

Beyond the bale



“If you can take pressure off the sheep – and off your head – that’s a win.”

MICHAEL EDMONDS,
HAYLANDS, ARMIDALE

ISSUE 105 MARCH 2026 AUSTRALIAN WOOL INDUSTRY WOOL.COM



WOOLMARK

**Grower
led research,
shaped by
real fly pressure** PAGE 8



John Roberts
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Wool Innovation



WOOLMARK

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.

AWI's purpose is to invest in research, development, extension and marketing to enhance the profitability, competitiveness and sustainability of the Australian wool industry. Every investment AWI makes is for the benefit of Australian woolgrowers.

Woolgrowers are at the centre of our work, you are our shareholders and levy payers. The collective advancement of our great industry is why we exist. We never forget that woolgrowing is tough and complicated. Recent rains in many dry areas of SA, NSW and Victoria are welcome but follow bushfires and drought.

On the flip side the prices paid for wool has seen a long overdue improvement compared to twelve months ago.

That rise is a combination of improving demand especially in China but also the contraction in supply.

In this edition we take a deep dive on the drivers impacting the market.

Our Marketing team reports on successful campaigns in China and how it is elevating the reputation of wool among young consumers in our biggest market.

Closer to home we have stories on local brands working on everything from next to skin garments to dog beds.

Turning to research and development we have an update on the important work we are doing with the University of Adelaide on bioharvesting.

We also go to Haylands, in the NSW Northern Tablelands to talk to third-generation woolgrower Michael Edmonds who is participating in a long-term project trying to get to the bottom of flystrike and why some sheep even in the same mob are more prone. This is promising work with a cracker team from Victoria's Deakin University.

Better understanding, reducing and measuring methane from sheep is another key priority and a project we are working on.

Across the country we are proud to support School Wether Competitions a hands-on practical program giving students a chance to learn the wool industry by doing it.

This is not just a feel-good exercise but a great way to promote and develop the industry's next generation.

Last November, Jock Laurie retired as Chairman of the board after serving the company and the industry with distinction for a decade. South Australian grower and businessman, George Millington, was elected unopposed as his replacement. That change, and the election of Anthony Uren and Chris Mirams to the board, brings new ideas and approaches to the many challenges and great opportunities that are part and parcel of growing wool.

2026 is set to bring a better year for wool, and everyone who works at AWI will strive to help that happen.

This edition of *Beyond The Bale* is the first of two this year, the next will be in September – happy reading.



50 15 microns, one global story

A new collaboration between leading Italian brand Tod's and Woolmark that started with growers like Charlie Bell at Paling Yards.

CONNECT WITH AWI

AWI website
wool.com

- AustralianWoolInnovation
- @AustralianWool
- woolinnovation
- AustralianWool
- @AWIWoolProduction

AWI e-newsletters

Subscribe to AWI's free e-newsletters, including the *Beyond the Bale* e-newsletter, at wool.com/subscribe

Beyond the Bale online

View *Beyond the Bale* online at wool.com/btb

AWI's The Yarn podcast

Listen at wool.com/podcast, Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

CONNECT WITH WOOLMARK

Woolmark website
woolmark.com

- thewoolmarkcompany
- @thewoolmarkcompany
- thewoolmarkcompany
- @TheWoolmarkCompany
- @TheWoolmarkCompany

Woolmark e-newsletters

Subscribe to Woolmark e-newsletters at woolmark.com/subscribe

Contents

ISSUE 105 MARCH 2026



14 A whole new world for the Merino

Crunching the numbers for wool and meat

UPFRONT

20 Nicky Lyons wears wool

Shearing the sheep, wearing the wool

24 Gabby Neal farm to fashion

Making wool for everyday wear

32 China Wool Week

How record online sales helps Australian woolgrowers

36 Wool futures

Managing risk

42 Running the distance

A marathon effort for a Woolmark-certified suit

46 Mizuno base-layers

From the wool shed to the Winter Games

54 Greenwich Pastoral

Tasmanian yarn spun with love and care

FEATURES

8 Flystrike research matters

Growers and researchers working together on a solution

12 Defending the fibre

Getting the science right on wool's true footprint

16 Remote sensing

Harnessing AgTech to measure nature

19 One pooch at a time

Wool bedding with a difference

28 Bioharvesting wool

An update on important research

31 ANTA GUANJUN

Merino wool for elite performance sportswear

38 School Wether Challenge

Out of the classroom and into the sheep yards

48 Paddock to performance

Where innovation is heading next

50 Tod's

A bomber jacket with a difference

56 Containment feeding

Hear from WA grower Simon Fowler

STAPLES

4 Market Intelligence report

Production and price analysis

52 From the ground up

The Sheep Sustainability Framework Report card

58 Resources

A cheat sheet on helpful online information

59 Get in touch

Extension Networks, social media and much more

60 National Wool Declaration

More information can mean higher prices

62 'World of Wool' photo gallery

Readers photos

Market intelligence report

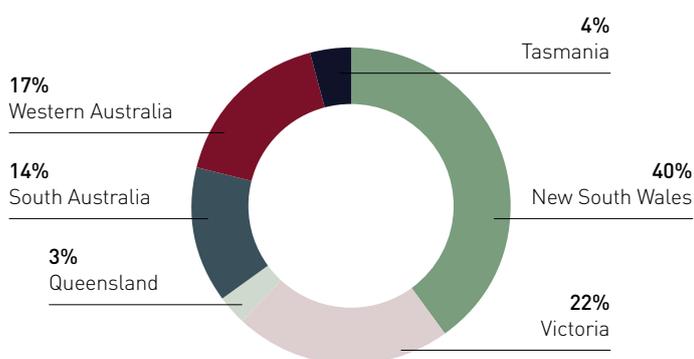
Here we look at the market's strong start in 2026 and the potential drivers impacting production and demand over the coming months.

Australian 2025–26 wool production by volume

Table 1. AWTA key test data for the 2025–26 season end January

	2025/26 (tonnes)	2024/25 (tonnes)	Tonnes difference (tonnes)	% Difference
New South Wales	62,972	68,916	-5,944	-8.62%
Victoria	34,404	39,592	-5,188	-13.10%
Queensland	4,535	4,905	-370	-7.54%
South Australia	22,480	26,408	-3,928	-14.87%
Western Australia	26,178	27,865	-1,687	-6.05%
Tasmania	5,490	5,843	-353	-6.04%
TOTAL	156,059	173,529	-17,470	-10.07%

Figure 2. AWTA state testing breakdown



All states have continued to record a downward trend in testing throughput year-to-date (ending January). Year-on-year, the largest declines were seen in South Australia and Victoria seeing 14.87% and 13.10% reductions respectively, largely due to harsh drought conditions with recent bushfire events in Victoria causing more pain for growers. New South Wales is also experiencing drought conditions particularly in Southern New South Wales, seeing a reduction of 8.62%. Seven months into the 2025/26 wool growing season has the total wool tested running 10.07% below the 2024/25 season total.

New South Wales continues as the largest wool producing state at 40%, followed by Victoria at 22% accounting for 62% of total Australian wool tested. Comparing this to the 2024/25 season, this is in line with New South Wales and Victoria finishing last season with 62% of all wool tested. Similarly, the other states remain in line with 24/25 season percentage totals.

Wool auction offering update – AWEX Auction data (as of week 31 sale)

- Offered 914,215 bales compared to the 942,043 bales offered last season. That is 27,828 bales less, or 3% less wool offered.
- Sold 853,273 bales compared to the 870,671 bales sold last season. That is 17,398 bales less, or 2% less wool sold.
- Clearance rates this season are running at 93.3% compared to 92.3% cleared over the same period last season.
- Total value sold through the auction system is A\$1,465 million, compared to A\$1,186 million last season at the same time. This is an increase of A\$279 million, or 19% higher year-on-year.

Offering statistics this season to date point to firmer wool values despite a reduction in overall supply. Looking ahead, supply constraints may become more pronounced, with AWTA testing volumes down around 10% year-on-year, while auction offerings are only 3% lower.

This divergence is most evident in Western Australia, where auction offerings are up 3.5% year-on-year, yet testing volumes remain down 6%. In contrast, southern auction offerings are down 6.6%, while northern offerings are only 0.1% lower, reflecting the seasonal growing conditions.

The data suggests current throughput is being supported by a drawdown of broker-held stocks and previously prepared wool. As this short-term buffer is progressively worked through, tighter supply conditions are likely later in the season if testing volumes remain subdued. This prevailing supply shortage will look to underpin prices moving through the 2026 calendar year.



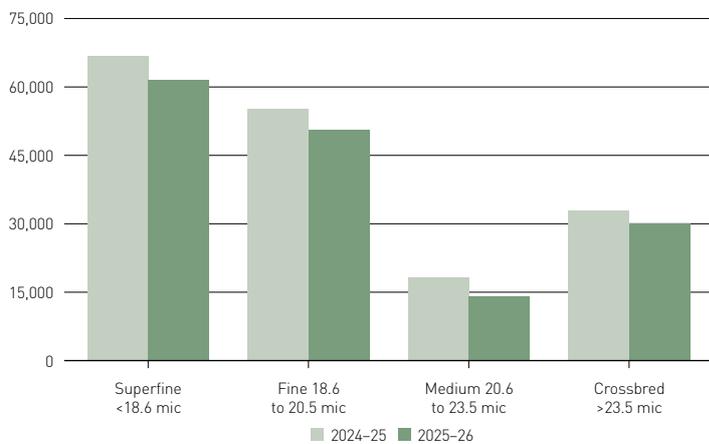
Keep up to date with AWI news. **Subscribe today.**

Monthly Woolgrower Newsletter Weekly Wool Market Report

Visit wool.com/subscribe for your free subscription

Production by micron – AWTA testing data (January)

Figure 3: Season to season production comparison (tonnes) by micron category



The largest year-on-year losses are concentrated through the 17.6–21.6 micron range, which represents the core of the Merino clip. The losses are less pronounced in the superfine Merino types. This likely reflects a shift in the clip toward finer micron under tougher seasonal conditions and/or changes in the mix of wool presented for testing. Despite this, the largest reductions remain concentrated in the core 17.6–21.6 micron range, which continues to drive the overall decline in throughput.

