access the guide and other rabbit control related information on the PestSmart website at pestsmart.org.au

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Effective long-term rabbit control at Thackaringa

The release of RHD in 1995 and subsequent ripping of rabbit warrens removed virtually all rabbits from woolgrower David Lord's property in western NSW and provided a huge boost to the feedbase – a situation that continues to this day.

Woolgrower David Lord, who manages the family wool-growing business with his son Hugh on 'Thackaringa', 40 kilometres west of Broken Hill, believes that removing rabbits from his property has provided the single biggest gain in feedbase on his country.

"Coupled with genetics, what goes into sheep's mouths is one of the most important elements in improving flock productivity," David said.

"My gut feeling is that, in the absence of rabbits, we have increased lamb and ewe body weights, increased lambing percentages, and we are cutting more wool from our lambs and ewes. We have not changed the stocking rate; the only change is the removal of rabbits."

Complementary rabbit control methods

In November 1995, RHD swept through 'Thackaringa', killing an estimated 750,000 rabbits, roughly equivalent to 75,000 DSE of sheep. But David advises farmers to not rely only on biocontrol to combat rabbits. He says other control methods such as warren ripping have a complementary effect.

"RHD and myxomatosis were incredibly successful in this part of the world at knocking-back rabbits, but even at their very-much-reduced numbers they are still insidious – unseen but still dangerous. Rabbits select the best food – the fresh new shoots and plants – and eat it before you even see it. The scientific evidence of damage at low rabbit densities is irrefutable."

Before an extensive rabbit control program in the early 2000s, there were 28,000 rabbit warrens on the property.

"At 'Thackaringa' we took advantage of the opportunity offered to us by RHD, and the availability of some funding under the Natural Heritage Trust, to begin a big effort in 2002 to rip the remaining 22,000 warrens, having started ripping in 1988."

By March 2003, the Lords had completed ripping all 28,000 warrens on the property.

"Ripping the warrens on 'Thackaringa' was a slow and exacting process. Every warren location was logged by GPS and stored on computer before the arrival of the bulldozer in the paddock. We were very fastidious about the ripping. I strongly advise never to rip warrens in the autumn, only do it when the soil is dry and the days are hot."

Positive results

The results has been incredible, with very few rabbits present during the past 22 years, and a consequent regeneration of pasture.

"We are seeing a better balance of vegetation on 'Thackaringa', leading to less run off, more infiltration, more pasture, with less woody weeds," David said.

"While the process of regeneration was recognised after the 1973/74 rainfall event in inland Australia, and was a result of the release of myxomatosis in 1950, the improvement in vegetation has rapidly accelerated since our warren ripping program."

David says the property is even experiencing a better response to small rains.

"One of the amazing things that has been observed now is how little rain is needed to germinate and support native plants. After rain, we are seeing the true gains of our rabbit control program in both the condition of the pasture and our sheep."

David also notes that foxes are now rarely seen on the property: "We do see fox tracks so they are still present, but in very low numbers. Feral cats are even more scarce."

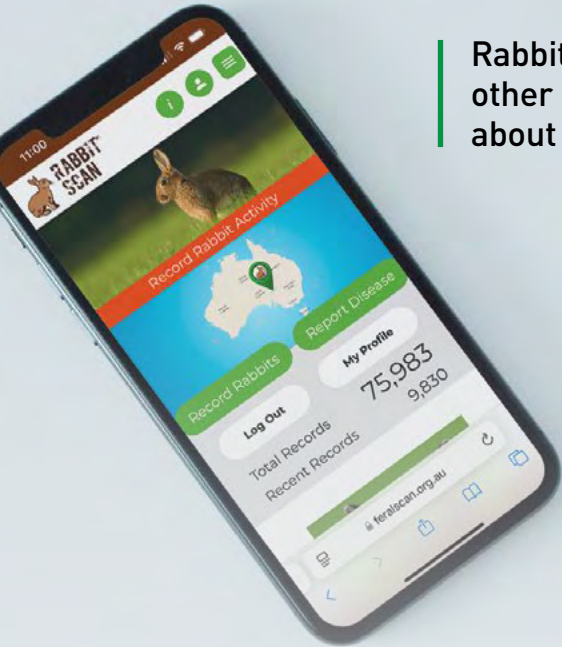
Before and after

Below are two sets of 'before and after' photos at 'Thackaringa' that show vegetation regeneration due simply to reduction in grazing by rabbits. This illustrates the success that can be achieved when biological and traditional rabbit control work together.





Monitor rabbits in your local area using RabbitScan



RabbitScan is a free digital resource that woolgrowers and other stakeholders can use to record and access information about rabbit populations in their local area.

RabbitScan is a free community resource that can provide woolgrowers and other community decision makers with accurate and timely information about the distribution and problems associated with rabbits. This information is valuable for guiding local management decisions on how and when to control the pest animals.

AWI encourages all landholders to monitor their rabbit populations and report through RabbitScan rabbit sightings, activity and control outcomes. The more people in a local area that use RabbitScan, the more useful it becomes.

What to record

- Rabbit activity, such as sightings and warrens
- Damage, such as soil erosion
- Control activities, such as warren destruction
- Disease in rabbit populations, such as RHDV.

Benefits of using RabbitScan

- Develop a property or local area map of rabbit activity to guide control efforts
- Work together with your neighbours (and local authorities) to undertake coordinated control
- Notify your local community or landholder group about rabbit activity and disease presence
- Send alerts to nominated people, such as neighbours or biosecurity authorities.

RabbitScan is available as an interactive website and mobile phone app, both of which have been designed to be simple to use.

RabbitScan is part of the FeralScan™ suite of tools for monitoring pest animals (see the box right). It receives funding from AWI, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry and NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) through the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS).

Free rabbit disease testing service

You can assist in the monitoring of rabbit disease across Australia by not only reporting dead rabbits you find in your local area, but also submitting samples of the dead rabbits for testing. This free rabbit disease testing service is carried out in a partnership between CSIRO, NSW DPIRD and CISS. Once the sample has been tested, you will notified of the results (e.g. RHDV and strain, or myxomatosis) via email.

To request a free sample kit, head to RabbitScan at rabbitscan.org.au and click the green 'Report Disease' button, which opens a Rabbit Disease Map. Click 'Record Data' on the top left corner and enter as much information as you can, including your postal address at question 7, then click 'Submit' when finished. A sampling kit (with instructions) and a reply paid envelope will be sent to you to submit your sample. Contact the RabbitScan/FeralScan coordinator for assistance if required – the contact details are available on the website.

While your sample kit is being posted to you, place the dead rabbit in a sealed and labelled plastic bag in your freezer. If the entire rabbit cannot be stored, retain only the liver or a hind-leg and follow the instructions when they arrive in the mail. Remember to always wear gloves when handling animals, and wash your hands thoroughly afterwards.

MORE INFORMATION
rabbitscan.org.au

What is FeralScan™?

FeralScan™ is an online platform that provides a local area map of pest activity which can help woolgrowers and others collaborate to implement effective pest animal control.

The community-designed, national platform enables people to record and monitor pest animals in their local area. There are 14 pest animal species that can be recorded in FeralScan™ including:

- rabbits (via RabbitScan)
- wild dogs (via WildDogScan)
- foxes (via FoxScan)
- feral pigs (via FeralPigScan)
- deer (via DeerScan).

Free to use, FeralScan™ consists of an easy-to-use mobile phone app (which can be used without phone reception) and an interactive website map.



FeralScan™ securely hosts pest monitoring and control data for thousands of farmers, land managers, pest

controllers and biosecurity groups across Australia.

The use of FeralScan™ continues to grow, with more than 52,000 individuals registered to use the platform and 500 active local groups using it.

FeralScan™ can also rapidly send alert notifications to private group members to quickly inform them of pest animal threats, such as a nearby wild dog sighting or attack.

The platform offers the greatest benefits when it is used regularly, by lots of people, and when linked with relevant local groups.

MORE INFORMATION
feralscan.org.au or contact
the FeralScan coordinator on
feralscan@feralscan.org.au

Navigating the Woolmark+ roadmap



AWI and its marketing arm, Woolmark, unveiled in September a comprehensive roadmap, known as Woolmark+, that is designed to help woolgrowers and supply chain partners work together to accelerate and communicate to consumers the wool industry's transition towards a 'nature positive' future. This article provides an update on the status of the 13 initiatives in the Woolmark+ roadmap and how woolgrowers can get involved.

The Woolmark+ roadmap has been developed in response to the increasing consumer and regulatory demands for low-impact products that is putting pressure along the whole supply chain of the textile and fashion industries.

Woolmark+ is designed to build on Australian wool's premium reputation and ensure woolgrowers' work with nature is recognised and supported.

The Woolmark+ roadmap has three overarching objectives, which will be delivered via a series of 13 initiatives, many of which are designed to support woolgrowers as they manage their natural assets for the benefit of their business.

Australian woolgrowers are encouraged to engage in the Woolmark+ initiatives to optimise nature positive practices on their farms and maximise the benefits, including:

1. **Market access** – Being able to showcase nature positive practices will enhance the reputation of Australian wool and increase access to market opportunities, both for individual woolgrowers and for the industry as a whole.
2. **Increased productivity** – Nature positive farming practices can enhance agricultural productivity, profitability and ensure long-term sustainability.
3. **New income streams** – As demand continues to grow for more sustainable products and climate-positive solutions, this will drive diversified revenue streams and a more stable business outlook for woolgrowers.
4. **Future generations** – By supporting sustainable livelihoods, we can help safeguard wool-growing now and into the future.

wool.com/woolmarkplus
woolmarkplus@wool.com
Episode 269 of AWI's *The Yarn*
podcast at wool.com/podcast

Status of the 13 initiatives in Woolmark+

Objective: Accelerate nature positive production



1. Insetting program

The Woolmark+ Australian Wool Insetting Program is a new pilot initiative that is being designed to connect woolgrowers with global fashion and textile brands looking to reduce their supply chain emissions. It aims to support woolgrowers to secure funding from brands to implement emissions reduction and removal activities on their farms, such as flock productivity gains and tree plantings.

Woolgrowers and brands are currently being onboarded to take part in the development and trial of the Program.

The Program is supported by the Australian Government through funding from the Climate-Smart Agriculture Program under the Natural Heritage Trust.



MORE INFORMATION
wool.com/insetting



2. Enhanced sheep productivity and profitability

The AWI-funded Merino Lifetime Productivity (MLP) project aims to enhance existing Merino breeding and selection strategies, for both ram sellers and buyers, to deliver greater lifetime productivity and profitability, through increased rates of genetic gain in key existing traits and new traits such as feed efficiency, resilience, survival. This in turn will lead to greater productivity per unit of methane.

The MLP project is a 10-year venture between AWI, the Australian Merino Sire Evaluation Association (AMSEA),

nominating stud Merino breeders and partners at five sites across Australia. The project has tracked the lifetime performance of 5,700 ewes as they proceeded through four to five joinings and annual shearings. A full suite of assessments has been taken on the ewes including visual trait scoring, classer gradings, objective assessments of a range of key traits and index evaluations along with a DNA genotype at the start and end of their lives.

MORE INFORMATION
wool.com/MLP



3. Nature positive farming framework

AWI has collaborated with woolgrowers and the supply chain (including brokers, certification schemes and brands) to develop 12 industry-informed metrics most relevant for measuring on-farm natural capital and environmental performance. Once operational, the specification will help woolgrowers, brands, and consumers better understand and promote wool's role in regenerating the environment.

The majority of the metrics selected can be assessed cost-effectively using satellite imagery or farm data; this reduces costs and makes it more accessible for woolgrowers. The metrics align with global reporting frameworks so they can integrate seamlessly into broader sustainability reporting systems.

Further work is currently underway before the nature positive farming framework is finalised to help determine how to combine the information from the metrics to assess nature positive claims, and how the data collection can be done in a rigorous, yet cost-effective way.

MORE INFORMATION
woolmark.com/nature-positive-framework



4. Methane Emissions Reduction in Livestock

The Australian sheep and wool industry is investing in R&D to implement practical and safe ways for producers to use feed additives to reduce methane emissions from Australian sheep grazing systems. There are currently nine R&D projects underway with supporting funding from the Australian Government's Methane Emissions Reduction in Livestock (MERiL) program. This work sits within the National Sheep Methane Program (NSMP) which is a collaborative and coordinated effort between AWI and the departments of primary industries and universities in the main wool producing states.

MORE INFORMATION

wool.com/meril



5. Carbon storage on wool farms

AWI has co-invested in the Carbon Storage Partnership, an MLA-led initiative that aims to identify the most effective, regionally relevant techniques that woolgrowers can implement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, sequester carbon in soil and vegetation, and build biodiversity, whilst improving productivity.

The research phase has been completed and the development of extension material for woolgrowers is underway.



6. Nature positive impact program

This program is currently under development by AWI. It will aim to connect investors with independent programs at leading institutions, presenting a portfolio of investment opportunities spanning across research, development, education and conservation, to accelerate a nature positive future.

Objective: Deliver the circular fibre of choice



7. Woolmark quality assurance program

Through the world-famous Woolmark Certification Program, established in 1964, AWI continues to uphold wool quality standards and promote long-lived products. Woolmark-certified products are assessed and approved for fibre content, durability, laundering and colourfastness. When attached to a product, such as on a sewn-in label or a swing ticket, the logo provides customers with an assurance of quality for the product, thereby also helping to strengthen the demand for wool.

MORE INFORMATION

woolmark.com/certification



8. Woolmark recycled wool content specification

The Woolmark Certification Program has been extended to include a specification to quality test and certify products with recycled wool content. Wool is already the role model fibre in the global transition towards the circular economy due to its high recycling rate. Brands wishing to demonstrate their alignment with the circular economy increasingly purchase virgin raw materials that are well-suited to recycling.

MORE INFORMATION

woolmark.com/recycled



9. Removing chemicals of concern in the supply chain

AWI has begun working with the Woolmark licensee network to understand where chemicals of concern are still in use in wool manufacturing and work to phase these out. This will help ensure that wool is regarded as a fibre that fits into a circular model of textile production that minimises pollution and aligns with forthcoming regulation.

Objective: Support thriving flocks and communities



10. Traceable wool production

AWI has provided a Woolmark Supplier Search directory on woolmark.com that features a range of Woolmark-licensed suppliers – from spinners and weavers to trading houses and vertical operations – all committed to specific sustainability practices. All Woolmark-certified suppliers are invited to self-declare their sustainability activities on the directory, helping establish benchmarks for responsible sourcing. This showcases how the entire wool value chain is committed to sustainability.

MORE INFORMATION

woolmark.com/suppliers



11. New pest and disease management solutions

Chemical resistance in sheep blowflies is compromising the effectiveness of current sheep flystrike control options, and there is potential for their access to be further restricted due to workplace health and safety, and residue and environmental concerns. AWI and its research partners are investing in a range of new technologies and natural formulations to provide new approaches with low residue and reduced environmental impacts, to target the blowfly and minimise the risk of flystrike in their sheep.

These investments include the creation of biopesticides derived from natural essential oils, such as tea tree oil, which are enhanced through nanotechnology. Additionally, AWI is exploring biological control methods for flies, including the Sterile Insect Technique. AWI is also investigating blowfly genomics to identify new targets for future control tools.



12. Supporting woolgrowers to manage flystrike

AWI's Flystrike Extension Program is available to woolgrowers across Australia to improve the lifetime welfare of their sheep, reduce their reliance on mulesing, optimise/minimise chemical use and increase whole farm profitability:

- It's Fly Time!TM – Practical, just-in-time information in the lead up to, and during, high-risk flystrike periods.
- DemystiFlyTM – Practical information about managing chemical resistance in blowflies.
- SimpliFlyTM – A one-day workshop to develop a property-specific, strategic flystrike management plan.
- ClassiFlyTM – A one-day workshop to increase understanding and skills in breeding for flystrike resistance.
- StrateFlyTM – A one-day workshop to develop a property-specific strategy for moving to a non-mulesed enterprise.
- AmpliFlyTM – One-on-one coaching and support from a trained advisor to assist you prevent and control flystrike.

MORE INFORMATION

wool.com/flystrikeresources



13. Enhancing ewe and lamb wellbeing

A combination of research and education projects are helping Australian woolgrowers implement best practice management for lambing. Projects include:

- Lifetime Ewe Management course
- Picking Performer Ewes workshop
- Value of pregnancy scanning
- Feed on Offer
- Effects of mob size and stocking rate on lamb survival
- Optimising Merino ewe survival at lambing
- Unlocking the productivity potential of eID.

MORE INFORMATION

wool.com/LTEM
wool.com/workshops
wool.com/lambing

Australian wool-growing showcased to global brands



A delegation from top-tier international brands visited several Australian wool-growing properties in December to learn more about the eco-credentials of Australian wool and the options for them to partner with the industry to establish a more nature positive supply chain.

The delegation from international brands learnt about responsible wool production and environmental sustainability, whilst also experiencing life on the farm.

In response to shifting consumer preferences towards low-impact products and new regulatory measures, brands are seeking ways to minimise the environmental impact of their supply chains. The Woolmark+ roadmap (see pages 28-29) supports woolgrowers and brands meet this challenge and tap into the opportunities that are uniquely available to the wool industry.

To help promote the Woolmark+ roadmap to the supply chain, AWI hosted the inaugural Woolmark+ Fellowship in December, bringing together leaders from top international brands including Thom Browne, Diesel, Tod's, Brioni, and Australia's own R.M. Williams.

During the four-day Fellowship trip, the delegation visited three wool-growing properties where they met local woolgrowers and gained first-hand insights into their nature-positive farming practices. The properties visited were: Oxton Park, Harden; Gundillawah, Mundarlo Valley; and Cavan Station, Yass.

"We place great importance on having the faith and confidence of our end users, and believe the only way to achieve and uphold this is to consistently emphasise the importance of the welfare of both our animals and our land. It's a benefit we can all share together," said the O'Connor family of Oxton Park.

The delegation also received the following presentations from sustainability experts to complement their visit to the farms:

- Wool knowledge; from Emma Gittoes Bunting, Global Sustainability Manager, AWI
- Wool and carbon; from Dr Steve Wiedemann, Principal Scientist and Managing Director, Integrity Ag & Environment
- Emissions mitigation and reduction opportunities for businesses; from Lara Philips, Director, Pollination Group
- Measuring environmental performance on wool farms; from Dr Sue Ogilvy, Farming for the Future.

"I have to admit that wool is at the top of the fibre pyramid in terms of beauty, properties and sustainability features. I'm so grateful to have been included and for the invaluable insights shared – it's been such an enriching experience. Your incredible team and the unifying message you champion truly set you apart on the global stage."

Andrea Rosso, Sustainability Ambassador, OTB Group (Diesel, Marni, Margiela, Jil Sander)

"The Woolmark+ Fellowship is all about fostering connections between Australian woolgrowers and key brands and individuals in the fashion industry," said AWI CEO, John Roberts.

"From hearing first-hand insights from woolgrowers to diving deep into cutting-edge research, the delegation embarked on a journey with Woolmark to explore the co-benefits that wool-growing has for the environment and the fibre's powerful potential to drive a nature-positive future."

During the visit, the Woolmark+ roadmap was highlighted to the delegation and they were shown ways their brands can get involved, specifically in the:

- Woolmark+ Insetting Program
 - Woolmark+ Nature Positive Farming Framework
 - Woolmark Supplier Search.

Feedback from guests was overwhelmingly positive, with them all leaving with a deeper understanding of the wool fibre, the Australian wool industry, the environmental benefits of progressive wool-growing practices and how they can engage with Woolmark+ programs.

The second Woolmark+ Fellowship is taking place this month.

Woolmark+ connecting brands and growers

Australian woolgrowers and fashion brands can work hand in hand when it comes to promoting the benefits of our premium natural fibre. That's the view of Graham Tabor from American brand Thom Browne who was one of the delegates on the Woolmark+ Fellowship tour (see opposite page).

Graham Tabor from Thom Browne (third from left, below) with other attendees on the Woolmark+ Fellowship tour of Australian wool-growing properties.

Based in New York, Graham Tabor is Head of Knitwear and Strategic Advisor for Sustainable Supply Chain Solutions at Thom Browne, a brand of Zegna Group.

"About 95% of Thom Browne products are made from natural fibres. A big focus of what I do is explore what it means to create a nature-positive material and how to connect brands and growers more in the supply chain," Graham explained in a recent episode of AWI's *The Yarn* podcast.

"It has been a deep pleasure for me to come and visit the growers in Australia. Being on farm and actually going into the field and having the growers show me and be excited about how natural vegetation has come back, about remnant pastures that they've been protecting, about wetlands that have been restored. For me, it's been extremely inspiring."

It's a long way from the sheep to the shop floor, conceptually and physically, and brands can often feel as remote from growers as growers feel remote from brands.

"When looking to source responsibly produced fibre, the problem that brands often face is that they are very disconnected from the farm because there are so many layers of traders and brokers in-between. Unless the brand has some direct grower relationships, it's very difficult to know what's happening on the ground on farms, what's working and what's possible, and what the goals of the farmer are. Similarly, it's very difficult to get demand signals, of what's important for brands and their final customer, back to the grower," Graham said.

"At Thom Browne, we have supply chains where we source directly from big farms so we have that traceability. But smaller, mid-sized farms don't have the scale to have that kind of direct traceability because the brokerage system aggregates the wool from smaller growers into the large-sized batches that scouring plants require. Unfortunately, this means that all the great work that a grower might be doing on, say, biodiversity isn't conveyed along the supply chain."

However, insetting programs are a way that brands and growers can work collaboratively. In contrast to carbon



offsetting, which involves a brand balancing out its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by investing in projects that reduce GHG emissions in other industries, carbon *insetting* focuses on reducing GHG emissions within the brand's own supply chain.

"So if a grower is doing these incredible environmental things that we as a brand want to support, we can give an ecosystem premium directly to the grower that is separate from the cost of the wool and separate from the broker system. It's an additional income stream for the grower," Graham said.

"The definition of insetting is that it has to be within your own supply chain. So a brand's wool scourer or spinner or, in this case, the woolgrower, has to be undertaking emissions reductions or removals on farm for the brand to be able to report it within their scope 3 reporting.

"For a brand, because the vast majority of the impacts are embedded in our product, we have to be engaging with our supply chain if we want to reduce our impact."

For broader environmental reporting by brands, it is about more than climate and carbon.

"It could be a lot of things that a farmer is doing. It could be rebuilding river banks, making wetlands more diverse and more resilient; it could be fencing off biodiverse areas; it could be supporting grazing in a way that remnant vegetation is

maintained. There's a lot of different ways that it could manifest.

"Global frameworks like the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures are basically trying to create an accounting system for nature through which companies report on their impacts on nature, in the same way they currently have to report on their financial health.

"If you have to report on your impacts on nature, then there's a reason for you to really invest in reducing that impact. And if you're a natural fibre fashion brand, a lot of your impacts are at the farms you work with, so you have to know your farmers and start engaging with them.

"We need to look at ways to bring us together and to reward growers for doing their incredible environmental work and to embed that in business."

Graham says it's also important to explore ways to connect consumers with the on-farm experience.

"If we can somehow connect people emotionally to what it means to be on these lands, and the woolgrowers' passion for the place, and the actual ecosystems, then that is extremely powerful. I think we change people not through the mind but through the heart," he said.

MORE INFORMATION

Hear more from Graham Tabor in Episode 268 of AWI's *The Yarn* podcast at wool.com/podcast

Get connected online with AWI



AWI offers a range of online choices for Australian woolgrowers and other stakeholders to access the latest information about AWI activities.

Wool.com website

Wool.com is designed specifically for Australian woolgrowers seeking information from AWI on lifting their productivity. The website covers the full range of on-farm topics and has a strong focus on market intelligence and on-farm tools. You can also access industry news and corporate publications such as the AWI Annual Report and *Beyond the Bale*. The Wool.com website received 341,345 visits during the 2023/24 financial year. Visit wool.com to view the website.

AWI e-newsletters

AWI produces several free e-newsletters:

- Wool Market Weekly Report, including weekly price movements and commentary
- Woolgrowers' e-newsletter (monthly)
- Beyond the Bale e-newsletter (quarterly)

Visit wool.com/subscribe for your free subscription.

AWI social media channels

- f** 12,003 followers
- @** 7,539 followers
- X** 8,060 followers
- in** 4,917 followers
- ▶** 4,229 followers

AWI Extension Networks

AWI Extension 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. All six AWI Extension Networks have their own website and social media channels. Visit wool.com/networks to connect with the AWI Extension Network in your state.

The Yarn podcast

AWI's *The Yarn* podcast is the wool industry's No.1 podcast. On *The Yarn*, you can learn more about AWI's projects from the people at the cutting edge of

Woolmark digital and social channels

AWI subsidiary Woolmark also has a range of digital channels including the Woolmark.com website, e-newsletters (visit woolmark.com/subscribe for your free subscription) and social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and TikTok) through which woolgrowers and other stakeholders can view the company's marketing, off-farm R&D and education initiatives.

R&D and marketing. Each episode is about 20 minutes in length and averages about 1,000 downloads. *The Yarn* can be listened to at wool.com/podcast, Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

AWI resources for dry seasonal conditions

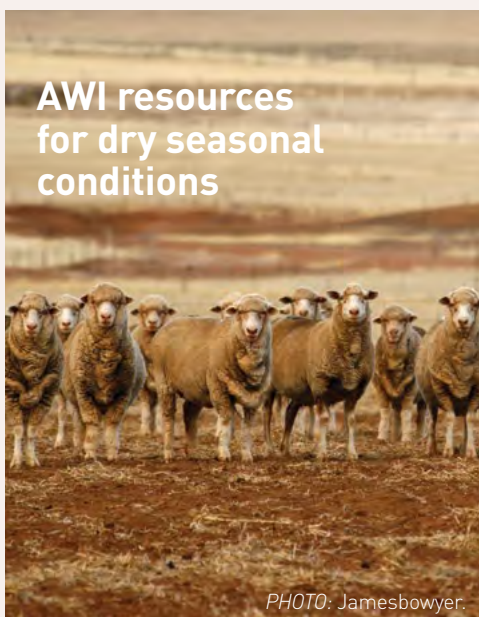


PHOTO: Jamesbowyer.

With some parts of the country experiencing particularly dry seasonal conditions, AWI reminds woolgrowers that it provides a range of resources to help them plan and carefully manage their enterprises during dry conditions, including:

Publications

- Feeding and managing sheep in dry times
- Managing fodder prices for droughts
- Managing sheep in droughtlots
- Which sheep do I keep?
- Drought feeding and management of sheep (Agriculture Victoria)
- Releasing sheep from containment feeding.

Decision support tools

- Cost of production calculator
- LifetimeWool feed budget tables
- Feed On Offer library.

These and other AWI and external resources for dry times are available on the AWI website. AWI also provides a range of information at wool.com/bushfires to help woolgrowers with bushfire preparation and recovery.

MORE INFORMATION
wool.com/drought



AWI and Woolmark

Working to increase the global demand for Australian wool



Wear Wool, Not Waste campaign success

Woolmark's powerful Wear Wool, Not Waste eco marketing campaign has wrapped up with more than 68 million views of the campaign film, almost double its target of 36 million views.



Screenshots from the *Wear Wool, Not Waste* campaign film. The immense and overwhelming accumulation of discarded synthetic clothing on the planet (left) contrasts with wool which is presented as a natural solution to fashion's environment issues (below).



In September last year, Woolmark launched an eye-catching and thought-provoking eco marketing campaign – which has had an impact on many consumers' perception of the environmental impact of their clothing.

Titled *Wear Wool, Not Waste*, the campaign highlighted to consumers that clothes made from synthetic fibres do not readily decompose but remain polluting the planet long after they have been discarded.

Importantly, the campaign also highlighted that wool has unparalleled advantages due to it being natural, renewable, biodegradable and the most recycled apparel fibre – and therefore a solution to reducing the fashion industry's impact on the planet. The campaign urged consumers to consider the fibre composition of a clothing product – and choose wool – when they are thinking of making a purchase.

When a wool product reaches its end-of-life and is disposed of, the wool fibre readily decomposes in soil, slowly releasing valuable nutrients and carbon back into the earth, acting like a fertiliser.

The campaign centred around a 60-second hero film showing people

in a city rushing to escape a massive 'zombie invasion' of old synthetic clothes, representing synthetic apparel that had been discarded over time but still haunts the planet to this day. There have been more than 68 million views of the campaign film, which is almost double the target of 36 million views.

The *Wear Wool, Not Waste* campaign built on the momentum and success of Woolmark's previous eco marketing campaign, *Wear Wool, Not Fossil Fuel*, which



Campaign advertising at Times Square in New York.

was released in September 2022 and raised awareness of fossil fuel as the source of synthetic fibres.

Campaign had impact amongst consumers

The *Wear Wool, Not Waste* campaign concluded in Paris, London, Seattle, and Austin (Texas) in October, but had an extended presence in New York City through to 6 January, covering Times Square (during New Years Eve) and airport taxi toppers.