Australian wool exports – ABS data (2025–26 season)

Table 4. 2025/26 – July-December – Australian Wool Export Destinations. Volume (Kgs) and Value (\$)

	Volume	Value
China	88.4%	86.5%
India	5.4%	5.5%
Italy	3.3%	5.5%
Czechia	2.0%	1.4%
Others	0.9%	1.1%

Australian wool exports declined on a year-on-year basis over the July to December period, with shipment volumes down 8.9% in kgs of greasy wool. China remained the dominant destination, accounting for 88.4% of total exports, although volumes shipped declined by 6.3% compared with the same period last year. India continued to rank as the second-largest importer of Australian

wool, however volumes were down 3.8% year-on-year. In contrast, Italy recorded an increase in volumes of 6.3%, while shipments to Czechia fell sharply, declining by 23.2% year-on-year.

In value terms, Australian wool exports were 0.2% lower compared with the previous year. Export values to China have increased modestly by 3.2% year-on-year, while still accounting for 86.5% of total export value. Czechia again recorded a significant fall in value, down 19.9%. In contrast, both India and Italy posted year-on-year increases in export value of 15% and 15.9% respectively, indicating relatively firmer price outcomes in these markets despite lower or modest shipment volumes.

It is worth noting that, despite recent improvement, Italian wool imports remain well below historical trend levels in both volume and value. However, the year-on-year increases recorded in both measures point to improving demand conditions, particularly from premium wool apparel markets. This marks the first time in several years that Italy has recorded positive movements in both value and volume, providing early signs of improving offshore demand for Australian wool in this market. While higher wool prices have likely contributed to the lift in export values from relatively low levels, the 6.3% increase in shipment volumes into Italy is a positive development and suggests some gradual improvement in demand.

Twice the killing power against sheep lice.



**PURCHASE 20 x 20 L VIPER™ POUR-ON BEFORE 31/03/26
AND GET A MAXRANGER4K™ SOLAR 2 SECURITY SYSTEM
WORTH \$950 AND A FREE 60 mL VIPER POWER DOSER™!***



6
MONTH
OFF-SHEARS
LICE-FREE
GUARANTEE¹

Viper™ Pour-On contains thiacloprid, next-generation neonicotinoid chemistry that is up to 2x more powerful than imidacloprid when applied.²⁻⁵ This user-friendly, water-based formulation provides rapid knockdown control of sheep lice and protects against re-infestation for four weeks when applied within 24 hours of shearing.⁶ **Even better, Viper™ Pour-On is backed by Elanco's exclusive six-month, off-shears lice-free guarantee!**¹ Contact Elanco or your rural supplier today!

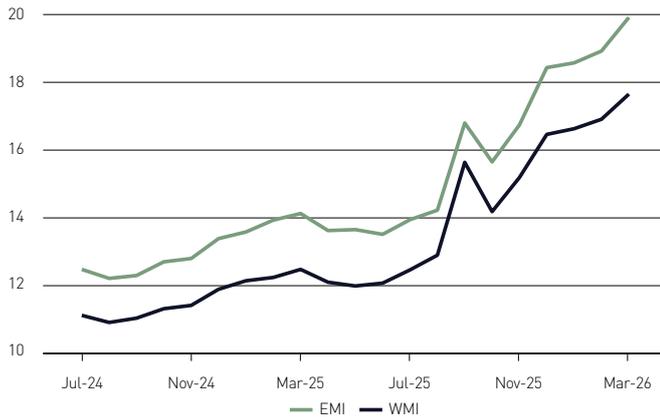
ElancoTM

farmanimal.elanco.com/au
1800 995 709

Always read and follow the label directions. Good agricultural practice is essential for optimal lice control. ^Offer valid for purchases made between 02/01/26 and 31/03/26. Offer must be redeemed by 15/04/26 and only valid while stocks last. Visit promotions.elancorewards.com.au for full terms and conditions. References: 1. Visit viperpouron.com.au for full guarantee terms and conditions and to register. You must register for the guarantee within 2 weeks of applying Viper Pour-On. 2. As formulated. 3. BAH Laboratory Study 6106008 2006. 4. BAH Laboratory Study 6108010 2008. 5. BAH Laboratory Study 6105020 2005. 6. Refer to registered label. Viper Pour-On contains 10 g/L thiacloprid. Power Doser™ is a trademark of Genesis Industries Australia. Viper™, Elanco and the diagonal bar logo are trademarks of Elanco or its affiliates. ©2025 Elanco or its affiliates. EAH25657. PM-AU-25-0728.

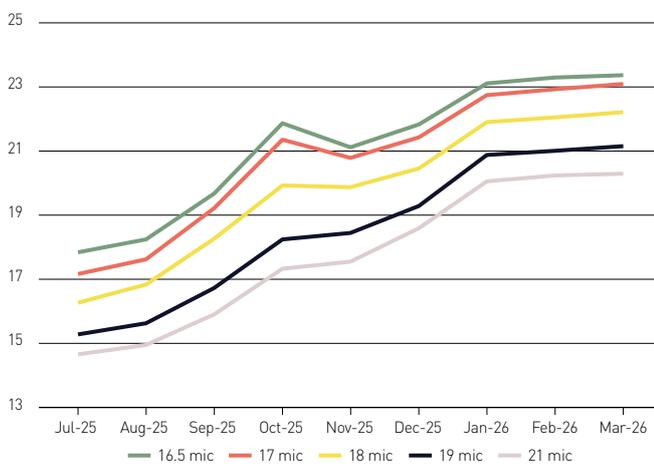
Wool pricing update – To the 36th sale week

Figure 5. 2025/26 EMI and WMI monthly price



Since the start of the current season to the 36th sale week, both the Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) and Western Market Indicator (WMI) have been well supported and have trended higher overall. By 4th March, the EMI had lifted by 45.8%, while the WMI increased by approximately 47.2% over the same period. Although both indices softened during October/November, they stabilised and strengthened into January, finishing close to seasonal highs. The strong lift through February suggests firmer market sentiment and improved buyer confidence, supported by tightening supply conditions through the auction system. However, the pace of recent gains also highlights the potential for increased short-term volatility.

Figure 6. 2025/26 season Merino wool micron pricing

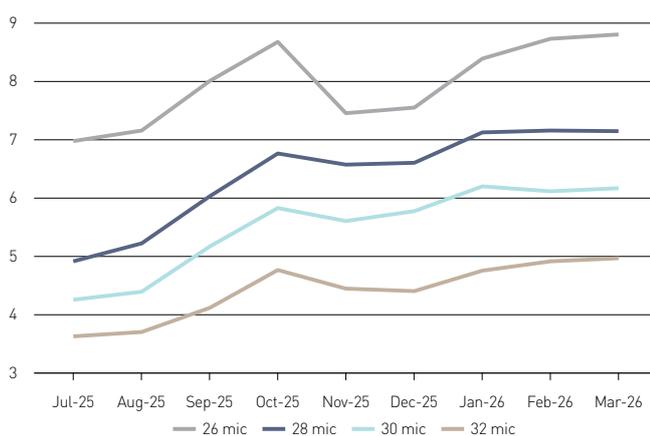


Since the start of the current season, Merino micron categories from 16.5–21 micron have recorded solid and well-supported gains. Prices lifted steadily through the early part of the season before accelerating sharply through September and October, with most microns adding around 300 to 400 cents per kilogram over that period. Following a brief consolidation in November, momentum resumed into December and January, with all microns finishing close to seasonal highs.

The strongest and most consistent gains have been evident in the core 18–21-micron range, which has improved by approximately 550 to 600 cents per kilogram season to date, reflecting strong demand for the main Merino types. On a percentage basis, 20-micron wool has been the standout performer, rising by 44%, and 19 micron at 39%. Finer microns have also lifted, with 17 micron up 35%, while 16.5 micron recorded the smallest increase at 31%.

As the Australian wool clip continues its longer-term shift finer, the price premium for superfine wool appears to be narrowing as supply increases. In contrast, medium-type Merino wools continue to perform strongly within a progressively finer national clip.