AWI CEO John Roberts says the campaign exceeded all expectations.

"*Wear Wool, Not Waste* was viewed by millions internationally and it is boosting wool's perception among consumers. Messages around wool's sustainability resonated, leading to increased consideration for wool as a natural and renewable option," John said.

"Our goal is to raise awareness of wool at a time when legislative changes are being introduced to curb the rise in throwaway fashion, which has been driven by cheap, synthetic clothing. AWI continues to invest in defending the fibre, ensuring wool's benefits are understood and appreciated and that wool is not disadvantaged in apparel rating schemes."

MORE INFORMATION

woolmark.com/wear-wool

Surveyed consumers who saw the *Wear Wool, Not Waste* campaign said it was very impactful:

81%	said, because of the advert, they believe wool is gentle on the environment.
76%	said the advert made them think twice about the environmental impact of their clothes.
75%	said, because of the advert, they would consider materials/fabrics when making a purchase decision regarding clothes.

Compared to before the campaign, amongst surveyed consumers, there was a:

29%	increase in perception of wool as environmentally friendly.
25%	increase in perception of wool as more fashionable.
14%	increase in perception of wool as high quality.
12%	increase in Woolmark brand awareness.

Amongst surveyed consumers:

63%	said they are now "considering" wool as an option to purchase (a 10 percentage point increase from last year).
75%	said they have a clear "intention" to purchase wool.
79%	said Woolmark has brand appeal. The campaign exceeded industry averages in terms of increasing appeal for both Woolmark and Merino wool.

Wool's eco-credentials pass the smell test

The natural odour resistance of wool garments is well known for keeping the wearer fresher for longer. But according to new AWI-funded research, wool's odour resistance also benefits the environment because less energy is needed to launder wool garments compared to polyester or cotton garments during their use phase.

Key research results

- New research shows that the frequency garments need to be laundered, based on their odour, differs significantly depending on the fibre type of the garment.
- Polyester garments consistently had fewer consecutive days of wear than wool or cotton garments before washing was deemed necessary by the participants in the odour trial.
- Over the course of a year's use, the wool garments in the study would require the lowest energy consumption during laundering, whilst the polyester garments would require the highest followed by the cotton garments.

When assessing the impact of clothing on the environment, people often focus on the beginning and the end of the garment's lifecycle, namely the production of the fibre and garment, and the disposal of the garment.

However, the 'use phase' of a garment – that part of the garment's life when it is owned and worn – has been shown to very strongly affect the garment's overall environmental impact. Different fibre types affect the use phase of garments in different ways. For example, previous research has established that wool garments have a longer average lifespan and are more likely to be reused or recycled than garments made from other fibres, which is better for the environment.

Laundering also carries a significant environmental impact from its consumption of energy, water and detergents. Wool garments are generally laundered differently than garments made from other fibre types, but the extent to which this reduces energy consumption has received little attention from researchers. Until now.

A recent AWI-funded study into the energy used in laundering garments made from different fibre types has recently been completed – and it is good news for wool. The research was led by AgResearch in New Zealand and carried out in conjunction with Consumption Research Norway (SIFO).

Positive research results for wool

The study used human volunteers to determine the number of days of normal wear that similar garments of different fibre types could be worn before they needed laundering, based only on the participants' assessment of the garments' odour.

The garments used in the study were base-layer garments (T-shirt), mid-layer garments (hooded sweater) and pairs of socks. There were three similar garments of each garment type, each made from a different fibre: Merino wool, cotton or polyester.

The first important result of the research was that there were significant differences in washing frequency based on fibre types. Polyester consistently had fewer consecutive days wear than wool and cotton before washing was deemed necessary by the participants.



PHOTO: nensuria

The researchers also collected information about typical washing conditions that consumers use when laundering different fibre types and established the energy use associated with all aspects of laundering. Combining this with the wash frequency data allowed the researchers to calculate the energy consumption associated with a year's use of each garment and fibre type.

The result was that Merino wool had the lowest energy consumption, with polyester the highest followed by cotton. This was applicable for all the three garment types in the study. Merino wool had 76% lower energy consumption than polyester for the mid-layer, 68% lower energy consumption for the base-layer, and 37% lower energy consumption for the socks.

The researchers also noted that, although not measured in the study, the higher washing frequency of polyester garments would also require higher water consumption than for wool garments. The high washing frequency of polyester garments also creates greater potential for microplastic pollution.

The researchers concluded that the results of the study underscore how the natural odour resistance of wool contributes to its lower environmental impact during the use phase.

Robust science helps marketing of wool

AWI Program Manager for Fibre Advocacy and Eco Credentials, Angus Ireland, says the study reinforces the positive eco-credentials of wool in a world where there is increasing concern about society's trend towards 'fast fashion' and the effect on the environment of synthetic textiles.

"The fact that wool clothes need less frequent washing not only reduces energy consumption, it also preserves the as-new look of the garment, enabling consumers to continue wearing it for longer," Angus said.

"By AWI funding scientific studies such as this one, the wool industry is in a knowledge-powerful position regarding the true impact on the environment of wool compared to other fibres. Importantly, the studies enable AWI, Woolmark and the wider wool industry to demonstrate to the fashion and textile trades, regulatory bodies, and consumers that wool is the planet-friendly fibre of choice.

"The results of this particular study also indicate the benefits of focusing environmental research on consumer habits and culture, and not only technologies."

Massive consumer marketing campaign in China

Woolmark's autumn/winter marketing campaign in China last year highlighted the eco-credentials of Merino wool to consumers and helped leading brands increase the sales of their wool products.

Campaign highlight results

4,800+	participating brands
1.65 billion	impressions
267 million	page views of Wool Pavilion
60%	increase in searches for 'Merino wool' compared to pre-launch period

Building on its successful marketing campaigns of previous years in China, Woolmark's new campaign was aimed at making Merino wool the most desirable apparel fibre for consumers in China during the recent autumn/winter season.

"The marketing campaign involved a key celebrity endorsement alongside a major digital, social and e-commerce component with the largest e-commerce platform in China, TMALL," said AWI Country Manager China, Jeff Ma.

"The theme of this season's campaign was wool's natural eco-benefits, which aligned with the sustainability themes of Woolmark's other recent campaigns in China. Natural and eco-friendly materials have become an important

consideration for Chinese consumers when buying clothes, with sustainable fashion messaging becoming increasingly resonant within the China market.

"By providing a direct link between consumers' growing sustainability values and the point of purchase, our marketing campaigns are successfully driving increased demand for Merino wool products, which ultimately will benefit Australian woolgrowers."

Celebrity endorsement

In the lead up to and during the major retail component of the autumn/winter campaign, Woolmark launched a celebrity endorsement of the fibre by well-known Chinese actress Charmaine

Sheh. With 25 million followers on social media, she is admired as a role model and trendsetter in fashion and lifestyle.

For the campaign, Charmaine Sheh highlighted Merino wool looks from Woolmark licensees, and featured in key visuals, behind-the-scenes footage, and video content. These assets were prominently featured throughout the campaign by TMALL, brand partners, Woolmark and the celebrity herself.

"Securing tier-one celebrity Charmaine Sheh as the Woolmark Sustainability Fashion Ambassador for the Wool Week campaign proved to be a highly successful strategy, attracting substantial consumer attention and boosting Merino wool sales on TMALL," Jeff said.





Pictured for the Double 11 shopping festival promotion are fashion blogger **Lin Yuzhou** wearing a simple and stylish wool jumper from HAZZYS and fashion blogger and model **Lu Mingming** wrapped in a JNBY wool coat.

Key visuals of celebrity Charmaine Sheh featured in the Wool Pavilion and digital advertisements. This year, TMALL also introduced an expanded wool sales channel, TMALL Pro Go, to guide consumers in selecting high-value products.

Woolmark brand licensees and key partners actively engaged in the Wool Week campaign through product and content promotions on TMALL, external advertising, social media, live streaming, and more. This year, TMALL also recruited 28 key 'captain brands' to co-invest in the campaign to boost their exposure and drive sales.

The autumn/winter campaign also involved brand partnerships in the run up to China's Double 11 online shopping extravaganza. Double 11 (also known as Singles Day) is an online shopping festival held on 11 November in China that is similar, in some ways, to Black Friday in western nations. During the Double 11 shopping festival, 11 of Woolmark's brand partners promoted their Merino wool products, amplifying their reach through e-commerce platforms and multiple social media channels. There is also a Double 12 shopping festival (also known as Couples Day) on 12 December, which involved further brand partnerships.

This year's campaign received a massive 1.65 billion impressions (the number of times the campaign was seen).

"Our campaigns in China have been successful in building and reinforcing consumers' awareness of the all-round benefits and natural credentials of Merino wool. Our research shows that, in the past two years, consumer awareness of Merino wool has increased by 27%. Importantly, the campaigns have also increased consumers' purchase intent of Merino wool, by 14%," Jeff said.

The expanded wool sales channel TMALL Pro Go, which was introduced by TMALL this year to enhance consumer access and engagement.



The home page of TMALL's Wool Pavilion (featuring popular celebrity Charmaine Sheh at the top), which received more than 267 million views.

Driving wool purchases at retail

For the retail aspect of the campaign, The Woolmark Company partnered with TMALL for the sixth consecutive year for Wool Week, during which the e-commerce platform had a dedicated 'Wool Pavilion' page which highlighted thousands of wool products for consumers to buy.

Widely known by industry insiders and highly recognised by consumers, Wool Week has become an annual campaign that brands and consumers look forward to. This year, a total of 4,800+ brands participated in the shopping festival. Taking place in September, it is the best time for new wool product launches.

Designed by TMALL, the Wool Pavilion featured celebrity imagery and showcased the TMALL stores of flagship brands, offering a diverse selection of wool collections categorised into four key trends: premium materials, comfort, easy care, and versatile styles. It also included algorithm-generated product recommendations tailored to customer preferences.

During the campaign, the Wool Pavilion received more than 267 million page views.

Merino aims for a hole in one in Korea

Capitalising on the huge popularity in South Korea of playing golf, Woolmark has collaborated with leading golfing brand TaylorMade to dress the country's golfers in Merino wool.



Merino wool golf apparel in the latest TaylorMade collection in South Korea.



The popularity of golf in South Korea is so large that the market for golf apparel in the East Asian nation now accounts for nearly half of the entire global market.

Even during the off-season, approximately two million Koreans enjoy golf tours abroad, ensuring a consistent demand for golf apparel throughout the year. Furthermore, golf is a sport that people tend to continue with once they have tried it out, which suggests the market will endure into the future.

This presents a great opportunity for Merino wool because golfers tend to prefer premium clothing and show great interest in the quality of the fibre used in their apparel. Merino wool's premium, natural benefits of breathability, thermoregulation, elasticity, softness and odour resistance make it an ideal fibre for the sport.

Leading golf brand TaylorMade

Recognising the potential market for Merino wool, Woolmark undertook a collaborative marketing campaign last year with leading golfing brand TaylorMade to

increase awareness and sales of its Merino wool apparel in Korea in the 2024 autumn/winter season.

The collaboration builds on the success of a similar joint campaign in the previous year. Based on those strong sales, TaylorMade almost doubled the amount of pieces for sale for the 2024 autumn/winter season.

TaylorMade is an American-based global golfing brand which boasts Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy, Scottie Scheffler and Tommy Fleetwood amongst its many global ambassadors. The brand is licensed in Korea to HanSung F.I which has significant expertise in the premium golf apparel market in Korea. By forming a strategic partnership with HanSung F.I, TaylorMade is expanding its apparel line.

TaylorMade's new 'Merino Wool Edition' includes men's and women's 100% Merino wool and wool blend jumpers. TaylorMade became a Woolmark licensee in June 2024, and more than a quarter of the garments in the new collection are Woolmark certified.

AWI Regional Manager Japan & Korea, Samuel Cockedey, says brands are introducing more luxurious golf apparel products in South Korea, and Woolmark is making sure that Merino wool is well represented.

"Through our partnership with leading brand TaylorMade, we have emphasised to golfers the high-performance benefits that Merino wool apparel can provide, thereby increasing demand for the fibre," Samuel said.

"We hope to encourage TaylorMade to develop more Merino wool products for future seasons, not only in South Korea but also in other markets such as the US.

"We also hope that other global golf apparel brands will see the success of TaylorMade's use of Merino wool and introduce the fibre into their own collections."

Marketing the Merino golf apparel

Woolmark's latest collaborative marketing campaign with TaylorMade was launched in October and highlighted the premium, high-performance benefits of Merino wool, along with the fibre's natural, biodegradable and renewable eco-credentials, and its easy-care properties.

The campaign primarily targeted customers in their 30s-50s through a combination of digital, social media and in-store marketing.

The digital element of the campaign included a home page feature on the TaylorMade website that drove customers to a landing page that highlighted the benefits of Merino wool alongside the new collection available to purchase. Four campaign videos promoted the collection online, along with paid social media advertising and influencer marketing.

In-store displays featuring the products were set up in 126 physical stores across South Korea to encourage purchases.

MORE INFORMATION
taylormadeapparel.co.kr

Merino suit promotion flexes its muscle in Korea

The latest marketing campaign of South Korean formal menswear brand Brentwood features national gymnast Kim Jae-ho showcasing the performance benefits of Merino wool by pushing the brand's Action Suit to the extreme.

The parallel bars, vault, and rings. These are just some of the gymnastic apparatus on which the South Korean national gymnast performed for Brentwood's latest marketing campaign with Woolmark – all while wearing a Merino wool suit.

The joint marketing campaign, which highlights Brentwood's signature Action Suit line, features video and images that showcase the amazing flexibility, movement and comfort of the Merino wool suit even when it is put to the ultimate test in the gym.

Established in 1989, Brentwood has been owned since 2009 by Korea's fifth largest apparel group Kolon Industries which had annual sales worth A\$3.7 billion in 2023. Brentwood's target consumers are mid to high level income earners in their 30s to 50s.

Although the men's suit market in Korea has faced downward pressure from the casualisation of apparel for a number

of years, net sales in the men's suiting market increased to about A\$5.32 billion in 2023, a rise of 8.4% from the previous year. This renewed interest in men's suits is a reflection of a recent trend towards men's grooming, especially among Gen Z.

"The marketing campaign with Brentwood aimed to increase awareness and sales of its Merino wool products by highlighting the fibre's performance benefits in a visually exciting and eye catching way," said AWI Regional Manager Japan & Korea, Samuel Cockedey.

"During the past couple years, we have built a strong relationship with Brentwood and its parent company Kolon Industries and we aim to maintain them as long-term partners, encouraging them to develop and sell more Merino wool products."

Joint marketing campaigns

The joint marketing campaign for the 2024 autumn/winter season comprised a digital and social media promotion as well as point-of-purchase displays (including the playing of the video) in the brand's 140 physical stores. The digital and social media component focussed on driving traffic to a landing page on the brand's e-commerce website, which featured the video and imagery from the campaign and, of course, the products available for purchase.

Nearly 60,000 pieces were available to buy, representing an estimated 30 tons of wool.

The new autumn/winter campaign followed on from a marketing campaign run by Brentwood in the 2024 spring/summer season. In this first season, Woolmark provided 'in kind' support to Brentwood to ensure that Merino wool – which Brentwood had never actively advertised before – became a core theme of the brand's marketing going forward.

Core messaging in the spring/summer campaign focussed on the fibre's excellent breathability and comfort, even in summer, with remarkable wrinkle recovery and freedom of movement. As well as digital and social media marketing, point-of-purchase displays promoting the wool products were on show at Brentwood's stores across the country.

In the spring/summer season, Brentwood produced more Merino wool products than they initially planned and achieved higher exposure than targeted. More than 72,000 pieces were promoted. The campaign received more than 3.8 million impressions (the number of times the promotion was seen online).

MORE INFORMATION

kolonmall.com/brentwood



Imagery from the 'Action Suit' joint campaign with Brentwood in South Korea.

Merino strikes gold with Goldwin in Japan

Following the success of a joint marketing campaign with Woolmark early last year, popular Japanese sportswear brand Goldwin recently launched a new campaign for an expanded range of Woolmark-certified base-layers with double the quantity of garments for sale.



Goldwin ambassador and Japanese trekking guide Shin Kaneko wearing a Goldwin AXIO® wool T-shirt: "I've tried a lot of base-layers, from expensive to cheap, but I think Goldwin's wool T-shirt and wool long sleeve T-shirt are the most comfortable to wear."

launched in November a joint autumn/winter marketing campaign for a range of wool blend base-layers. This campaign follows on from a successful joint campaign held in the spring/summer season that targeted trail runners.

The new range includes 11 styles of wool blend base-layer including T-shirts, shirts and leggings, which is more than double the number styles available in the spring/summer collection. The quantity of garments for sale is also more than double the number of

the earlier campaign. All the garments are certified for quality by Woolmark.

"Woolmark's second collaboration with Goldwin is a reflection of the growing relationship between the two companies," said AWI Regional Manager Japan & Korea, Samuel Cockedey. "By establishing a cooperative relationship with Goldwin, we have seen the brand this season expand its use of Merino wool. We hope that a Merino wool category will become an essential long-term category for the brand."

As with the previous collection, all the garments are made using an innovative wool blend yarn from leading Japanese spinner Nikke. In contrast to conventional wool-polyester blend yarns that wrap the polyester fibres around the outside of the wool fibre bundle, Nikke's AXIO® yarn has a spiral-structured polyester fibre wrapped inside the wool fibre bundle.

Because the wool is exposed on the surface of the yarn, AXIO® retains the exceptionally soft texture and feel of pure wool when touching the skin. It also has

all the other benefits of wool, such as the ability to reduce post-exercise chill, absorb and release moisture, and resist odours.

Nikke is a long-standing Woolmark licensee that consumes about 2,000 tons of Australian Merino wool each year. Established in 1896, Nikke has been expanding its wool yarn business in the sports and outdoor category through the company's innovative AXIO® yarn.

Collaborative marketing campaign

The marketing campaign for the new, expanded AXIO® wool collection, which was launched in November, aims to raise consumer awareness in Japan of Merino wool in sports, with a focus on hiking and trekking, as well as driving sales of the Goldwin wool-rich base-layers.

To give added authenticity to the campaign, Woolmark worked closely with Goldwin trekking guide ambassador, Shin Kaneko, who is based in a well-known hiking area near Mount Fuji, to highlight and endorse the benefits of the wool blend collection for trekking. Shin Kaneko says that his favourite base-layers are Goldwin's wool T-shirt and wool long-sleeve T-shirt.

"I rotate several of them and wear them almost every day. I love how comfortable they are and the simple design. They are made from a hybrid material of Merino wool and synthetic fibres, but the texture and feel are just like Merino wool," he said.

"For more than five years, I've only been wearing Merino wool or Merino wool blend base-layers. I really like the soft feel of Merino wool and its excellent odour resistance properties."

The digital aspect of the campaign drove online customers to a dedicated campaign blog page which highlights Shin Kaneko's comments on the benefits of wool and how important Merino wool base-layers are during trekking and hiking. The blog page links to Goldwin's e-commerce website which contains an aggregated page containing all the Woolmark-certified products.

The campaign included organic and paid influencer social media posts, promotional e-newsletters to Goldwin's client base, and paid online advertisements – all aimed at helping drive traffic to the blog page on the Goldwin website. The campaign also included advertorial for the print and online versions of *Begin*, a men's lifestyle magazine.

Established in Japan in 1951, the popular Goldwin brand sells premium apparel for running, trekking, skiing and lifestyle markets. The brand's garments are sold in more than 350 stores across Japan as well as online, generating annual sales worth about A\$32 million.

The brand is part of the much larger Goldwin Inc, the fourth largest sports group in Japan that has annual sales worth more than A\$1 billion and operates many leading labels in the Japanese market, including The North Face, Helly Hansen, Icebreaker and Speedo.

Goldwin Inc aims to develop its eponymous Goldwin brand into a global premium sports brand in the next decade, with wool as one of the brand's key material categories.

Goldwin's expanded product range

With the aim to increase the use of Merino wool apparel by hikers in Japan, the Goldwin brand and Woolmark

MORE INFORMATION
goldwin.co.jp

Promoting wool with blossoming Japanese brand

Woolmark has again collaborated with fast-growing contemporary womenswear brand ánuans on a digital and in-store campaign during the recent autumn/winter season, this time to promote 25,000 pieces of the brand's Woolmark-certified products.

Following a highly successful marketing collaboration with ánuans during the 2023 autumn/winter season, Woolmark has again partnered with the highly popular Japanese womenswear brand during the 2024 autumn/winter season.

With famous fashion influencer Asami Nakamura as its creative director, ánuans has quickly gained a strong following amongst Gen Z and millennials in Japan because of its timeless designs and its attention to quality. Launched in January 2021, ánuans is owned by Dot One Inc, a company that owns four other womenswear brands in Japan.

AWI Regional Manager Japan & Korea, Samuel Cockedey, says ánuans is a thriving brand that is keen to embed Merino wool in its DNA.

“The brand has consciously put Merino wool at the core of its collections and showcases its Woolmark certification to consumers as an assurance of high-quality wool products. The brand sources its wool fabrics from some of the best mills in Japan,” Samuel said.

“Woolmark’s previous collaboration with ánuans was very successful in helping educate the brand’s Gen Z and Millennial customers about Merino wool’s position as a premium fibre and increase sales of its Merino wool products, so we were pleased to collaborate with the brand again during the most recent autumn/winter season.

“The brand operates under an agile and modern business model and benefits from a highly-engaged customer base of digital savvy, young consumers with high disposable income, which is a key target segment for Woolmark in Japan.



“The latest annual sales of ánuans are A\$33 million which is a growth of 45% on the previous year. Fostering our relationship with such a fast-growing brand will hopefully result in it continuing to increase its use of Merino wool, which will ultimately benefit Australian woolgrowers.”

Latest joint marketing campaign

The digital and in-store campaign in the autumn/winter 2024 season promoted a range of 28 Woolmark-certified products, including coats and jackets, knitwear and skirts.

There were 25,000 pieces available, a 20% increase compared to the autumn/winter 2023 season, using about 14,000 kg of wool. Many of these items were sold out before they even hit the market at pre-launch on their websites, resulting in the brand ordering additional quantities of the wool products.

There were dedicated pages on the ánuans website, featuring the wool outerwear and knitwear, the wool material used in the products and the manufacturing process, the meaning of Woolmark certification, and of course the range of wool products for customers to buy. Online advertising banners, e-newsletters and social media posts helped drive customers to these hub pages.

In-store sales activations were rolled out at the brand’s growing number of brick-and-mortar stores that are sited in prime locations. A special window display promoting the collection was installed at the entrance of one of Tokyo’s prominent fashion malls, LUMINE, located at Shinjuku Station in Tokyo, the world’s busiest train station that sees traffic of more than 3.6 million passengers a day.

MORE INFORMATION
anuans.com

Woolmark-certified wool coats from ánuans being promoted online and in its brick-and-mortar stores.



“この一枚を私は選ぶ”
今、手に入れたい本命アウター

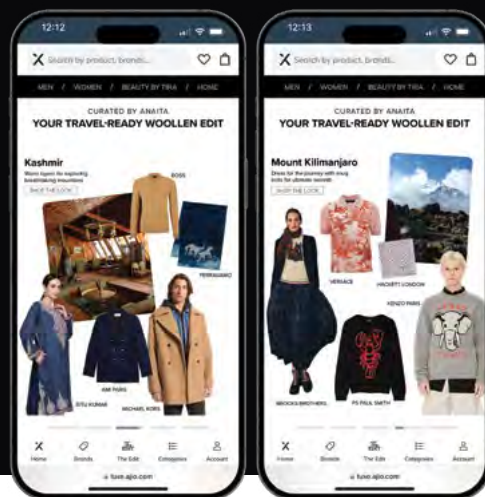
Wool promotion on India's largest luxury e-retailer

Woolmark in November launched a successful, new joint marketing campaign with Ajo Luxe, India's largest luxury e-retailer, to increase sales of Merino wool products in what is now the world's most populous country.



Supported by
THE WOOLMARK COMPANY

Well-known Indian celebrity fashion stylist Anaita Shroff Adajania was the face of the joint marketing campaign on India's largest luxury e-retailer, Ajo Luxe.



After China, India is the largest importer of Australian wool, and the country is well-known for its premium textile manufacturing. But as well as being an important wool manufacturing hub, India is also an increasingly important consumer market for Australian wool.

The population of India has surpassed that of China to make it the most populous country on the planet. Furthermore, its economy is the fifth largest in the world and one of the fastest growing of major economies.

To capitalise on the growing luxury apparel market in India, Woolmark recently launched a 2½ month marketing campaign with India's largest luxury e-retailer, Ajo Luxe, which has one million daily active users. The campaign follows on from a successful joint campaign held the previous year.

Launched in November, the new campaign on the Ajo Luxe website and app featured more than 1,100 unique styles of wool apparel which is a 25% increase in styles from the previous year, from nearly 60 brands which is a 25% increase in number of brands from the previous year, reflecting Ajo Luxe's increasing confidence in wool products.

The marketing campaign received an impressive 31 million impressions (the number of times it was seen online), and the value of wool sales during the campaign increased by 28% compared to the same period last year.

"The campaign successfully increased consumer awareness to drive sales of Merino wool apparel amongst luxury online shoppers in India during the autumn/winter season. This is the time of year in India when many festivals, weddings and parties are held, which drive apparel purchases," said AWI Senior Marketing & Business Development Manager India, Ajay Pradhan.

Celebrity endorsement of marketing campaign

The campaign featured one of the leading voices within India's fashion community, Anaita Shroff Adajania. The former fashion director for *Vogue India* is a well-known celebrity stylist, movie costume designer and actress in India.

Banners on the Ajo Luxe home page and womens' page highlighted the wool campaign and pointed people to a special landing page that contained Anaita's curated pick of travel-inspired looks using Merino wool garments. The landing page also included information about Woolmark and Merino wool. Importantly, this special landing page pointed customers through to the area of the online platform where they could purchase wool apparel.

There was also another special page titled 'Winter Ready with Anaita Shroff

A selection of Anaita Shroff Adajania's curated picks of travel-inspired looks using Merino wool garments.

Adajania', on which the celebrity stylist talked about the potential of wool as a fibre for the future, as a luxury go-to fabric and for its eco-credentials. This page also pointed to areas of the e-commerce store to purchase wool products.

"Having Anaita Shroff Adajania as the face of the campaign, a well-known A-list celebrity who resonates luxury and sustainability, gave the campaign a huge boost that helped extend the reach, engagement and positioning of the campaign," Ajay said.

The campaign was also amplified by posts on Ajo Luxe's social media channels, and notifications sent to Ajo Luxe's e-newsletter subscribers and app users.

Ajo Luxe is a part of Reliance Group, the largest business conglomerate in India. Woolmark's

collaborations with Ajo Luxe have strengthened Woolmark's relationship with Reliance Brands Limited which could prove valuable for wool in India because the company is the exclusive master franchise of most domestic and international luxury brands in India.

"When making a fashion choice for my clients or myself, I look for materials that are timeless, versatile and natural. Fibres, like wool, help me achieve all of these."

Anaita Shroff Adajania,
celebrity fashion stylist

Handcrafted Merino excellence from India

Woolmark has partnered with Indian brand Tarooob to support the promotion of its premium handcrafted shawls and other products that are made from Australian Merino wool.

Tarooob is a young brand from the Punjab region of northwestern India, an area known for its manufacturing of wool textiles. The brand produces handcrafted shawls, scarves, stoles, capes, jackets and accessories.

In particular, the brand specialises in the heritage craft of embroidery using various traditional Indian patterns and techniques, but in modern and contemporary silhouettes that complement both Indian and Western attire. The artisans who handcraft the brand's products have often inherited their craft from parents and grandparents, infusing an authenticity and uniqueness into the garments.

Targeting young and fashion conscious consumers, the colours used in its products are vibrant and bright yet sophisticated.

Tarooob is focusing on growing its business through a strategy of premiumisation – and to enhance the value of its products, the brand has chosen to use Merino wool.

“Derived from Merino sheep, Merino wool is celebrated worldwide for its unmatched quality.

Australian Merino wool is 100% natural, renewable, and biodegradable, offering unique fibre properties that elevate your wardrobe,” the brand highlights on its website.

“Tarooob is committed to sustainability. Wool is the epitome of eco-friendly fibres. It aligns seamlessly with our dedication to luxury that lasts.”

Woolmark provides in-kind support

Woolmark is providing in-kind support to help the brand sell its Woolmark-certified Merino wool products via the e-commerce store on the Tarooob website and also via traditional physical retailers.

“Woolmark’s in-kind marketing support for Tarooob is a cost-effective way of helping the brand promote its commercially available wool products,” said AWI Senior Marketing & Business Development Manager India, Ajay Pradhan.

“Woolmark’s in-kind contribution included providing advice on product quality improvements and marketing strategy. Tarooob is now utilising Woolmark marketing collateral such as imagery, video and information to raise awareness amongst consumers of the premium qualities and eco-credentials of Australian Merino wool, thereby increasing sales of its Merino wool products.