Figure 7. 2025/26 season crossbred wool micron pricing



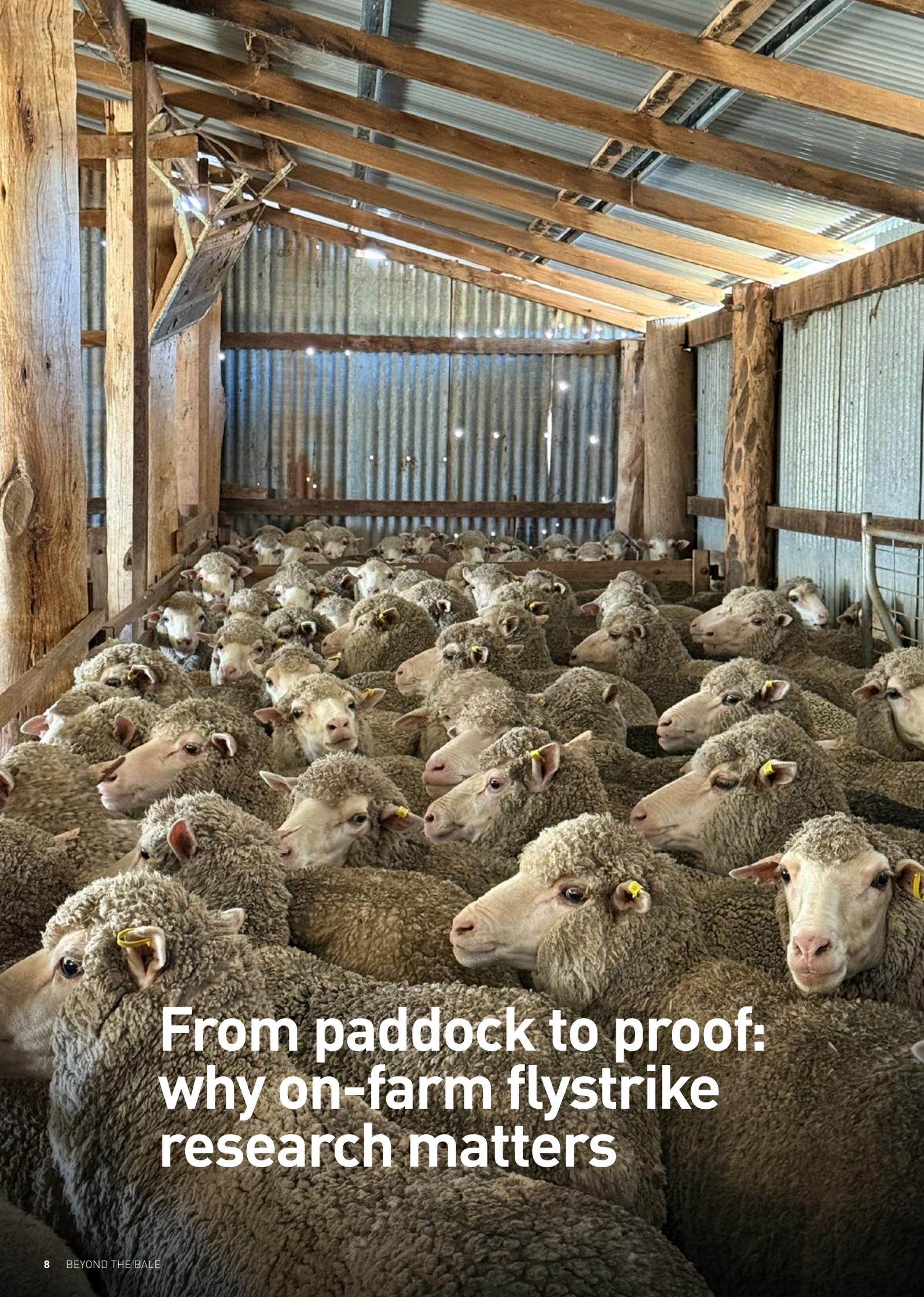
Over the past 12 months, the crossbred wool market has recorded solid price growth, largely rebounding from historically low levels. Over the last seven months, 30-micron wool has lifted by around 190 cents clean per kilogram, while 32-micron wool has improved by approximately 130 cents. On a percentage basis, 30-micron wool has recorded the strongest seasonal gain to date, rising by 45%, with 32-micron up 37%. The 28-micron category has seen more modest gains sitting 17 cents dearer. Based on AWEX average returns per head, a 5 kg 28-micron fleece at this time last year would have generated a gross return of around \$13 per head. Today, the same fleece would return around \$23 per head. Current returns mean many growers are likely now able to recover shearing costs from adult crossbred wool sheep.

Demand signals – Zhangjiagang Wool Industrial Association

During the 27th meeting of the Zhangjiagang Wool Industrial Association, industry leaders noted that recent wool price gains are increasingly being driven by underlying supply–demand fundamentals rather than sentiment. Feedback highlighted a sustained contraction in

global wool production, now translating into tighter raw material availability and lower inventories across the supply chain. From a demand perspective, while early price rises in late 2025 were met with caution, subsequent increases were seen as more fundamentally driven and

supported by genuine downstream demand. Processors also observed that downside risk for fine wool prices now appears limited, though there was broad recognition that a measured pace of price appreciation will be important to ensure the recovery remains sustainable.



From paddock to proof: why on-farm flystrike research matters

Flystrike has always been more than a line item on a farm budget. For woolgrowers, it is time, labour, stress and constant vigilance – often during the busiest and most demanding parts of the year.

Yet despite decades of management tools, treatments and workarounds, one fundamental question remains unanswered: why do flies strike some sheep – and not others – within the same mob?

That question is now being tackled where it matters most: on commercial farms, with growers at the centre of the science.

At Haylands, just outside Armidale, third-generation woolgrower Michael Edmonds is one of several producers across Australia participating in a national, multi-year flystrike research project supported by Australian Wool Innovation.

Working alongside growers is a research team from Deakin University, including Madison Bone, a PhD researcher focused on flystrike, and Dr Andrew Oxley, a senior lecturer specialising in microbes and how they influence insect behaviour.

Together, they are investigating flystrike from a different angle – not just how to manage it, but why it happens in the first place.

A working wool enterprise, not a laboratory

Haylands runs around 1,200 Merino ewes and lambs, alongside 110 prime lambs, producing an average 16-micron clip. Michael farms in partnership with his mother, Elaine, on a property that once carried more than 2,000 Merinos under his father Trevor's management.

The enterprise is based on native pasture, supported by 25 acres of oats grown on-farm to feed ewes and lambs, with hay and grain provided ahead of lambing. It is a commercial operation shaped by seasons, labour availability and real-world constraints – exactly the environment the researchers said was essential.

"I work off-farm as well," Michael explained. "So anything we do here has to fit into the routine. You can't afford things that are too complicated or time-consuming."

That practicality was one reason he agreed to take part.

Flystrike: the hidden cost

Michael has seen flystrike management change over time – and understands the true cost extends well beyond chemicals or treatments.



"Fifteen years ago, fly was constant. You were chasing sheep every week," he said. "The real cost wasn't just money. It was headspace. You were always on edge."

Breeding plainer-bodied sheep and transitioning away from mulesing around six years ago was a significant decision. While jetting remains part of the program, fly pressure today is far lower than it once was – but never absent.

"You still get some fly strike... You still have to stay on top of it. Anything that can reduce that pressure helps."

Why this research is different

Traditional flystrike controls – insecticides, husbandry interventions and physical treatments – manage the outcome, not the cause.

"A lot of the strategies we currently use don't target the root of the problem," Dr Oxley said. "They're interim solutions. They don't explain why flies are targeting certain sheep in the first place."

Woolgrower Michael Edmonds with Deakin University's Madison Bone collecting samples on farm at 'Haylands', Armidale.

"So anything we do here has to fit into the routine. You can't afford things that are too complicated or time-consuming."

MICHAEL EDMONDS,
HAYLANDS, ARMIDALE

“In a paddock full of sheep, some are struck and some aren’t,” Bone added. “And we still don’t fully understand why.”

More than 90 per cent of flystrike in Australia is caused by a single species – *Lucilia cuprina*, the familiar green-bronze blowfly. The unanswered question is why this species targets live sheep, and why certain animals within a mob are repeatedly affected.

To answer that, the team said they needed data that cannot be replicated in controlled laboratory conditions alone.

What on-farm participation actually involves

For growers like Michael, involvement is deliberately straightforward.

“They come out about four times a year,” he said. “We yard up a mob, they sample about 20 sheep, collect flies, and that’s it. Half an hour out of your day.”

Bone said that keeping the workload low was a deliberate decision.

“We already know growers are time-poor,” she said. “If participation isn’t practical, the research doesn’t work.”

From bacteria to behaviour

Early findings suggest something significant: struck sheep across Australia show surprising similarities, regardless of region, genetics or management system.

“What we’re seeing is that struck sheep tend to be more similar to each other than to healthy sheep,” Dr Oxley explained. “That suggests there’s a common mechanism at play.”

The team is investigating whether microbes living on the sheep’s skin – and inside the flies themselves – are producing chemical signals that attract blowflies.

“Just like humans, sheep and flies have complex microbial communities,” Bone

explained. “Those microbes produce chemicals, and insects are highly responsive to those signals.”

Early work has shown *Lucilia cuprina* has a distinct bacterial fingerprint compared with other fly species – a clue that may unlock more targeted control strategies.

The long-term goal is not elimination, but diversion: drawing flies away from sheep using attractants that outperform the animal itself.

“If you can reduce fly numbers on-farm by even 50 per cent, that’s a meaningful gain,” Dr Oxley said.

Why it takes time

The project runs over three years – and the researchers said that may still only be the beginning.

Fly seasons are shifting. Climate variability is changing strike patterns. In some recent seasons, strike numbers have been lower than expected, making long-term datasets even more valuable.

“We need data across multiple seasons,” Dr Oxley explained. “Short-term results don’t give growers confidence that something will work year after year.”

Bone agreed: “We want solutions that hold up across climates, regions and management systems – not something narrowly effective.”

Non-chemical options matter

For Michael, one outcome stands out.

“Non-chemical options are really important,” he said. “For the environment. For the sheep. For the future.”

Chemical resistance is already a challenge in fly populations. Behaviour-based attractants – rooted in evolution rather than chemistry – are far less likely to fail over time.

“They’re always going to be attracted to certain chemical cues,” Dr Oxley said. “That doesn’t change.”

Why grower-led research works

For Bone, working directly with woolgrowers reshaped how she approached the science.

“Being out on commercial farms changes how you think,” she said. “You gain an understanding you simply can’t get from textbooks.”

Dr Oxley said that approach reduced the risk of developing tools that failed once they left the lab.

“You can design something that looks perfect in theory,” he said, “but if it doesn’t work in the paddock, it’s useless.”

A message to other growers

Michael was pragmatic about research. He was not looking for promises – just progress.

“I want to see proof,” he said. “If it works, I’ll use it.”

Would he encourage others to get involved?

“Jump in and have a go,” he said. “It’s half an hour out of your day. And if it helps someone else down the track, that’s worth it.”



THE YARN EPISODE 282

Testing flystrike research with commercial flocks

LISTEN TODAY
wool.com/yarn

Why it matters

On-farm research is not an abstract exercise. It is how practical change happens – grounded in paddocks, seasons and people.

For Australian Wool Innovation, projects like this only succeed when growers are active partners, not passive recipients. For woolgrowers, participation helps ensure research dollars deliver tools that respect labour, animals and commercial reality.