“Tarooob is also highlighting the quality endorsement provided by the Woolmark brand, not only on its website but also through the use of Woolmark tags on its garments that are for sale in physical stores.”

Tarooob proudly announces on its website the partnership with Woolmark: “This collaboration marks a milestone in our journey toward excellence, uniting woolgrowers, mills, brands, and customers in a shared commitment to unparalleled quality.”

The Tarooob website has promotional content and imagery on its home page that points to a special Woolmark landing page that contains information about the benefits of Merino wool, the meaning of Woolmark certification, the source of premium Merino wool in Australia, and the sustainability credentials of the fibre.

Importantly, a special online Wool Shop is highlighted on the Tarooob website. From here, customers can buy the brand’s many wool products.

The digital aspect of the promotion is complemented by Tarooob promotions through its social media channels.

MORE INFORMATION

tarooob.in/pages/woolmark

Online banners on the Tarooob website promoting Tarooob’s Woolmark-certified collection made from Merino wool.



Woolmark India promoting wool to the textile trade

Woolmark last month collaborated with Austrade at the massive Bharat Tex trade show in New Delhi, celebrating the connection between Australia as the largest producer of apparel wool and the Indian supply chain.

Bharat Tex is one of the world's largest textile trade shows, attracting more than 6,000 international buyers and 120,000 trade visitors from 120 countries during its four days. It is an initiative of the Government of India aimed at showcasing and helping develop the Indian textile industry.

India is already the world's fourth largest exporter of textiles and apparel. Its textile industry is the country's second largest employer with 54 million people directly employed. Overall, there are 3,400 textile mills.

As the second largest importer of Australian greasy wool by volume, India is an important market for our fibre. Woolmark first opened its Indian office in 1966 and has operated continuously in the country for nearly 60 years. Today, Woolmark India works with more than 100 supply chain partners in all stages of the wool supply chain, helping cement Australian wool's ongoing place in the country's thriving textile industry and growing premium consumer market.



Australian and Indian wool industry and government representatives at the opening of the Woolmark booth at the Bharat Tex trade show in New Delhi. The key message highlighted at the booth was 'Australia. The world's largest producer of apparel wool. Crafted in India.'

Promoting wool at Bharat Tex

To ensure that Australian wool was well represented at the Bharat Tex trade show, Woolmark participated in collaboration with Austrade (Australian Trade and Investment Commission) with a booth highlighting Australia's dominance in the production of fine Merino wool. This was Woolmark's second year of collaborative participation at Bharat Tex.

The Woolmark booth was inaugurated by Austrade's Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner for South Asia, John Southwell; Chairman of India's Wool & Woollens Export Promotion Council (WWEPC), Romesh Khajuria; and IWTO Secretary General, Dalena White.

"Woolmark plays a critical role in driving the increased take up of wool in the Indian garment and textile industry and we are pleased to support their endeavours in the country. We are delighted to partner with them all the way to ensure better economic returns to Australia's woolgrowers – and those who support them," said John Southwell.

At the Woolmark booth, the company showcased the natural and performance benefits of Australian wool, its latest wool product innovations, and its help for brands to source wool yarn and fabrics (see box below). There were plenty of in-depth discussions and connections with visitors from the textile supply chain to bring wool to the forefront of their minds when considering fibre and fabric choices for their future collections and product ranges.

This year, wool globally had a strong presence at Bharat Tex. In addition to Woolmark, eleven Woolmark-

certified supply chain partners, and wool bodies from New Zealand and Britain, had booths. "I enjoyed so many inspiring conversations during Bharat Tex," said IWTO's Dalena White.



Indian suppliers and Japanese buyers at the Wool Connect meetings organised by Woolmark.

Connecting wool buyers and sellers

As well as the Woolmark trade booth, Woolmark India and Woolmark Japan organised an initiative called Wool Connect, which comprised special buyer-seller meetings at Bharat Tex supported by WWEPC. International buyers from Japan and Israel had 25 meetings with thirteen prominent Indian suppliers during the 2½ hour Wool Connect session which proved very efficient and was well appreciated by the Japanese and Indian partners.

The trade show was a success not only for Woolmark but also for its supply chain partners, who received better than expected business enquiries for wool products manufactured in India. There seems to be a strong willingness from brands to shift their textile supply chain to India, in addition to exploring the local consumer market.

"Woolmark's participation in this mega event underscores its commitment to promoting Merino wool and fostering business connections between Indian manufacturers and global buyers," said Romesh Khajuria, Chairman of India's WWEPC.



Guide to sourcing wool products from India

Woolmark has created a sourcing guide that highlights key information and contact details of the best wool spinners, weavers, knitters and specialist suppliers on the Indian subcontinent: India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal. This unique resource helps brands and designers from across the world to connect with the region's leading suppliers of premium yarns and fabrics made from Australian Merino wool, thereby increasing demand for the fibre. Access the guide at woolmark.com/industry/source-wool.

Saks campaign generates 124% increase in wool sales

The hero shot from the joint marketing campaign that featured widely during the campaign. The model is wearing the Aria jumper from Favorite Daughter and the Brixton Wool Plaid Pants from Veronica Beard. PHOTO: Dan Li

Campaign highlight results

124%	increase in Saks.com wool sales (compared to previous 6-week period)
137%	increase in “wool” and “Merino” searches (compared to previous 6-week period)
88%	above the campaign’s target impressions
3,000	Saks stylists participated in retail training



A sample of other shots used in the campaign. The main image features the model wearing the Belted Light Wool Coat from Mackage and the Main Vally Checkered Fringe Scarf from Acne Studios. PHOTOS: Dan Li

Building on the success of two previous joint marketing campaigns with Saks in North America, Woolmark recently ran another campaign with the premier ecommerce platform for luxury fashion, resulting in a 124% increase in wool purchases (compared to the previous six-week period).

Saks Fifth Avenue is the leading name in luxury shopping and a destination where customers can explore and discover the latest fashion from established and emerging designers.

For the third consecutive year, Saks partnered with Woolmark in November/December to carry out an integrated digital and social media marketing campaign. The aim was to increase awareness and knowledge of Merino wool amongst its customers, thereby encouraging purchases of wool products on Saks.com during the peak wool buying 2024 holiday season.

The campaign leveraged imagery from a custom photoshoot produced by Saks that highlighted top Merino wool products carried at Saks and Woolmark brand partners. An editorial landing page on Saks.com featured imagery from the photoshoot alongside information on the benefits of Merino wool, to inspire customers to purchase Merino wool products.

Importantly, Saks.com also showcased a dedicated wool digital shop featuring 696 wool products including womenswear, menswear, accessories and home products. The digital shop had a Woolmark branded banner positioned at the top of the webpage, and leveraged the eye-catching hero image from the photoshoot.

The editorial storytelling and Merino wool education was further highlighted in a dedicated Saks email to its customers, email banners, premium run of site advertising banners, and social media. The campaign generated 88% more impressions (the number of times the campaign was seen) above its target.

Total Saks.com wool sales during the six-week campaign were an impressive 124% higher than the six-week period prior to launch.

[MORE INFORMATION](#)
saks.com

3,000 Saks stylists trained about wool

As part of the marketing collaboration, Saks and Woolmark also collaborated on retail training which consisted of a custom wool education video for Saks stylists. The training was carried out in early November in preparation for the campaign launch.

Nearly 3,000 Saks stylists participated in the training which aimed to increase their understanding and knowledge of wool so they could confidently and skillfully advise Saks customers about wool products to increase sales.

“The materials were shared at the perfect time – right when my clients were asking me for winter style that was timeless and would hold up in their wardrobes!”

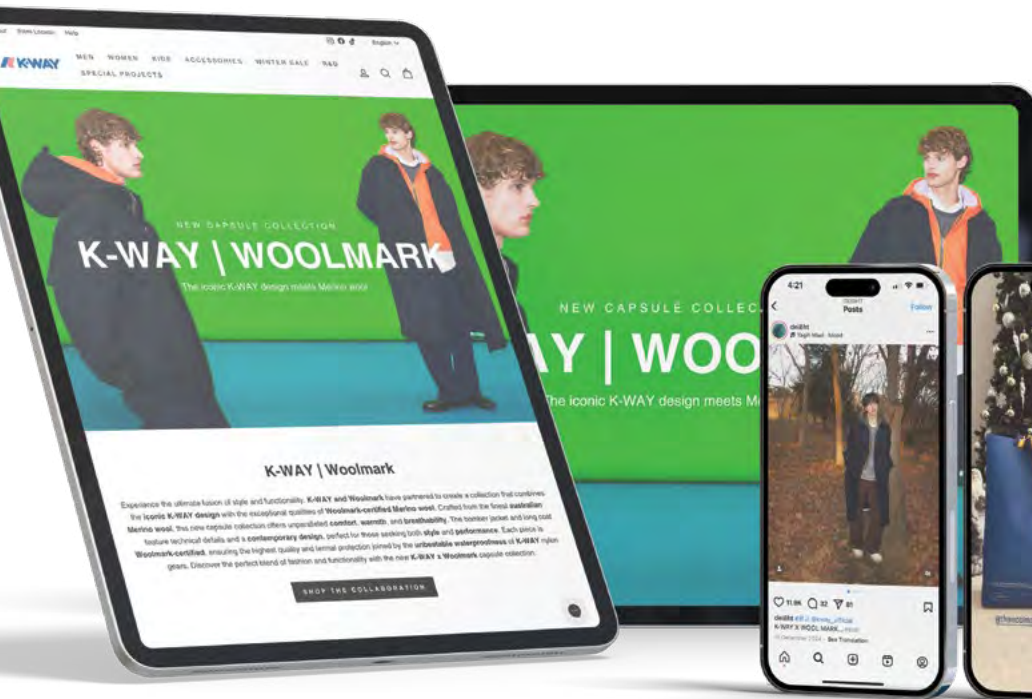
Saks Digital Stylist

“The store stylists told me that they didn’t understand the true qualities of wool before watching the training videos. Now it resonates with them how versatile wool can be!”

Saks Selling Initiatives

In a separate project, Senior Vice President, Fashion Director at Saks Fifth Avenue, Roopal Patel, has participated as a mentor to the finalists of the upcoming 2025 International Woolmark Prize to support them in the development of their collections and business.

K-Way® picks the Merino way



The K-Way® website featuring its Merino wool collection.

Left: South Korean social media influencer YongJin Kang (@dei8ht), who has 580,000 followers on Instagram, showcasing the K-Way® wool-rich garment.

Right: Italian influencer Luca Vezil (@lucavezil), who has 990,000 followers on Instagram, posting about the K-Way® Woolmark collaboration.

For the first time, iconic outerwear brand K-Way® has developed and launched a coat range dedicated to Merino wool, thanks to a collaboration with Woolmark.



K-Way® store window in Bologna, Italy.

Founded in France in 1965, K-Way® is a brand of outerwear that soon became famous in Europe for its classic, lightweight, waterproof jacket that can be folded and stored in a small, wearable pouch.

The brand was acquired in 2004 by Italian company BasicNet, which has transformed K-Way® into a more upmarket brand with an expanded product range, although its products still feature the practicality and functionality for which the brand is well known.

K-Way® has reached such a popularity that it is included in the Italian dictionary as a term for a waterproof jacket.

K-Way® Merino wool collection

In a bid to reduce its reliance on synthetic fibres, K-Way® has chosen Australian Merino wool for a new range in its latest Autumn/Winter collection. Launched in November, the Woolmark-certified wool-rich collection features a men's bomber jacket, a long coat for men and long coat for women, all of which give a nod to the unmistakable style of the iconic K-Way® rain jacket.

K-Way®'s partnership with Woolmark reinforces the brand's commitment to innovation and the use of technical fabrics. The new collection is designed to highlight the inherent natural quality and performance benefits of Merino wool.

As well as being available to purchase online, the collection is available in stores in Italy, France, the Benelux region, Japan and South Korea.

Promotion of the collection

The collection has been promoted via a digital and social media campaign, with a promotion on the home page of the K-Way website, a special landing page where customers can buy the product, and a dedicated e-newsletter was sent to K-Way®'s quarter of a million subscribers.

There were also window displays in K-Way®'s flagship stores showcasing the products, the natural origin of the fibre, and the Woolmark logo.

"Woolmark's collaboration with K-Way® has created cutting-edge products that combine the practicality of K-Way's designs with the natural properties of Merino wool," said AWI Regional Manager, Central & Eastern Europe, Francesco Magri.

"The joint project has been successful in educating consumers about the performance benefits and eco-credentials of wool, built the reputation of the Woolmark logo and, importantly, driven sales of wool product."

MORE INFORMATION

k-way.com/pages/k-way-woolmark

Italian sporty-chic style made with Merino

Daema is a young Italian sportswear brand for women who love a timeless, sophisticated and sporty-chic style. Daema has chosen to use primarily Merino wool, not only for its high performance but also because the brand says it represents a declaration of trust in nature.

Founded in 2020 in Bergamo, near the Italian fashion capital of Milan, Daema crafts sportswear primarily for tennis and golf but also for everyday fitness and lifestyle activities.

Daema CEO and co-founder Daniela Manzoni says the brand combines her two passions of fashion and sport. She grew up in a family of fashion entrepreneurs, with parents who she says were the epitome of good taste and sober elegance; and Daniela loves tennis, which she has played from a young age.

Daema's garments are made almost exclusively from Merino wool, a fibre the brand has chosen for its combination of high performance and sustainability. The fabric is made from 96% Merino wool with 4% elastane to add an extra bit of stretch. The fabric provides the brand's clothing with comfort, freedom of movement and impeccable style.

The garments include sophisticated, sporty dresses and a skirt and top with petals, plus a jumper, polo shirt, tank top, shorts, and cropped leggings. The cuts, lengths and fit of each piece are designed to emphasise the natural beauty of every woman and make her silhouette feminine.

"Daema's Natural WoolFeeling collection is entirely made of Merino wool jersey to allow the athletes to rediscover the value of wearing noble natural fibres with high-performance properties. Perfect for sport!" Daniela said.

"The feeling I get when I wear my Daema garments for a tennis match is incredible: although wool is often associated with warmth, in reality Merino wool feels as fresh as cotton to the touch and on the skin, providing a sensation of lightness and freshness even on the hottest days."

The garments are made entirely in Italy, a country with a heritage of craftsmanship and style.

Daema and Woolmark: quality and eco-responsibility

All the garments in Daema's Natural WoolFeeling collection are Woolmark certified.

"In an era where the concept of luxury is being redefined and the fashion industry's environmental impact is under increasing scrutiny, Daema and Woolmark stand out for their shared mission: to elevate fashion towards a new balance between style, innovation and respect for the planet," Daniela said.

"Our relationship with Woolmark is not just a strategic alliance but a convergence of values, a mutual commitment to promoting fashion that respects and celebrates the environment."



Daema's Merino wool top with petals, designed for tennis (top) and its Merino wool midi dress designed for golf.

Daniela says Daema's philosophy is rooted in the belief that natural materials such as wool can offer a valuable and sustainable alternative to an industry dominated by fast fashion.

"Our choice of Merino wool is no coincidence: it represents a declaration of trust in nature. Merino wool is much more than a highly performing material. Each thread tells a story: that of the woolgrowers who produce it with sustainable techniques, its bond with the land, and its ability to transform nature into a lasting resource," she said.

The brand's garments are sold via the Daema website, which highlights the natural performance benefits of Merino wool and the value of the brand's relationship with Woolmark.

[MORE INFORMATION
daema.it](https://www.daema.it)

"Daema has sustainability and circularity in its DNA. Care for the environment starts through the choice of raw materials."

Daniela Manzoni,
Daema CEO and co-founder



Aclima Wool Weekend promotion in Oslo

Woolmark recently supported a three-day Aclima Wool Weekend event in Oslo to promote sales of the Norwegian brand's Merino wool apparel at outdoor retailer Naturkompaniet in the Nordics.

Founded in 1939, Norwegian company Aclima is a Woolmark licensee that specialises in making innovative and functional Merino wool clothing for the outdoor sports market.

In September, Woolmark supported an initiative between Aclima and outdoor retailer Naturkompaniet to increase consumer awareness of the natural and performance benefits of Merino wool and, importantly, increase sales of Merino wool clothing.

Naturkompaniet (which translates as Nature Company in English) has more than 50 stores in Sweden and Norway

Naturkompaniet store staff (wearing wool T-shirts with the Woolmark logo) advising customers about Aclima's range of Merino wool products at the Aclima Wool Weekend event held in Oslo, Norway.



as well as an online store. It is owned by the Fenix Outdoor group which also owns outdoor retailers Friluftsland in Denmark, Partioaitta in Finland, Globetrotter in Germany, and Trekitt in the UK. Fenix also owns several outdoor brands including Fjällräven.

A highlight of the in-store and digital campaign was a three-day consumer-focused event titled Aclima Wool Weekend x Naturkompaniet x Woolmark held in Naturkompaniet's store in Oslo, Norway, to promote the benefits of wearing wool,

how to take care of wool garments, the meaning of Woolmark certification and, importantly, increase sales of Aclima's wool products.

Naturkompaniet shop floor staff were trained about

wool, Woolmark certification, and the Aclima wool products, so they could advise customers with confidence. Promotional displays were also placed in highly visible areas of the store to promote wool.

In addition to the retail event, 200 guests attended an inspiring lecture by Norwegian explorer and national hero Jens Kvernmo, who told the audience about his travels in Greenland, Canada and Mongolia, and also talked about the advantages of wearing Merino wool on his expeditions.

Famous Norwegian adventurers and wool ambassadors Stine Mikalsen and Karen Kyllèsø were also present. In January, 21-year-old Karen Kyllèsø made history by becoming the youngest person to ski solo and unsupported to the South Pole. She undertook her journey while wearing Aclima's wool gear, which she promoted on her Instagram channel (@friluftsjenta) – see page 58.

Woolmark Marketing Manager AGS and Nordics, Nicki Arndt, says the collaboration between Naturkompaniet, Aclima and Woolmark was a great opportunity to increase consumer awareness about Merino wool, promote Aclima's commercially available wool products at retail, and strengthen Woolmark's presence in the Nordics market.

"Aclima is a highly recognisable brand in the market which is very supportive of our aim to promote the natural benefits of Merino wool and the meaning of quality behind the Woolmark brand," Nicki said. "The multi-collaboration also gave us an introduction to the Fenix Outdoor group with which we can hopefully build a strong relationship and collaborate further with Naturkompaniet and its other brands which are leading players in the outdoor and travel market."

Aclima wins True Scandinavia Award

In December, Aclima was presented with the prestigious 'True Scandinavia Award' at the Scandinavian Outdoor Awards for its WarmWool Motion Roll Neck, which was launched in October. This 100% Merino wool product, for men and women, is a slim fit top with a high collar that is suitable as a base-layer on cold days for activities such as hiking and cross-country skiing.

The WarmWool fabric is jacquard knitted, providing exceptional stretch and comfort as well as effectively managing moisture so the wearer is never too hot or cold. The garment also has an extended back panel for extra coverage and flatlock seams to prevent chafing and enhance comfort.

The fabric has a unique pattern that is inspired by dynamic shapes and lines found in nature, like snowdrifts formed by the wind or annual rings in a tree trunk. The appealing design makes it perfect for relaxing after being active. During production, Aclima cuts the fabric as efficiently as possible meaning the pattern will vary from garment to garment, making every product unique.

The Scandinavian Outdoor Awards jury stated: "For Scandinavians, being outside is not just an activity, it is part of their lifestyle and heritage. The WarmWool Motion Roll Neck is a great example for this true Scandinavian mindset since it is more than just another top made from Merino wool. Thanks to its jacquard knitted, super stretchy and cozy fabric it hugs the body like a second skin, allowing you to move freely."

Aclima's award-winning 100% Merino wool WarmWool Motion Roll Neck top.



MORE
INFORMATION
aclima.com

High-performance wool fabrics showcased

AWI subsidiary Woolmark successfully raised awareness of the performance benefits of Australian wool at the recent Functional Fabric Fair trade show in Portland, Oregon, which is an important destination for the textile trade to source fabrics for outdoor, sports and lifestyle apparel.

Located in northwestern USA, Portland is an epicentre for the sports and outdoor apparel industry, with the likes of Nike, adidas and Columbia all headquartered there. Portland is also the location of one of the most important global trade shows for the industry, Functional Fabric Fair.

Held over three days in November, the trade show featured more than 330 suppliers showcasing their latest innovations in high-performance fabrics for the 2025/26 autumn and winter seasons. The event attracted a record number of attendees, including CEOs, designers, sourcing and material managers, and product development executives from global brands and retailers.

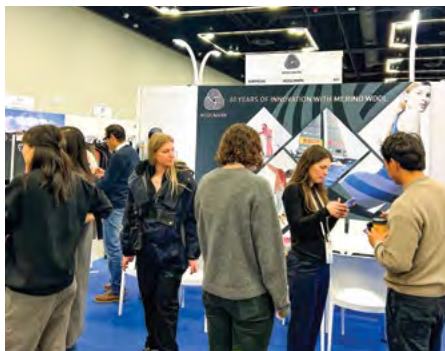
Promoting Australian wool

It is vital for the Australian wool industry that its fibre is well represented at this important trade show for the sports and outdoor apparel industry. Woolmark therefore exhibited at the show to engage with and help inspire the supply chain to include Australian wool in their upcoming collections.

“Functional Fabric Fair was a valuable way for Woolmark to increase awareness and demand for Australian Merino wool by promoting the natural and performance benefits of the fibre, by showcasing commercially available wool fabrics, and educating attendees about the services that Woolmark offers,” explained said AWI Trade & Education Extension Manager Americas, Angela Jabara.

“Our presence at the show was an important source of leads for business development. It enabled in-depth discussions and connections with the supply chain to bring wool to the forefront of their minds at a time when they are considering fibre and fabric choices for their future collections and product ranges.”

Merino wool is the ideal performance fibre due to attributes such as softness next to the skin, breathability, thermoregulation, elasticity and odour resistance. Furthermore, in contrast to synthetic fibres, wool is a natural, renewable and biodegradable fibre.



A hive of activity at the Woolmark booth at Functional Fabric Fair trade show in Portland, Oregon.

Engaging with the textile trade

The Woolmark booth at the show featured The Wool Lab sourcing guide to the world's best commercially available wool fabrics and yarns, including its new ‘Unrivalled’ theme book containing 118 wool fabric swatches for active sports to lifestyle – see woolmark.com/thewoolab. Another highlight of the booth was a display of the Merino wool-rich uniforms of the

Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli sailing team.



The Wool Lab ‘Unrivalled’ theme book containing 118 wool fabric swatches for active sports to lifestyle.

Wool education at University of Oregon

The AWI Americas’ team took the opportunity of being in Oregon to host an event exploring wool, sustainability, and market intelligence at University of Oregon, an institution renowned for its textile and sport product design expertise. During this visit, they also met with key faculty and toured the school’s new Innovation Building. The activity provided a great opportunity to further grow Woolmark’s relationship with this important university.

The event began with Woolmark providing information on the unique benefits of wool and its sustainability credentials. Students then watched the Woolmark’s latest eco campaign videos and joined in a lively discussion on sustainability and how they approach sustainable fashion.



AWI Business Development (Sports & Performance) & Sustainability Manager, Americas, Monica Ebert, giving a presentation about wool to students.

Top outdoor lifestyle brand in China chooses Merino

Outdoor lifestyle brand Aigle has launched Woolmark-certified Merino wool base-layers in China for the very first time.

In China, outdoor lifestyle brand Aigle has become a Woolmark licensee and, for the first time, launched a 100% Merino wool base-layer range during the recent autumn/winter season.

Founded in 1853 in France, Aigle has grown into a global clothing and accessories brand present in more than 20 countries across Europe, Asia and America. Aigle is part of MF Brands Group which also owns brands such as Lacoste and Gant.

In 2005, Aigle and Chinese sports company Li Ning formed a joint venture to establish Aigle in China. Today, Aigle has more than 200 physical stores across the country and an e-commerce presence that together achieved sales worth A\$277 million for the brand in the past year.

An example of a display promoting the Merino wool apparel in Aigle's Chinese stores.



The Merino wool apparel was also available to purchase on Aigle's website in China.

Aigle's first-ever wool base-layers

Reinforcing the brand's dedication to producing premium products that combine style, performance, and sustainability, Aigle in China recently launched a collection of long-sleeve base-layers for men and women, all crafted from 100% superfine Merino wool of 16 to 17.6 microns.

This new collection is Aigle's first foray into incorporating Merino wool into its autumn/winter base-layer apparel.

All the garments in the collection are Woolmark certified. Aigle in China last year joined the Woolmark Certification Program as a demonstration of its strong commitment to quality and excellence.

Staying true to Aigle's signature minimalist design ethos, the collection showcases timeless styles that are versatile enough for everyday wear, travel, or relaxing at home. With the added convenience of being machine-washable, the products combine fashion and functionality.



Promoting Merino in a growing market

Through a strategic marketing collaboration with Woolmark, Aigle launched the collection at the beginning of December. The Woolmark Merino Perform logo was prominently displayed in all the marketing.

The campaign included a digital and social media strategy that pointed consumers to the Aigle website that contains special imagery and information about the garments to encourage purchases.

The brand's physical stores featured eye-catching wool displays that highlighted the superior quality of the fibre and the wool garments, thereby enriching the overall consumer experience.

"By harnessing the reputation and strong presence of the Aigle brand in the outdoor and sports sector, the marketing collaboration elevated consumer awareness of Merino wool's performance benefits, and also bolstered recognition and purchases of Aigle's Woolmark-certified products," said AWI Country Manager China, Jeff Ma.

"It was important to ensure Aigle's first steps with Merino wool in the market were successful. We hope that the brand will explore further market opportunities with the fibre and expand its Merino wool product range in future seasons.

"In the past decade, China's outdoor and sports apparel market has increased massively, a growth that seems set to continue. Last year's Paris Olympics saw a surge of enthusiasm among Chinese consumers for performance apparel. Our aim is to make sure that Merino wool is well represented in this market."

MORE INFORMATION
aigle.com.cn

Woolona strides ahead with Merino activewear

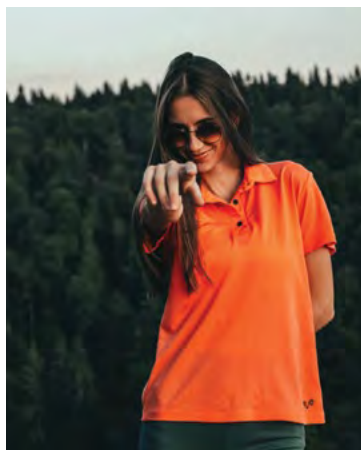
Turkish activewear brand Woolona is a long-term Woolmark licensee that specialises in garments made from Australian Merino wool. In December, the brand's new Merino Polo Shirt won a prestigious ISPO Award for its sustainability, functionality and fashion appeal.



Woolona's Brant long sleeve base-layer made from 100% Australian Merino wool.

Woolona is the activewear brand of Hasyün, a next to skin knitwear manufacturer that was established in 1952 in Turkey. The company has been a Woolmark licensee since 1993 and proudly produces its apparel using Australian Merino wool.

Hasyün specialises in the knitting of wool and wool blend underwear for the local Turkish market, while its Woolona brand sells its range of wool base-



Woolona's award-winning Merino Wool Polo is made from 100% Merino wool.

layers, mid-layers and accessories into global sports, outdoor and casual markets.

As well as being very active in the Turkish market, the Woolona brand

has a big presence in Germany and other European countries and the US. Woolona also manufactures products for other international brands. It sources its Merino wool yarn from spinners such as Südwolle and Italfil.

"We knit wool and wool blends in a variety of weights which enables us to create a wide range of products for all seasons. The Woolmark certification

of Woolona products provides our customers with an extra assurance of our products' quality," said Woolona CEO, Ahmet Yibar.

"We pride ourselves on showcasing the natural source, beauty and benefits of Australian Merino wool to consumers. By using high-quality yarns and fabrics and cutting-edge machinery, we believe we are setting new standards in sustainable textile design, as exemplified by our award-winning Merino Wool Polo."

Having a strong local manufacturing industry, Turkey is an important country in which AWI and Woolmark work to build the awareness and use of Australian wool. Turkey also benefits from its proximity to European retail markets as well as from its own domestic market that is increasingly sophisticated.

Woolona's Merino Wool Polo wins ISPO Award

Woolona's Merino Wool Polo was launched in August last year. It is made from 100% Australian Merino wool that Woolona has crafted into a high-quality, 170 gsm fabric with a 'pique' structure.

A pique fabric has a tiny waffle pattern that is ideal for polo shirts and is normally created with a cotton yarn. However, Woolona's use of a 100% Merino wool pique fabric combines the customary durability of a pique structure with Merino wool's renowned natural qualities including comfort, breathability, temperature regulation and odour resistance.

Retailers benefit by offering a product that merges functionality and elegance, while customers enjoy a shirt that stays fresh for multiple wears during outdoor

adventures or more casual occasions.