And for flystrike – one of the industry’s most persistent challenges – the path forward may not come from the lab alone, but from the collaboration between science and the paddock.

MORE INFORMATION

wool.com/on-farm-research/flystrike-progress/

(L–R) Michael Edmonds, Armidale with Andrew Oxley, and Maddison Bone both from Deakin University



USING BUTEC® FOR PAIN RELIEF PAYS FOR ITSELF

"When we treated our lambs with Butec for the first time this year, I was amazed at how quickly they re-mothered afterwards, and the marked mob was walked 3 kms after marking and I was astounded how well the lambs travelled back to the paddock with no issues. I highly recommend this product."

Sam Mumford, Kangaroo Island



Simple, safe and sustained pain relief^{1,2} for use in all marking procedures.

TRY BUTEC® NOW

Visit butec.com.au or your local rural reseller.



References: 1. Colvin, A. October 2002. Trends in mulesing, tail docking and castration practices of Australian woolgrowers: Results of the 2021 AWI Merino Husbandry Practices Survey. AWI Project No.: ON-00829. 2. Van der Saag, D.; Lomax, S.; Windsor, P. A.; Taylor, C.; Thomson, P.; Hall, E.; and Whit, P.J. 2018. Effects of topical anaesthetic and buccal meloxicam on average daily gain, behaviour and inflammation of unweaned beef calves following surgical castration. Animal 2018 Nov;12(11):2373-2381. TR5101_092E



When sustainability claims are made, the numbers behind them matter. For woolgrowers, those numbers increasingly influence how wool is judged, compared and ultimately valued in the marketplace.

If the data is wrong or incomplete, wool can be unfairly penalised – despite being a natural, renewable fibre produced in complex grazing systems that also store carbon and support biodiversity. That's why getting the science right is critical.

Why it matters to growers

Around the world, brands, retailers and governments are tightening sustainability requirements. Many are using lifecycle assessment (LCA) data to guide sourcing decisions and product labelling.

When those assessments rely on broad global averages rather than Australian-specific data, wool can appear to have a higher footprint than it actually does. That can affect demand, market access and confidence in the fibre.

By investing in more accurate, industry-specific data, Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) is helping ensure wool is assessed fairly – and that the full picture of emissions and removals is recognised.

A fairer measure for natural fibres

AWI has worked with the Australian Meat Processor Corporation (AMPC) and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on new research that delivers a clearer, more representative picture of wool's environmental footprint.

The project has developed a new data framework that measures emissions and removals across Australia's red meat and wool industries, reflecting real production systems rather than generic global assumptions.

As brands work toward ambitious greenhouse-gas targets under initiatives such as the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), some have taken shortcuts – shifting away from natural fibres based on incomplete data.

Many existing global models fail to account for carbon stored in regenerating vegetation, or the role of well-managed grazing systems in maintaining healthy soils and landscapes.

AWI Program Manager for Eco Credentials Angus Ireland said the updated framework helps correct those gaps.

"The importance of accounting for both sides of environmental impact can't be overstated," he said. "This work improves the accuracy of greenhouse-gas reporting for wool and highlights the carbon removals happening across Australia's sheep country."

Real data, real progress

The framework, developed by Integrity Ag, allows emissions to be measured at a product level, right through to the point of sale. It also introduces national estimates for land-use change and water use, providing a more complete picture of production impacts.

For growers, the outcome is tangible.

Wool's carbon footprint has fallen 7 per cent, from 26.3 to 24.5 kg CO₂-e per kilogram of greasy wool since 2020. Sheepmeat and beef recorded similar improvements.

When industry-specific data is used, emissions are often less than half the levels shown in older global models.

Integrity Ag Chief Scientist Dr Stephen Wiedemann said the work gives the industry a stronger foundation.

"This provides the product-specific results needed for accurate benchmarking and allows industries to report progress more transparently and more often," he said.



**Defending the fibre:
getting the science right on
wool's true footprint**

Defending wool on the world stage

AWI will now incorporate the updated data into its Wool Lifecycle Assessment dataset, which is freely available to the global market.

That dataset has already been adopted as globally representative by the European Commission and France's textile-labelling system – meaning the latest improvements will flow directly into international rating schemes that influence brand decisions and consumer perception.

Angus Ireland said the benefits extend well beyond research.

“It's about ensuring that when fibres are compared, the accounting is right,” he said. “These improvements mean schemes can show not only emissions, but also removals – a complete picture of sheep-farm impacts.”

Science that backs the story

This project reinforces the role of good science in protecting wool's position as a natural, climate-relevant fibre.

By replacing one-size-fits-all assumptions with data drawn from Australian farms and processors, the industry now has the evidence to demonstrate real environmental performance.



For woolgrowers, it's reassurance that the work done on-farm – managing land, livestock and natural resources – is being properly recognised.

And as sustainability reporting becomes more regulated, both in Australia and globally, it ensures wool's true story is counted, understood and defended.

Why it matters to growers

Sustainability data is increasingly shaping how wool is assessed, compared and sourced by brands and governments.

When lifecycle assessments rely on broad global averages rather than Australian-specific data, wool can appear to have a higher environmental footprint than it actually does. That can influence sourcing decisions, product labelling and long-term demand for the fibre.

By investing in more accurate, industry-led data, AWI is helping ensure wool is measured fairly – accounting for both emissions and carbon removals. This work protects market access, supports confidence in Australian wool and ensures growers' on-farm management and environmental gains are properly recognised as sustainability reporting becomes more regulated worldwide.

SMART MODULAR SHEARING SHED FITOUTS

DESIGNED BY STOCKPRO FOR SMOOTHER SHEEP FLOW, FASTER SHEARING, SAFER HANDLING

- ✓ FRONT FILL
- ✓ REAR FILL
- ✓ RACE DELIVERY
- ✓ ANGLED CHUTE
- ✓ SLOPED FLOOR
- ✓ CATCHING PEN



Stockpro™

Livestock Handling Equipment

CALL US TODAY 1800 354 415 OR VISIT STOCKPRO.COM.AU TO SEE OUR FULL RANGE ONLINE.

At Yarrawonga in southern NSW, the Phillips family are proving the modern Merino is more than a wool sheep – it's a high-performing, dual-purpose enterprise driver. With 20,000 ewes, 3,500 lambs on feed and a strong genetic focus, they're showing how wool income can underpin feeding costs and lift whole-of-flock profitability.

Meat and wool. Genetics and growth. A Merino built for today's market.



A whole new world for the Merino

The modern Merino at work

At Yarrawonga, near Cunnigar in the South West Slopes of New South Wales, the Phillips family is showing how the modern Merino continues to fit naturally into today's mixed-farming landscape.

Across seven properties, Steve and Liz Phillips and their son Sam, the fifth generation on the land, manage 20,000 Merino ewes joined to Merino sires, another 10,000 joined to terminals, and 1,000 Angus cows.

About 2,500 acres are used for grazing crops, with Merinos remaining the main focus of the operation.

The family also sells around 600 rams each year to clients across southern and central New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania.

Built on decades of experience, the Phillips' enterprise highlights how far the Merino has come as a reliable, dual-purpose sheep delivering value from both wool and meat.

"People who used to be 40 per cent livestock and 60 per cent cropping are now 70 per cent sheep," said Steve.

"And most of those are Merinos."

Wool and meat working together

Once considered primarily a wool animal, the Merino is now firmly established as a balanced wool-and-meat proposition.

"Our Merinos make more money than our crossbreeds," Steve said.

"Mainly because of the extra income from the wool."

It's a straightforward equation. A Merino lamb can return around \$300 on carcase value and another \$80 for its fleece, while the ewe that raised it adds her own wool income to the overall return.

"It's an extremely good package, the Merino is the whole package – meat and wool," Steve said.

In some cases, Merino wether lambs are returning more than \$400 once wool and meat are combined. "The versatility of the wether is very attractive – the profit margins are so much bigger," Steve said.

"Then you have the versatility of the Merino ewe – the cull ewes can be joined to terminals for cash flow, and you still have the wool from them. She's the cornerstone of the sheep industry."

Breeding for performance

The Phillips family began moving toward the modern Merino about fifteen years ago, selecting for plainer-bodied, more fertile sheep with longer staple length and fine, soft-handling wool.

Today, the flock averages around 18-micron.



"You have to look forward, not backwards. In the Merino industry there's too much living in the past – we need to look ahead."

STEVE AND LIZ PHILLIPS,
YARRAWONGA, NSW

"You don't have to go broad to have the multipurpose Merino," said Steve.

"Early growth rates are a big factor now, and we're seeing people really focus on that."

Genetics and measurement are central to the operation. Australian Sheep Breeding Values are used to track performance and shared with commercial clients.

"Most young people want to see them now," he said.

"It's becoming more predictable – you can pick traits and growth rates. We DNA both sides, ewes and rams, and it's worth it."

Sam agrees. "We found the top one and five percentiles are the ones people are focusing on."

Wool income supporting production

At their Gundagai feedlot, where around 3,500 lambs are finished each year, the Merino's dual-purpose advantage becomes particularly clear.

"All the lambs that went into the feedlot had their feeding costs covered by their wool income," said Sam.

"The Merino wool covers the feed. That's the difference."

He says the modern Merino now performs just as well as a crossbred lamb when managed correctly.

"People just have to feed them like a crossbred. If you do, their growth rates are just as good."

The role of the Merino ewe

For the Phillips family, the Merino ewe remains central to both the enterprise and the broader sheep industry.

"You go to most enterprises that have good Merino sheep – it's their best money maker," said Steve.

"It's about the money the Merino ewe produces, and it can come from either side, wool or meat."

With both markets holding firm, Steve believes there is opportunity ahead.

"If both the meat and wool markets stay strong, I think there's every chance Merino numbers will increase again," he said.

"It's a complete package now – meat and wool. It must be seen that way."

Looking forward

Steve has watched the transformation of the breed over time.

"The world is full of grain – they can grow grain anywhere in the world," he said.