"This shirt embodies the perfect synergy of form and function, offering day-long freshness," said Radovan Kovac, an adventurer involved in its development.

The Merino Wool Polo recently won a prestigious award from ISPO, the leading international sporting platform that helps connect businesses in the industry. ISPO Awards highlight the latest global trends and innovations in product design and materials. By winning the ISPO Award, the Woolona

product was showcased at ISPO Munich, the world's foremost trade show for the sports industry, which attracted 55,000 international attendees in December.

The ISPO Award Jury noted in particular the garments's natural climate control, comfort and elegant pique knit design.

"The ISPO Award confirms our dedication to innovation and quality, inspiring us to explore new paths," said Woolona's Ahmet Yibar.

"An innovative use of Merino wool for everyday needs. The pique knit design adds a unique touch to the polo shirt – no blend, just pure Merino knit. A sustainable textile that combines outdoor functionality with fashion appeal."

ISPO Award Jury

[MORE INFORMATION
woolona.com](https://www.woolona.com)

Fleece to Fashion on parade at Armidale

The Fleece to Fashion Awards in 2024 returned to its home of Armidale, the geographic centre of the New England superfine wool-growing region, for a spectacular fashion parade of wool garments created by designers from across the country. The 2024 Awards had the highest number of entrants for many years.

Based in the New England region of NSW, the Fleece to Fashion Awards is an annual competition that promotes the unique, versatile and sustainable qualities of Merino wool, while celebrating fashion designers from across Australia who embrace the fibre in their collections.

The Awards are run by Fleece to Fashion, a community-based not for profit company in Armidale that aims to educate and inspire the next generations of designers to continue to experiment and explore the many qualities Merino wool has to offer. The Awards are sponsored by AWI along with local businesses and woolgrowers.

The Main Pavilion of the Armidale Showground was the venue for this year's Fleece to Fashion Awards which were held on 16 November. Hosted by AWI Program Manager – Education Extension, Kelly Mcavoy, the event was a hugely successful gathering for woolgrowers, fashion designers, the New England community, and wool industry stakeholders. Rams from

Shalimar Park Merino Stud were also on display to highlight the natural source of Merino wool fibre.

AWI Industry Immersion award

After a parade of wonderful wool designs in front of a packed venue, the highlight of the night was the presentation of the Supreme Award of the competition, the AWI Industry Immersion, to young Sydney-based designer Angelica Kilkolly.

The AWI Industry Immersion will this year take place in Tokyo and Seoul where Angelica will receive a complete wool supply chain induction, dive into wool manufacturing and learn about the vibrant fashion and retail landscapes of Japan and South Korea.

Graduating at the end of 2023 with a Bachelor of Design in Fashion and Textiles from University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Angelica has a love for knitwear exemplified by the range of techniques used in her winning designs – see the below image.

“I love working with wool because of its properties, versatility, and sustainability. As designers and consumers, it's essential that we consider the environmental impact of the clothing we create and wear. Wool, being renewable, biodegradable, and requiring fewer resources to produce compared to other materials, is a perfect example of how fashion can embrace both innovation and sustainability,” Angelica said.

Since graduating, Angelica has tutored at UTS and is currently working as a seamstress/designer at Australian made sustainability label Re/lax Remade. In March last year, Angelica attended AWI's Incubation Lab

workshop for emerging Australian and New Zealand fashion designers.

The Supreme Award was presented to Angelica by AWI General Manager, Processing Innovation & Education Extension, Julie Davies, who was very impressed with the level of design talent entering the Awards.

“It is fantastic to see at these Awards such an exceptional showcase of the potential of Merino wool in fashion and textiles,” Julie said.

“It has been such an incredible opportunity to come to Armidale and connect with the welcoming community at the heart of our wool industry. It's so inspiring to witness firsthand the passion and dedication behind this incredible, natural resource.”

Angelica Kilkolly

“Having this type of event in Australia where the wool is grown with passion, and seeing the students design with passion, is very inspiring. The message I always give to young designers in Australia is that the best wool comes from your nation,

treasure it, nurture it and push it out to the globe so others can truly appreciate this incredible fibre.”

Awards nurture the next generation

The Fleece to Fashion Awards were judged this year by Australian fashion designers Akira Isogawa and Jonathan Ward, and AWI's Business Development Manager – Fashion and Product for Australia and New Zealand, Clementine Hurley.

The Awards were open to three categories of designers: established designers, tertiary students and secondary school students. As well as awards for each of these three categories, there were also ‘innovation awards’ for knitted and crochet creativity, colour and dyeing technique, use of sustainable processes, cutting edge design, use of recycled/re-purposed wool, and innovative use of wool.

In addition to the AWI-sponsored Supreme Award, the other major awards were the Akira Isogawa Mentorship award, the Fleece to Fashion Fostership award in honour of Fleece to Fashion founder Liz Foster, and a Wool Producer's Pick award.

Winner of the AWI Industry Immersion Award **Angelica Kilkolly** (centre) with models wearing the winning wool garments. From the left: jacquard knit jumper and skirt, twisted knit maxi dress and rib knit bolero, intarsia knit cardigan, and punchcard knit tracksuit set.



The Hanson Bay Wrap (left) and the Willson Rib Beanie (right) all made from 100% superfine Merino wool from by Kangaroo Island Wool.



Kangaroo Island Wool traceable Merino garments

From sheep to shelf. Kangaroo Island Wool uses superfine Merino wool from its woolgrower owners to produce a range of garments and accessories at the company's own mill on the Island.

In 2011, two Kangaroo Island veterinarians Greg Johnsson and Deb Lehmann teamed up with local woolgrowers to form Kangaroo Island Wool, a company originally set up to market the best of the Island's wool to discerning international buyers.

Kangaroo Island Wool builds on the long history of wool-growing on the Island which began in 1836, and is dedicated to maintaining the long-held reputation of its wool for quality.

Through regular monitoring and reporting, Kangaroo Island Wool says it works hard to ensure that best practice management is maintained by the company and its woolgrowers regarding, for example, sheep health and welfare, producing a quality fibre, and care for environment.

Today, the company is owned by 23 farming and veterinary families, who collectively grow about one third of the Island's total wool and 40% of its fine Merino wool.

Kangaroo Island Wool products

As the tourism industry on Kangaroo Island began to flourish in recent years, Kangaroo Island Wool saw an increased level of interest from visitors in the Island's farming. Recognising there was a demand for Island-grown wool garments, the company set up a wool mill to process its farmers' raw wool and manufacture it into garments and accessories.

It now produces a range of products, all crafted from 100% superfine Merino wool. Everything in the showroom is knitted on Kangaroo Island and Kangaroo Island Wool is now proudly processing wool from its owners, from scouring to yarn onsite.

Only the very best portion of the total wool clip is devoted to the production of the Kangaroo Island Wool range of products. The company can trace the wool from its Island home all the way through production.

The company's garments currently include a wrap, poncho, jumper, vest and T-shirt, and accessories including a scarf, beanie, mittens and headband. Knitting yarn is also available to purchase. A recent addition to its range is a unique blanket featuring a unique Kangaroo-inspired intarsia design.

All the products are knitted on Kangaroo Island, most recently using a newly purchased Shima Seiki WHOLEGARMENT® knitting machine that enables the production of seamless garments.

The company also retails premium quality quilts, filled with pure fine Merino wool from the Island, which are manufactured in Melbourne.

Mill tours and showroom

Since January 2024, the company has run guided tours of its working wool mill to increase the profile of the company and to connect consumers to the origin of the wool fibre.

The immersive 75-minute mill tour starts with an impressive cinematic experience hosted in Australia's only nine-metre 360° 'igloo dome'. Inside the dome, visitors virtually view wool-growing farms, the inside of a working shearing shed, and explore the history of Kangaroo Island from its early settlers through to today's woolgrowers.

After this one-of-a-kind experience in the dome, visitors embark on a fully guided tour through the working mill, from the scouring of raw fibre through to the knitting of finished garments. Two tours are held daily and bookings are essential.

Alongside its mill, Kangaroo Island Wool also has a showroom that stocks its wool products available to purchase. All its products are also available to buy online via its website.

MORE INFORMATION
kangarooislandwool.com

Market intelligence report

Here we look at changes in the production volumes of Australian wool and where those changes are most pronounced, China's dominance as an export destination of Australian wool, and we take a special look at India.

Australian wool production volume by weight

Table 1. Australian wool production for the season up to the end of January

	2024/25 (tonnes)	2023/24 (tonnes)	YOY difference (tonnes)	YOY difference (%)	% of national 2024/25 total
New South Wales	68,916	73,141	-4,225	-5.78%	39.7%
Victoria	39,592	41,724	-2,132	-5.11%	22.8%
Western Australia	27,865	35,017	-7,152	-20.42%	16.1%
South Australia	26,408	30,884	-4,476	-14.49%	15.2%
Tasmania	5,843	6,559	-716	-10.92%	3.4%
Queensland	4,905	5,367	-462	-8.61%	2.8%
TOTAL	173,529	192,692	-19,163	-9.94%	100%

Australian Wool Testing Authority (AWTA) Key Test Data for the 2024/25 season up to the end of January shows that the volume of Australian wool tested dropped by almost 10% compared to the volume tested during the same seven months of the previous season, which is a decrease of just over 19,000 tonnes or about 106,000 bales.

If the average monthly volume tested so far was applied to the whole 2024/25 season, the annual figure would be about 297.5 mkg, a shortfall of 11.1% on the previous season. This would see 1,662,000 bales flow through the AWTA for the season.

The largest drops in wool production have been in Western Australia and South

Australia. Whilst adverse climatic conditions have played a major role in the reductions of wool being grown, Western Australia has additionally been influenced by government legislation which has forced landowners there to assess the inclusion of sheep in their enterprises going forward.

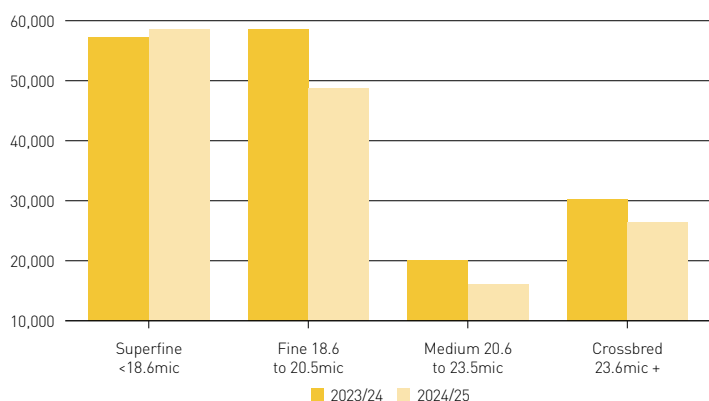
The production volumes of the two largest wool producing states, New South Wales and Victoria, have been far less impacted, despite some regions in the two states experiencing continuing dry conditions. Even though both of these two states have less wool being tested, the losses are restricted to about half of the national 12.0% fall predicted by the Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee

(AWPFC) in its December report. This is somewhat helping hold overall Australian volumes.

The latest AWPFC forecast of shorn wool production for 2024/25 is 279.4 mkg greasy, a 12.0% decrease on the 2023/24 forecast. The number of sheep shorn is forecast at 63.2 million, down 11.7%.

Australian wool production volume by micron

Figure 1: Season to season comparison (tonnes) by micron category, up to the end of December



The first six months of AWTA testing for the 2024/25 season has produced some quite unexpected results. The only category to show increased production volume is the superfine Merino sector of 18.5 micron and finer which has grown by 2.3% year on year. Dry conditions may be a prime factor, with Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria all affected.

All the other micron sectors have seen falls in production volume that exceed the current average national 9.8% loss (up to the end of December 2024) and the AWPFC full season estimate of a 12.0% loss. Fine Merino wools of 18.5 to 20.5 micron have tested 16.6% less wool so far this year; medium wools of 20.6 to 23.5 micron are down 20.1%; and perhaps the most unexpected is the coarsest wools and crossbred area of broader than 23.5 micron which is 12.7% down compared to the same stage of last season.

Australian wool exports

Table 2. Australian wool imports by country for the season up to the end of November

	2024/25 by % volume	2023/24 by % volume	YOY % difference	2024/25 by volume	2023/24 by volume	YOY % difference
China	85.8%	84.8%	1.2%	99,332,660	108,432,393	-8.4%
India	5.0%	5.1%	-2.0%	5,740,199	6,509,140	-11.8%
Italy	2.8%	3.6%	-22.2%	3,197,298	4,636,915	-31.0%
Czechia	2.7%	2.6%	3.8%	3,110,735	3,315,557	-6.2%
Others	3.7%	3.90%	-5.1%	4,337,025	4,997,709	-13.2%
			TOTAL	115,717,917	127,891,714	-9.5%

According to Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data up to end of November 2024, China remains the dominant importer of Australian wool. Compared to the same point of last season, China's **share** of all Australian wool increased by 1.2% to 85.8%, even

though the total **volume** imported by China is 8.4% lower.

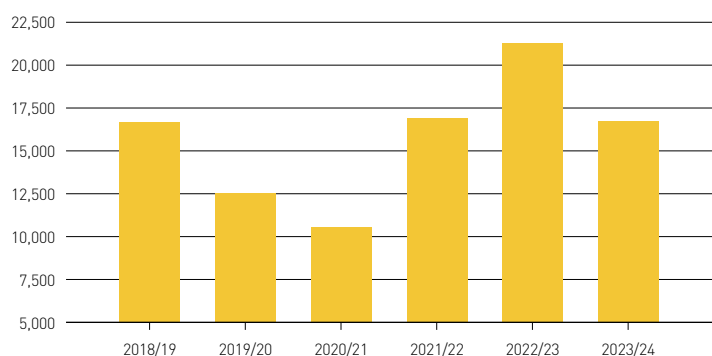
Export volumes are currently 9.5% lower than the previous season, up to the end of November, which is similar to AWTA key test data which has dropped 9.8% for the same period.

All importing nations for the first five months of the 2024/25 season have seen much lower volumes of Australian wool being imported. The largest drop off for our major manufacturers comes from the 31% less wool that Italy has imported thus far.

FOCUS ON INDIA

Trade update

Figure 2: Australian wool (tonnes) exported to India



Raw wool imports by India have surpassed pre-Covid levels to reach 92.2 million kgs in 2023-24, of which 18% is from Australia. Most wool yarn manufacturers have indicated increased enquiries and orders compared to the past 8-10 months. They hope the momentum will grow in the coming months. Indian textile and apparel manufacturers continue to receive 10-20% increased orders, mostly due to the unsure Bangladesh political situation.