"But wool, they can't grow everywhere, and not quality wool like ours in Australia. The work that's gone into the Merino flock over the last fifty years is incredible. Everyone's micron has probably dropped two or three, and we're producing better wool than anyone else in the world."

He believes the modern Merino is now better placed than ever.

"It's a whole new market for Merinos now," he said.

"The wether lamb market hasn't been there in the past like it is now. But I don't think we've had the wether lambs we have now. There's better genetics, better feeding, better management. They're simply a more productive sheep. The wool comes off the animal where the meat is – it's a combined package."

"It's a whole new world for the Merino," he said.

"You have to look forward, not backwards. In the Merino industry there's too much living in the past – we need to look ahead."

For the Phillips family, that approach is clear – continuing to breed, feed and manage a sheep that delivers consistent returns and flexibility across a modern farming system. The Merino has once again proven itself not just as a wool sheep, but as a practical, profitable all-rounder for Australian conditions.

Remote sensing natural capital for woolgrowers

Harnessing AgTech to better measure a property's soil, water and vegetation is at the heart of this project.

It's all about unlocking more data on natural capital and how that information can help your enterprises' performance on farm to make your wool more valuable.

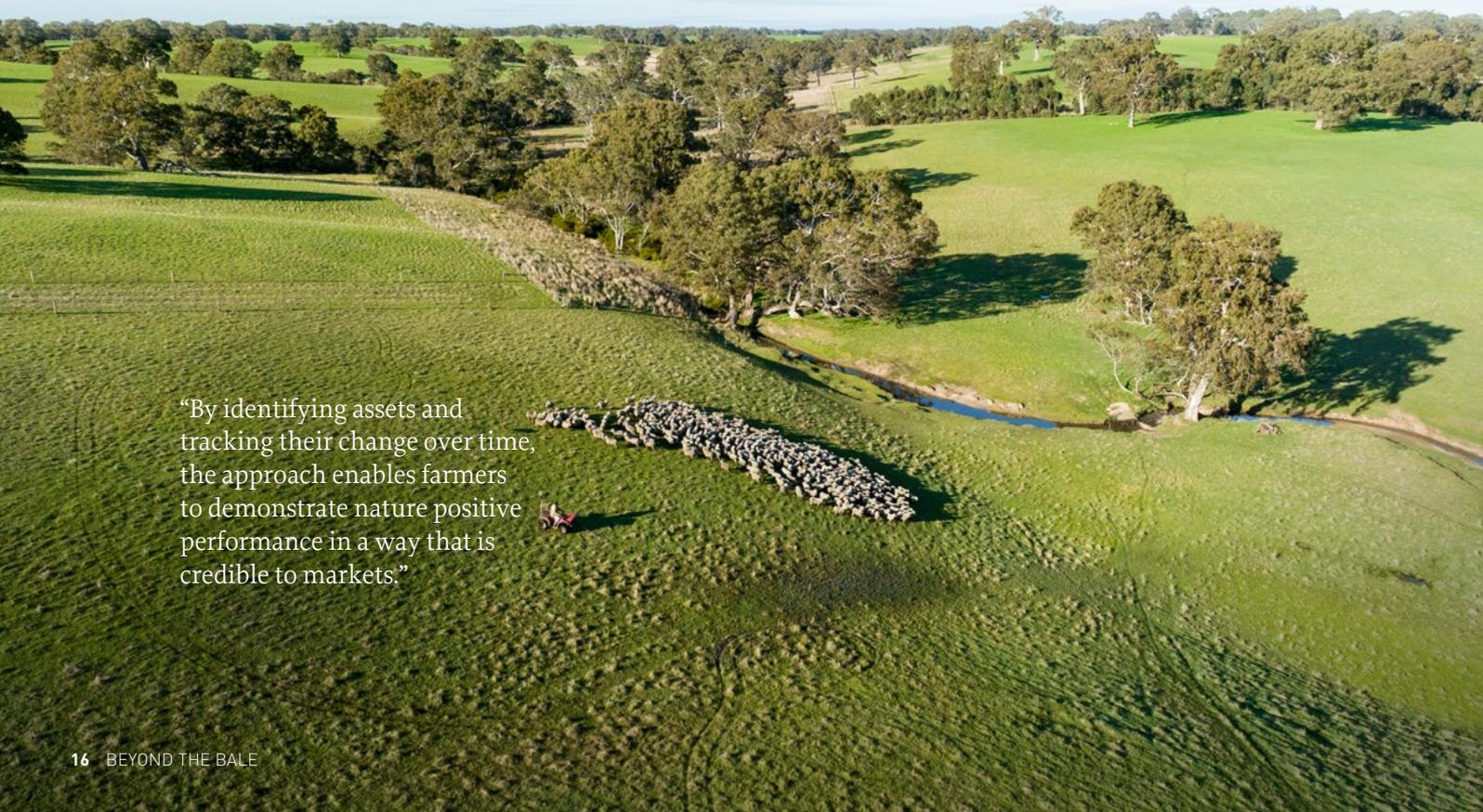
Recent research has shown a strong link between natural capital and farm business performance, and consumers, supply chains and markets are paying close attention to where and how their products are produced.

The ability to quantify natural capital is therefore increasingly important. Traditionally this has been done through ground-based assessments that, while valuable, can be costly, time consuming and difficult to scale. This project, led by researchers at La Trobe University and co-funded by

the SmartSat Cooperative Research Centre (CRC), AWI, the Macdoch Foundation (Farming for the Future) and Integrated Futures, is addressing this challenge by using remote sensing technologies to map natural capital across entire farms.

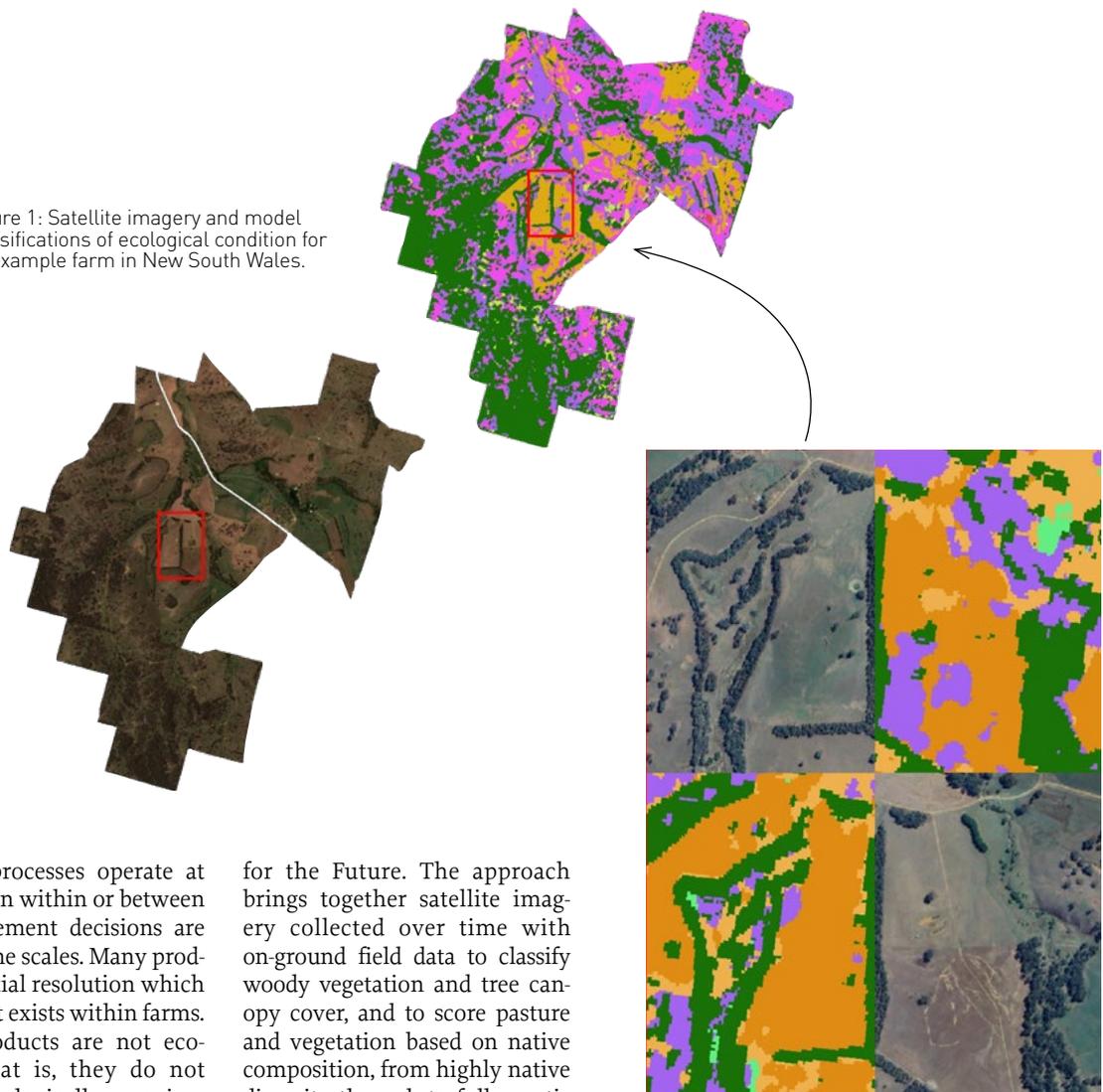
Natural Capital is important

Despite widespread use of remote sensing in agriculture, most existing products are not designed to quantify natural capital in a way that supports farm management or nature markets.



“By identifying assets and tracking their change over time, the approach enables farmers to demonstrate nature positive performance in a way that is credible to markets.”

Figure 1: Satellite imagery and model classifications of ecological condition for an example farm in New South Wales.



Firstly, ecological processes operate at fine spatial scales – often within or between paddocks, and management decisions are often made at these same scales. Many products lack sufficient spatial resolution which masks the diversity that exists within farms.