Global brands see India as a reliable sourcing destination that provides

integrated sourcing solutions. The large capacity garment manufacturers are the largest beneficiaries.

Winter wear sales quickly picked up in mid-December due to a sudden drop in temperature in Northern India. This unpredictable weather impacted the inventory and sales plans of brands, as November did not have a temperature drop as expected which impacted sales which is usually at full price.

Economy update

India ranks first in terms of population and fifth in terms of economy worldwide as of

2023, according to Global Data. India's GDP growth in 2025 is estimated to be 6.4%, the fastest among all other major economies. The inflation rate currently stands at 5.22% whilst unemployment is running at about 8%.

India's economic outlook underscores changing consumer spending trends among the growing middle-income group. As middle-to high-income households see increased disposable incomes, this trend is expected to boost economic growth and consumer spending. Real household expenditure is projected to grow at an average annual rate of 6.9% in 2024-25. India intends to strengthen its global manufacturing capabilities, with planned investments set to drive economic growth.

As of December 2024, India's market capitalisation was US\$5.1 trillion. This was an 18.4% increase from 2023, making India the third-largest stock market in the world.

According to the REN21 Renewables 2024 Global Status Report, India is the world's third-largest energy-consuming nation. India is fourth globally in installed renewable energy capacity, including large hydro. Additionally, India ranks fourth in wind power capacity and fifth in solar power capacity.

Use the NWD to attract the highest price

All woolgrowers are being urged to complete the National Wool Declaration (NWD), as wool sold as Not Declared usually receives a discount. The NWD provides transparency to buyers and the whole supply chain and helps woolgrowers earn Premiums and/or avoid Discounts for their wool.

Did you know?

- To attract the highest price for their wool, all woolgrowers, regardless of their Mulesing Status and wool type, should ensure that their wool is accompanied by an NWD. Failure to complete an NWD has usually resulted in the wool being discounted.
- In the first six months of the 2024/25 season, 60.1% of all Tas wool and 56.9% of Tas Merino wool was either Non Mulesed (NM) or Ceased Mulesed (CM). Qld is not far behind, with 48.8% of all its wool either NM or CM and 48.1% of all its Merino wool either NM or CM.
- Nationally, declaration rates for NM wool continue to climb (currently 21.6% of all wool; 16.1% of Merino wool), as do the rates for Mulesed with Analgesic/ Anaesthetic (AA) wool (currently 45.0% of all wool; 52.4% of Merino wool).

The National Wool Declaration (NWD) enables woolgrowers to communicate directly with prospective buyers, processors and retailers; and them send key wool market messages back to woolgrowers.

Whenever AWI discusses the Australian wool industry's animal welfare with brands and retailers along the supply chain, they invariably say that they would very much like all Australian woolgrowers to declare their wool through the NWD; it creates two-way transparency, choice in the marketplace, and price signals back to growers.

Once a woolgrower has completed the NWD, which is voluntary, the contents are converted for inclusion in sale catalogues and test certificates. All woolgrowers are encouraged to complete the NWD, regardless of their sheep's breed and wool type, and husbandry practices.

Table 1. NWD declaration rates (%) by Mulesing Status and state for season 2024/25 for all wool (up to 30 December 2024)

Mulesing Status	NSW	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	National
NM	26.8	45.0	10.7	52.5	20.9	7.1	21.6
CM	2.4	3.8	2.7	7.6	3.2	0.7	2.5
LN	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.1
AA	45.0	33.2	56.5	26.1	48.6	36.0	45.0
M	7.1	4.6	9.2	2.2	4.9	9.4	7.2
ND	18.5	13.4	20.9	11.6	22.0	46.9	23.6
Total bales	261,883	24,056	96,039	18,774	107,643	95,626	604,021
% declared	81.5	86.6	79.1	88.4	78.0	53.1	76.4

The NWD declaration rate has increased by 0.8 percentage points in the first six months of the 2024/25 season to be 76.4% up to 30 December 2024. Three states improved their declaration rate: Tas (+3.2 percentage points), Qld (+2.7), NSW (+2.3). However, there were decreases for WA (-5.4 percentage points), SA (-1.5), Vic (-0.2). Tas woolgrowers top the list for declaration

rates at 88.4% of wool sold, followed by Qld woolgrowers at 86.6%. The WA declaration rate had the biggest decrease from an already low level, down to 53.1%.

Tas and Qld woolgrowers also top the NM categories at 52.5% and 45.0% of wool sold (which has been the case for a long time). **These two states have the most NM wool as the risk of flystrike is lower.**

Table 2. NWD declaration rates (%) by Mulesing Status and state for season 2024/25 for Merino wool (up to 30 December 2024)

Mulesing Status	NSW	Qld	SA	Tas	Vic	WA	National
NM	19.3	44.2	7.8	47.1	13.9	6.2	16.1
CM	2.9	3.9	2.6	9.8	3.8	0.7	2.8
LN	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.1
AA	55.0	33.9	62.7	33.9	61.3	37.3	52.4
M	8.4	4.7	9.4	3.0	5.6	9.7	8.0
ND	14.4	13.3	17.4	6.1	14.8	46.2	20.5
% declared	85.6	86.7	82.6	93.9	85.2	53.8	79.5

Merino wool declaration rates continue to improve nationally, up 0.7 percentage points to 79.5% for the 2024/25 season up to 30 December 2024. Three states improved their declaration rate (Merino): Qld (+2.5 percentage points), NSW (+2.0), Tas (+1.3). However, there were decreases for WA (-5.6 percentage points), SA (-1.4), Vic (-1.1). Tas woolgrowers top the list for declaration rates (Merino) at 93.9% of wool sold followed by Qld woolgrowers at 86.7% and NSW at 85.6%. The WA declaration rate (Merino) is the lowest at 53.8%.

Compared to the previous season, the national Merino clip declared as NM rose to 16.1% (up 0.8 percentage points).

All states apart from Vic and SA increased their NM declaration rate (Merino): Tas rose by 4.6 percentage points and has the highest rate of all states at 47.1%, followed by Qld which rose by 3.4 percentage points with now 44.2% (Merino) declared as NM. Both NSW and WA rose by 0.3 percentage points. Meanwhile, Vic fell by 2.4 percentage points and SA by 1.0.

Nationally, AA declarations (Merino) were up 1.5 percentage points to 52.4%. Mulesed (M) declarations (Merino) have reduced by 1.1 percentage points nationally to 8.0%. Of the Merino wool that is declared as M or AA, AA now makes up 86.5% and M now down to 13.5%.

Table 3. NWD declaration rates (%) by Mulesing Status and breed/micron (µm) for season 2024/25 (up to 30 December 2024)

Breed	Merino					Crossbred					
	Mulesing Status	<18.6	18.6-20.5	20.6-24.6	>24.6	Total	<18.6	18.6-20.5	20.6-24.6	>24.6	Total
NM		20.9	12.0	9.3	2.4	79,567	31.1	39.7	44.0	47.0	50,897
CM		2.9	2.8	2.5	0	13,900	2.9	1.0	0.8	1.5	1,493
LN		0.2	0.0	0.0	0	634	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12
AA		51.9	52.9	52.6	80.8	258,676	6.2	10.8	12.0	11.7	12,921
M		6.2	9.5	11.3	4.8	39,742	7.9	1.8	2.3	3.6	3,623
ND		17.8	22.9	24.3	12	101,471	51.9	46.8	41.0	36.2	41,085
Total Bales		242,622	201,225	50,018	125	493,990	241	1,026	23,051	85,713	110,031

Table 3 shows that, aside from the few Merino breeders with >24.6 micron wool, it is Merino breeders with lower micron wool, less than 18.6 microns, that are most likely to declare, with only 17.8% of their wool sold not declared. By breed,

the declaration rate for Merinos is 79.5%, whilst the Crossbred declaration rate is 62.7%; this appears to be a reflection of market prices as indicated in the Premium and Discount report in Table 4.

Table 4. Premiums and Discounts for Mulesing Status (c/kg clean) for the past three seasons 2022/23 to 2024/25 (comparison with declared as Mulesed) * The 2024/25 season is up to 30 December 2024.

		Merino						Non-Merino			
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	27	28	29
Non Mulesed (NM)											
Season	2022/23	25	36	15	17	19	6	0	-2	1	0
	2023/24	19	17	17	7	2		0	5	4	
	2024/25*	50	25	15	10	9			3		
Ceased Mulesing (CM)											
Season	2022/23		30	14	14	10	6				
	2023/24			9	5	2	1				
	2024/25*		22	8							
Mulesed with Analgesic &/or Anaesthetic (AA)											
Season	2022/23		19	5	9	6	4	0	0		
	2023/24			8	5	2	1	0	4	4	
	2024/25*		12	7	7	7	2		0		
Not Declared (ND)											
Season	2022/23	-39	-28	-24	-2	0	0	-4	-15	-13	
	2023/24	-15	15	-7	-5	-5	-1	-7	0	-1	
	2024/25*		-20	-15					-7		

Source: AWEX

Criteria for calculation of Premiums and Discounts (c/kg clean) for Mulesing Status:

- Australian stored; Merino adult/weaners and crossbred fleece
- >30 N/ktex, >60% Schlum Dry, <2.2 VMB, Styles 4/5, Good/light colour (incl. H1), P Certificate
- Lengths according to diameter range: 70-95 mm (<18 µm), 75-99 mm (19-21 µm), 83-104 mm (22-24 µm), 90-110 mm (26-29 µm), 100-130 mm (30-34 µm)
- Records per group (micron/NWD status) >2, empty cells when not enough data to generate a P or D.
- Comparison with prices for wool declared as Mulesed.

From a financial perspective, Table 4 shows that woolgrowers usually receive **premiums for wool declared as NM, CM or AA**. This is a greater issue for WA woolgrowers as their declaration rate is 53.1%, lower than all the other states that range from 78.0% to 88.4% wool declared.

Wool sold as ND usually receives a Discount compared to wool that is declared as M. These are the averages over the selling year and if you do mules, it

would likely be financially advantageous for you to complete the NWD and declare your wool as M, rather than not complete the NWD.

The message is clear. To ensure your wool attracts the highest price possible, you need to ensure that your wool for auction is accompanied by an NWD.

MORE INFORMATION
awex.com.au



WoolClip achieves 96.6% NWD declaration rate in 2023/24

WoolClip, the industry's electronic wool speci, achieved a major milestone in the 2023/24 season: a 96.6% NWD completion rate, compared to the national average of 75.4% for the 2023/24 season. More than 260,000 bales were processed through its digital wool book in the 2023/24 season.

The higher declaration rate is a testament to WoolClip's pivotal role in transforming wool clip information, quality assurance, and traceability across Australia.

The WoolClip platform also enhances the industry's sustainability credentials, a crucial factor as markets increasingly demand proof of environmental and ethical standards. Through features like eBale scanning and integration with the Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme (AWSS), WoolClip helps users evidence how their wool meets consumer expectations for sourcing and production.

By connecting their WoolClip account to their Australian Wool Traceability Hub profile, woolgrowers may be able to view their test data and gain insights into the buyers of their clip, depending on selling agent and buyer permissions.



Contact details:
woolclip@awex.com.au
AWEX 02 9428 6170



For further advice on achieving Premiums for your wool, contact your wool broker.

'World of wool' photo gallery

Have you got any interesting photos that you'd like to share with other readers of *Beyond the Bale*? If so, please email the image and a brief description to the editor of *Beyond the Bale* Richard Smith at richard.smith@wool.com.



The next generation

This wonderful photo shot by **Frances Terlich** of **Pleasant Hills** in the Riverina of **NSW** won first prize in the open category of People's First Bank 2024 photographic competition. It depicts one of her sons on their property cleaning up for shearing in January 2024. Frances is also a professional wedding and family photographer working in the Albury/Wodonga/Wagga region (facebook.com/francesterlichphotography and instagram.com/francesterlich_photography).



World record for Nicki Guttler

What a way to end 2024! **Lockhart** shearer **Nicki Guttler** set a new women's solo 8-hour Merino lamb world record on 21 December when she shored 450 Merino lambs shorn at Parkdale SRS Poll Merino Stud at Dubbo, NSW. In doing so, she smashed the previous record by 55 lambs. What a legend!



Record breaking journey to the South Pole with Merino wool

After solo skiing for 54 days in extreme temperatures across 1,130 km, 21-year-old **Karen Kyllèsø** (@friluftsjenta) of **Norway** in January made history by becoming the youngest person to ski solo and unsupported to the South Pole, a record she broke by an impressive six years. She undertook her journey while wearing Aclima's Merino wool gear – see page 48. “A big thank you to Aclima for keeping me warm, comfortable, and safe during my 54-day journey across the ice to the South Pole! With temperatures dropping to an effective minus 40 degrees, it's crucial to have reliable wool garments that I can trust to keep me warm and secure,” Karen said.

AWI Industry Relations Officers: Here to help

Meet the four AWI Industry Relations Officers that operate in Australia's largest wool-growing states. They each manage AWI's on the ground relationships and engagement with woolgrowers and wool industry networks in their state. You can contact them if you want to share your thoughts or need some input regarding wool-related activities and events in your state.



New South Wales
Kristen Frost

Based near Crookwell, Kristen commenced in the role in April 2023. Kristen grew up in Crookwell and has been around sheep and wool her whole life. She is a woolgrower and a partner in a Merino Stud. Kristen also has a background in rural and agricultural communications, and was previously National Sheep and Wool Writer at Fairfax Agricultural Media.

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0427 393 601



South Australia
Shannon Donoghue

Based in Jamestown, Shannon commenced in the role in April 2023. Shannon grew up on a sheep farm at Naracoorte. She went straight into the sheds after finishing school and has a background in wool classing and wool handling training with SCAA Shearer Woolhandler Training Inc. Shannon was a finalist in last year's national wool handling championship and is also the Secretary of the Sheep & Wool sub-committee of the Jamestown Show.

shannon.donoghue@wool.com
0459 293 919



Victoria
Holly Byrne

Based near Bendigo, Holly commenced in the role in July 2023. Holly grew up on her family's sheep and cropping property near Axedale, where her family still farms. She undertook a wool-classing certificate during her final years at school, starting her career in wool with a short stint in a bulk wool handling facility before then continuing a decade long career working in shearing sheds across central Victoria and Southern NSW.

holly.byrne@wool.com
0459 326 091



Western Australia
Tennille Norrish

Based in Kojonup, Tennille commenced in the role in May 2024. Tennille and her husband operate a Merino enterprise at Kojonup, WA. She is passionate about wool, the people who produce it, the people who work with it and the whole pipeline thereafter.

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0474 875 222

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