Secondly, most products are not ecologically resolved, that is, they do not distinguish between ecologically meaningful states. For example, common indices such as vegetation cover may indicate a paddock dominated by annual weeds as highly productive because it appears green, even though the system may be in poor condition. By contrast, a drought-resilient perennial pasture may appear less productive in the short term, but is often functionally healthier, with deeper root systems, improved groundcover and greater long-term stability.

Thirdly, many products are not temporally resolved which limits condition assessment. Single snapshots cannot distinguish between seasonal variability, management effectiveness and long-term trends.

Without linking remotely sensed signals to natural capital assets, composition and function, these products fail to represent condition in a meaningful way and insufficient for ecological accounting, natural capital assessment and nature-positive claims.

What the project is doing

The project is developing a new approach that uses remote sensing and machine learning to identify and map natural capital assets at the farm-scale, down to sub-paddock levels. The models the researchers are developing make use of the ground survey datasets developed by Farming

for the Future. The approach brings together satellite imagery collected over time with on-ground field data to classify woody vegetation and tree canopy cover, and to score pasture and vegetation based on native diversity through to fully exotic pastures or crops.

Progress to date has been encouraging. Initial results show that the researchers can resolve meaningful ecological variation at the sub-paddock level that reveals patterns not captured by existing products. The approach successfully identifies canopy cover and assigns native composition values to satellite-visible ground cover. These values are then scaled to ecological condition categories associated with varying levels of canopy and ground cover nativeness.

Satellite imagery helps

An example farm in Figure 1 illustrates this clearly: areas in green are identified as tree canopy. Patches of bright green and purple correspond to high (41-70%) and medium (11-40%) levels of native pasture composition while light orange and dark orange are low (0-10%) native pasture composition and exotic pasture, respectively. When comparing ground level observations and satellite images, the remotely sensed outputs align closely with the known on-ground condition.

The outputs are further integrated into defined 'ecological condition states' based on the extent of canopy cover and composition of surrounding ground cover.

These condition states have been shown to be a good surrogate for biodiversity and are closely linked to the provision of key ecosystem services. Together, they provide a meaningful, spatially coherent representation of the farm's ecological condition.

Validation is the key

That said, more work is still needed. Continued model refinement is currently underway, expanding training datasets to integrate the classification of shrubs, riparian zones, dams and waterways into the current models. Ongoing validation will be critical to ensure the products are trusted and useful.

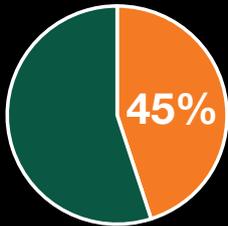
Carbon markets, biodiversity credits, sustainable supply-chain requirements and emerging "nature-positive" standards all require credible, repeatable, and spatially explicit evidence of ecological outcomes. This work directly supports the Nature Positive Farming framework by providing measurable, spatially explicit metrics of natural capital. By identifying assets and tracking their change over time, the approach enables farmers to demonstrate nature positive performance in a way that is credible to markets.



ZOLVIX™ PLUS

NOW FOR SHEEP AND CATTLE

Switch on the power of orange.



Is your drench really working?

Evidence of resistance in major worm species was detected in 45% of 171 DrenchChecks completed by Elanco between 2022 and 2024.¹ Scan QR for full results or to register for the Zolvix Plus Challenge.



PURCHASE 3 X 10 L ZOLVIX PLUS AND RECEIVE AN OLIGHT JAVELOT TURBO 2 TORCH KIT WORTH \$349.95. AVAILABLE AT SELECTED STORES WHILE STOCKS LAST!



With widespread resistance to older single, double and triple sheep drenches^{1,2}, it's time to switch on the power of Zolvix™ Plus. This unique drench delivers the power of monepantel, the only member of the 'orange' drench class³, in combination with abamectin. Monepantel's unique mode of action provides >99.9% efficacy against a broad spectrum of internal parasites in sheep, including single, double and triple resistant strains.^{4,5,6} Contact Elanco or your rural supplier and put the power of orange to work in your worm control program.



farmanimal.elanco.com/au
1800 995 709

Always read and follow label directions. Good agricultural practice is essential for optimal worm control.

References: 1. Elanco National Drench Check Summary 2022-2024 PM-AU-25-0128. 2. Playford, M.C. *et al.* (2014). Prevalence and severity of anthelmintic resistance in ovine gastrointestinal nematodes in Australia (2009-2012). *Aust Vet J* 92(12):464-471. 3. Monepantel is a member of the amino-acetonitrile derivative (AAD or 'orange') family of anthelmintics. 4. Hosking, B.C. *et al.* (2010). A pooled analysis of the efficacy of monepantel, an amino-acetonitrile derivative against gastrointestinal nematodes of sheep. *Parasitol Res* 106:529-532. 5. Refer to registered label. 6. Baker, K.E. *et al.* (2012). Efficacy of monepantel and anthelmintic combinations against multiple-resistant *Haemonchus contortus* in sheep, including characterisation of the nematode isolate. *Vet Para* 186(3-4): 513-517. Zolvix Plus contains 25 g/L monepantel and 2 g/L abamectin. Zolvix™, Elanco and the diagonal bar logo are trademarks of Elanco or its affiliates. ©2025 Elanco or its affiliates. EAH25729. PM-AU-25-0857.

Building new demand – one pooch at a time

Australian wool has long been associated with apparel, but some of the most promising growth opportunities for the fibre are emerging well beyond the wardrobe.

Bedding – and increasingly pet bedding – is one such category, offering woolgrowers exposure to demand driven by performance, durability and repeat purchasing rather than fashion cycles. These emerging uses reinforce wool's role as a working fibre, valued for what it does in everyday applications.

For MiniJumbuk, a proudly regional South Australian business with more than 50 years' experience engineering wool into bedding products, the move into dog beds was a natural extension of its expertise.

"If there's one idea I'd want a woolgrower to remember, it's this: your fibre has value well beyond traditional apparel, and it performs exceptionally in everyday products where comfort, durability and natural performance really matter," said Brett Woods, Chief Executive Officer of MiniJumbuk.

Wool is not being used as a marketing inclusion; it is selected because it solves real performance challenges. When engineered correctly, wool delivers measurable benefits while creating commercially viable, repeat-purchase categories that support long-term fibre demand.

From human bedding to dog beds

MiniJumbuk's experience with wool quilts, mattress toppers and pillows provided the technical foundation for its pet bedding range. Wool's ability to regulate temperature and manage moisture has long been established.

"From our experience, and this is backed by science, wool offers superior temperature regulation, keeping you warm in winter and cool in summer," Woods said. "It manages moisture far better than synthetics, improving sleep comfort."

Dogs, particularly larger or older animals, spend significant time resting. A stable, breathable sleeping surface supports comfort and hygiene, while durability remains critical for owners.

Wool's natural resilience and ability to maintain loft makes it well suited to pet bedding, particularly compared with synthetic fills that can compress, degrade or retain odours.

What the fibre has to do

Dog bedding places significant demands on fibre performance. Products must withstand repeated compression, moisture and heat while maintaining structure and recovery.

"In dog bedding, the fibre needs resilience, spring and breathability," Woods said. "Structure and recovery are critical – the product must withstand repeated compression and bounce back consistently."

Wool's ability to absorb and release moisture vapour without feeling damp helps regulate humidity, supporting comfort and hygiene over time. For woolgrowers, this reinforces wool's structural capability in applications where consistent performance matters.

Credibility at the shelf

As wool enters more mainstream retail environments, consumer trust becomes increasingly important. The Woolmark Wool Blend logo provides assurance around fibre content and performance.

"The Woolmark Wool Blend logo gives consumers immediate confidence that the wool content is genuine and verified," Woods said. "In a retail environment, that trust is critical."

This verification reinforces wool's role as a functional component rather than a marketing addition – an important distinction in competitive retail categories.

Everyday exposure, real volume

Pet products introduce wool into households in a practical, performance-driven context. Consumers may not initially seek wool, but firsthand experience with durable, odour-resistant products helps reposition it as a high-performance fibre.

That exposure builds familiarity and repeat demand, strengthening wool's position across non-traditional categories through proven performance.

What this means for woolgrowers

Pet bedding represents a genuine end-use market offering steady, non-seasonal demand.

"If a woolgrower asked me how this helps their business, I'd say it creates another genuine end-use market for their fibre," Woods said.

In performance-led categories, wool's durability, resilience and comfort provide a strong competitive advantage.

Looking ahead

The broader opportunity lies in wool's role across functional, everyday products.

"What excites me most is wool's potential in functional, everyday applications," Woods said. "That represents a powerful opportunity for the industry."

For woolgrowers, it reinforces the ongoing relevance of a fibre that continues to prove its value well beyond apparel.

Expect to see the MiniJumbuk dog beds in store from March.

MORE INFORMATION
minijumbuk.com.au







Shearing the Sheep, Wearing the Wool:

“The Merino denim was lighter and cooler, they felt amazing – the stretch in them was incredible. A lot of shearing pants aren’t made from 100% natural fibres, so they don’t have that give.”

NIKKI LYONS,
SHEARER, NSW

Nikki Lyons’ Record for Merino

New South Wales shearer Nikki Lyons holds the women’s world record for shearing the most Merino lambs in a nine-hour period, successfully shearing 502 non-mulesed Merino lambs in October 2025 at a shearing shed near Marnoo, Victoria.

It was the most recent accredited nine-hour Merino lamb shearing world record for a woman – a new global benchmark achieved after 18 months of preparation, both physically and mentally.

To attempt the record, Nikki was dressed entirely in Australian Merino wool.

From her IO Merino sports bras to her custom Merino denim shearing pants, every layer was chosen with purpose.

“I always wanted to be able to showcase wool, especially Merino wool,” Nikki said.

“It has the reputation of being that itchy, granny-like sweater feel and people can’t get that out of their minds. So, to stand up there and shear and do something really hot and physical in wool – it really shows the benefits of wool.”

On record day, the temperature reached 27 degrees, yet Nikki said her fan never went past number two.

“Wool wicked that moisture away from me,” she said.

“And we are limited in our wool clothing choices as shearers, so I had to find them.”

Nikki wore Willpower’s Racer-Back Wool Blend Shearing singlets, readily available for purchase, which she favours day to day, for their outer durability and the Merino wool lining’s softness against the skin. In choosing the undergarments, she sought the same tactile requirements, trying and testing until she landed on the IO Merino Pace Sports Bra.

Finding the right fit Merino Dungarees, however, proved the most challenging yet culminated in such a fruitful collaboration across the Australian wool sector and abroad, resulting in a custom prototype pair of Merino wool denim shearing trousers, designed to pay homage to the history of Australian sheep shearing and celebrate Australian Merino Wool.

With an essential need for made to measure pants and an established relationship with Courela Clothing, Nikki approached Founder, Kerry Johnson in Streaky Bay, South Australia, who has been custom making shearing work wear for a loyal customer base for almost 38 years, including Nikki and her shearer husband Fergus.

Kerry told Nikki if she was able to source appropriate Merino Wool fabric for the pants, she would sew them.

The hunt for fabric, worthy of a world record, was tasked to MerinoWA's, Ann Marie Bradstreet, who after a prudent conversation with AWI Wool Harvesting trainer, Amanda Davis, decided Merino wool denim would be the perfect choice.

Serendipitously, Nikki, Ann Marie and AWI Program Manager, Kelly McAvoy had met in February 2025, mindfully brought together by outgoing MerinoWA (SMBWA) president, Michael Campbell for their annual AGM Speaker's Forum, Weaving our Future, Stronger Together, where Kelly was keynote speaker.

Michael, who fosters relationships within the industry and encourages innovative projects, sowed the seed for the trio bonding over their shared passion for promoting the wool industry through all levels of the supply chain.

Thus, when accessing appropriate wool denim options proved difficult, MerinoWA naturally reached out to Kelly, who was integral in working with her international colleagues, who diligently sought and provided the right twill, fit for purpose.

The 63% Merino to 37% Cotton blend with a 314gsm was the perfect recipe for a double denim lined record breaking shearing trouser.

"The Merino denim was lighter and cooler," Nikki said.

"They felt amazing – the stretch in them was incredible. A lot of shearing pants aren't made from 100% natural fibres, so they don't have that give."

Nikki said comfort was crucial when it came to her performance.

"Especially in a record situation, being comfortable is extremely important because if something is annoying you, the focus has gone from shearing the sheep to 'gee I wish there was more stretch in that left knee right now!'" Nikki said.

Kerry's knowledge and experience of the shearing industry was an essential component in customising the Courela Shearing Trouser, designed to be comfortable, facilitate movement and meet the extreme physical demands of Nikki's challenge.

Training for the record meant pushing her limits.

She worked with UK-based personal trainer Matt Luxton, who has trained several record holders, completing strength and conditioning sessions throughout the week, in which she trained in IO Merino and Homestead Road Merino garments.

Because she normally shears for about four and a half hours a day, to accommodate school pick up for her four children, and needed to double that time to eight hours, Nikki added afternoon workouts to build endurance.

Her preparation also extended to diet, with careful balance between protein and carbohydrates, depending on her workload.

During the record, she ate what she would on a normal working day and added small quick-energy foods to stay consistent.

"Things like smoothies and jelly were easy to eat and digest in a half-hour break," she said.

Finding the right sheep for the attempt was also a challenge.

Nikki said she "chased the sheep" to Victoria because she needed animals that were consistent and suitable for a record attempt.

Despite the long build-up and attention around her record, Nikki remains humble.

"Doing the record was a personal goal," she said.

"This industry has given me a home. To this day, it's how we pay for our bills and put food on the table for our kids. It felt like my way of giving back to the industry."

She said the attempt wasn't about recognition.

"The world didn't need to know why I was doing the record – it was personal. I'm really grateful I did it because I made a promise to my younger self."

However, Nikki wanted to use her public platform for a purpose close to her heart, she wants to inspire everyone to wear wool, just as she inspired so many in the industry to get behind her record challenge, making it possible for her and her team, who wore custom shirts by The Merino Polo, to wear the precious fibre she harvests.

When practicality meets design

For Kerry Johnson, founder and long-time designer behind Courela Clothing, the creation of the Merino denim trouser was more than just another project – it was the culmination of a lifetime's work and something she was honoured to collaborate on.

"I was thrilled to think Nikki and Ann Marie were both confident in my ability to produce a product they wanted, and I was more than happy with their acceptance of my opinions."

After decades dedicated to crafting functional, hard-wearing garments for rural Australians, the collaboration with Nikki, MerinoWA and AWI became a swan song of sorts, as she prepares for retirement and sale of the business.

These trousers represented the union of practicality and design, of tradition and innovation.

Kerry, Nikki and Ann Marie share a close working relationship built on respect, and a shared appreciation for well-made clothing, which lends itself to mindful functional design, harking to the rich history of an iconic Australian industry.

Kerry knows her craft, her creative spirit and no-nonsense



Top: Nikki in action during her record attempt, where preparation, precision and the right sheep were just as critical as strength and endurance.

Bottom: Wearing custom Merino denim trousers developed through collaboration with Courela Clothing, MerinoWA and AWI.

pragmatism was a perfect match for Nikki's practical needs, her tactile response to clothing and Ann Marie's creative leanings of celebrating when function meets fashion.

"When practicality meets design, we get excited, we bonded over old Milroy catalogues," Ann Marie said.

Kerry knows exactly what a working shearer needs, she has responded to their feedback over decades, but she also has an eye for detail and history that makes her pieces special.

She decided to use the orange stitching on the blue Merino denim in honour of Nikki's husband, Fergus' preferred aesthetic for his own custom dungas.

Kerry's own husband, Grub, a shearer, was her inspiration for making her first pair of shearing pants and has used their combined wisdom in the design of these shearing trousers with a deep understanding of what matters on the board.

The stretch side panel was a key feature – an innovation she had long championed to improve fit, flexibility and comfort.

"I had trialled the idea of a complete stretch side component to the sides of the trousers for 18 months, and had good reports and decided Nikki didn't need any restrictions to her movement due to an ill-fitting garment on her big day," Kerry said.

The trousers maintained a traditional aesthetic while incorporating practical design features that made them perfectly suited to the demands of record-day shearing.

The story of how these humble pair of pants came to be is one of remarkable dedication.

The Merino denim fabric arrived in Streaky Bay on the Wednesday before the record attempt, after freight delays threatened to derail the project entirely.

A long weekend further hindered delivery and if the package hadn't landed that morning, the dearly held plan would have been over before it began.

Kerry, with her unflappable can-do attitude, accepted the challenge, as she has done since the inception of Courela.

She worked through the day – cutting, sewing, filming, and

sending off the finished trousers that same afternoon to ensure they reached Victoria in time, despite her father-in-law having been hospitalised the day before.

"It was an intense long weekend talking to chatbots until reaching a real person at DHL in business hours, who happened to love sheep, was inspired by the story and moved mountains to get the package to Streaky Bay in time," Ann Marie said.

"For Kerry to sew those pants in one day, with everything she was going through, was incredible. The Courela Wool Denim Shearing Trouser is a testament to her skill and character."

For Kerry, it was the climax of her design career – a final, defining project that embodied everything she's learned and loved about Australian wool and the people who wear it.

"I felt very proud of Nikki and her achievements and pleased that my garments didn't cause her any obstructions in reaching her goal," Kerry said.

"The future is very bright for Courela Clothing, for an entrepreneurial person. After 38 years, I'm ready to retire and pass the baton

to the next generation of creatives. We have a great country and a great industry to be involved in."

The collaboration has marked a moment of teamwork across the industry and the country. Nikki, Ann Marie and Kerry all acknowledge Kelly McAvoy from AWI as an integral part of making the idea a reality and are so grateful for her shared enthusiasm and being part of their creative team.

"Kelly really opened the door for us on this project," Nikki said.

"It wouldn't have happened without her help."

Nikki, Ann Marie and Kerry hope to continue their partnership, exploring new designs that might incorporate the remaining Merino denim fabric.

"Nikki and Kerry are such inspirations with a wealth of knowledge, experience and passion and I believe creative stories and projects within the wool industry have immense potential in the global marketing of Australian Merino Wool, the narrative is a powerful tool." Ann Marie said.

"I felt very proud of Nikki and her achievements and pleased that my garments didn't cause her any obstructions in reaching her goal."

KERRY JOHNSON,
COURELA CLOTHING, SA

The best fibre in the world – why Nikki wouldn't wear anything else

Nikki said she believes there is no fibre like Australian Merino and she doesn't just wear it shearing on the board, she wears it when she trains, when she picks the kids up from school and is ever seeking out new pieces to add to her wardrobe.

"It's the best natural fibre in the world," she said.

"There's nothing else like it – it's comfortable, durable and sustainable. I'm a real fabric person. I like how things feel rather than how they look."

Now that the record is behind her, Nikki is happy to return to what she loves most – shearing sheep and being outdoors.

"I enjoy going to work and making a bit of money," she said. "I'm very much a doing person and I love to be outside."

By shearing the sheep and wearing the wool, Nikki Lyons has walked the walk, she didn't just set a world record – she told a story of collaboration, craftsmanship and quiet pride.

From the shearing board in Marmoo, to the office of MerinoWA in Perth, to the sewing table in Streaky Bay, her record celebrates not just performance, but the people and fibre that make Australian wool truly world-class.



Taking wool beyond the farm gate

The future of Australian wool will not rest on production alone. It will also depend on how wool is used – whether it ends up in everyday products, whether consumers understand it, and whether they choose it regularly, not just occasionally. That work does not sit only on farm. It sits across the supply chain.

Gabby Neal works in that space.

This is not a story about fashion for fashion's sake. It is a story about how wool is used, understood and valued. Gabby represents a different type of industry participant – one who works across production and market, and who focuses on practical ways to connect the two.

From the farm to fashion

I first met Gabby at the Condobolin Flock Ewe Competition. It is the sort of event that is practical by nature – focused on performance, measurement and improvement. It is also where you often see younger people quietly stepping into the industry, not necessarily

through traditional roles, but through skills that connect wool to the wider market.

Gabby grew up in a woolgrowing family in Central West New South Wales. Merino wool was part of everyday life. So were the pressures that come with farming – seasonal risk, long-term decision-making and working with what the year delivers. What sets Gabby apart is that she has also spent time at the other end of the supply chain, working in fashion and consumer-facing business.

With formal training and industry experience in fashion and design, she understands how fibre moves from farm to finished garment. Over time, that gave her a clear view of where wool was missing out. Not because it lacked quality or performance, but because it was not showing up often enough in products people wear every day.

Her career path was not straightforward. After school, Gabby studied radiation physics before deciding it was not the right fit. She moved into fashion, studied in Sydney and built experience through internships before working in talent management at a time when influencer marketing was starting to take off.

In her early twenties, she was managing large brand partnerships and working alongside a creative director whose projects ran between Sydney and New York. Two summers working in the United States gave





“For me, it reinforced how important it is to understand the whole supply chain, from fibre through to how a consumer makes a decision.”

GABBY NEAL,
INTACT, CENTRAL WEST NSW

conversations moved beyond day-to-day work to include the broader business picture.

At the same time, the fashion industry was starting to talk more seriously about sustainability and natural fibres. That was when the connection became clear.

“I realised we weren’t just farming – we were part of the fashion industry,” Gabby said.

A visit to the wool sales reinforced that view. Seeing what happens to wool after it leaves the farm helped her understand where value is added and where opportunities can be lost. When she compared that with what consumers increasingly look for – comfort, durability and performance – the gap stood out.

Wool already does those things well. The issue was not the fibre. It was how it was being presented and used.

Making wool everyday

INTACT was created in 2021 with a simple aim: to make Australian Merino wool part of everyday wardrobes, and in doing so, help support woolgrowers by building demand.

From the beginning, Gabby wanted to keep things straightforward. INTACT was built around a small number of staple pieces designed to be worn often, rather than seasonal fashion items. Knitwear was a practical starting point. It allowed for efficient use of fibre and lighter-weight garments, which helped challenge the idea that wool is only for winter.

Product development was careful and slow. Samples were worn over long periods and adjusted based on how they performed. Friends tested garments in everyday settings. Gabby also surveyed around 300 consumers to better understand how people viewed wool and what stopped them from buying it.

The results were familiar. Many people still see wool

her exposure to the scale and speed of global fashion.

Back home, conditions were very different. Drought was affecting large parts of New South Wales, including her family’s operation. Being away from the farm during that time was difficult.

“I’ve always come home and worked on the farm,” Gabby said. “Not being able to be there when things were tough really impacted me.”

That experience prompted her to think differently about how she could contribute. If she could not always be on the farm, how else could she support the industry her family relied on?

Education was always part of her upbringing. Gabby often spoke about her father taking the time to explain farming to visitors – where food and fibre come from, and why it matters. As she got older, those

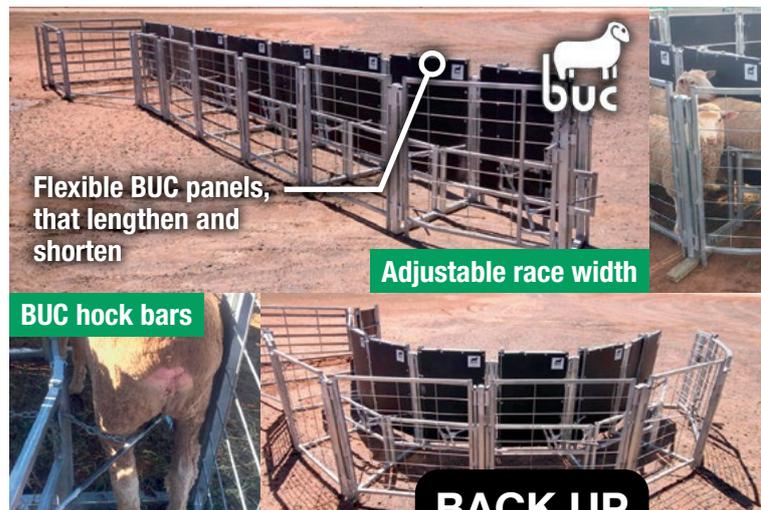
LEFT Gabby Neal at home in the yards in Central West NSW – where production meets perspective on how wool moves beyond the farm gate.

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 and easily assembled
- Flexible to any sheep yard scenario and sheep handler
- 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
- Proudly Australian owned, designed and made in Lockhart NSW
- Henty Machinery Field Days – 2016 Machine Of The Year WINNER!



as itchy, hot or formal. For younger consumers, those assumptions often stop the conversation before it starts.

The early response to INTACT was encouraging, but it also highlighted a commercial reality. While younger people may like the idea of wool, many cannot afford higher-priced garments. Gabby adjusted accordingly.

Her main customer base became older, city-based consumers who value quality and natural fibres. At the same time, she kept thinking about how wool could be introduced earlier and more easily.

Her answer focused on everyday items.

When Gabby talked about opportunity, she did not start with coats or fashion pieces. She talked about underwear, base-layers and socks – items people buy regularly.

“These are everyday items,” she said. “They’re often treated as disposable – but they’re an easy way for people to try wool.”

Lower-priced wool products offered a way to bring new consumers into the fibre. Once people experience wool next to skin – and understand how it performs – their views often change.

Good for your skin and your health

Merino wool’s natural qualities fit well with this approach. It is soft, breathable, odour resistant and suitable for year-round wear when designed properly. Gabby saw these traits as practical selling points, particularly for garments worn every day.

“If you’re going to wear something every day, it should be good for your skin and your health,” she said.

Later collections continued to test these ideas. A knit dress and skirt designed for warmer conditions challenged the assumption that wool does not belong in summer wardrobes. At pop-up events, many customers were surprised by how light the garments felt.



On the panel at the Nanjing Wool Conference – reinforcing the link between production, processing, and consumer decision-making.

Online sales were more difficult, reinforcing how important touch and experience still are when it comes to wool.

More recently, Gabby developed a wool–linen blend dress made in Sydney using fabric sourced through AWI’s The Wool Lab. The process highlighted how many steps are involved in local manufacturing and the challenges that sit around rebuilding onshore capacity.

In September, Gabby joined AWI’s Future Wool Industry Leaders tour to China. She attended the Nanjing Wool Market Conference and took part in discussions focused on finished products.

What stood out most was scale. The speed, efficiency and level of innovation in China were eye-opening. The trip also reinforced the importance of understanding the full supply chain.

“For me, it reinforced how important it is to understand the whole supply chain,” Gabby said. “From fibre through to how a consumer makes a decision.”

Not long after returning, Gabby was contacted by China Global Television Network and asked to take part in an on-farm interview about the wool industry. The crew travelled to the Central West to film her and her father working sheep and talking about wool.

It was only at the end of the day that Gabby learned the program’s estimated audience was around 200 million viewers.

For her, the moment was not about publicity. It was about being on the farm with her father and contributing in a way that felt genuine.

Wool already performs well. The challenge is making sure it ends up in products people choose and wear regularly.

That is where Gabby is putting her effort – and where part of wool’s future will be shaped.

MORE INFORMATION
intactco.com



From global dialogue to local execution – developing practical wool pieces consumers choose to wear regularly.



Designing wool's future: Fleece to Fashion connects fibre and innovation

L-R: Izzy Carlon and Leah Baklien



The future of Australian wool depends not only on how it is grown, but how it is understood and used by the next generation of product designers. Programs like Fleece to Fashion play an important role in building that connection early.

Held annually in Armidale, the Fleece to Fashion Gala Parade provides emerging designers with the opportunity to work directly with wool, exploring its performance, versatility and aesthetic potential through garment design. The program helps bridge the gap between fibre production and finished product, ensuring wool remains front-of-mind as new designers enter the global apparel industry.

The 2025 Supreme Award, sponsored by Australian Wool Innovation (AWI), was awarded to Whitehouse Institute of Design student Skyla Wedd. As part of the prize, Skyla will undertake an international industry immersion, expected to include visits to Japan and Korea, where she will engage with brands, manufacturers and innovators across the wool supply chain.

This firsthand exposure provides valuable insight into how Australian wool moves from raw fibre to premium garments, while building practical understanding of the technical, commercial and creative factors that influence fibre selection.

Programs like Fleece to Fashion form part of AWI's broader Industry Development and Education Extension efforts, which aim to strengthen wool's position in global markets by ensuring those designing future products understand its natural performance advantages.

By supporting emerging designers at the beginning of their careers, AWI is helping embed wool into future product pipelines – strengthening its relevance across fashion, performance apparel and technical applications.

These early connections are critical. Fibre choice is often determined at the design stage, and confidence in wool's performance, supply chain and innovation potential can influence material decisions for decades to come.

PHOTO: Stephan L'Hostis Photography



Pictured L-R: Julie Davies, Lily Edmonds, Jannala McNally, Skyla Wedd, Prue Chapman and Izzy



Pathways in wool

The Woolmark Learning Centre is equipping the next generation of wool professionals with practical, industry-relevant knowledge across fibre science, processing, product development, sustainability and marketing.

The free, self-paced online platform connects learners anywhere in the world with technical insights that strengthen wool's position from raw fibre to retail.

For woolgrowers, it represents more than education – its capability building across the global value chain that ultimately underpins demand for Australian wool.

Growers, students, and industry participants can explore the courses and register free at woolmarklearningcentre.com.

MORE INFORMATION
woolmarklearningcentre.com



Bioharvesting at a glance

- Wool is weakened during growth, not cut at the skin
- A clean break point forms along the fibre
- Wool can be removed without blades
- Fibre continues to regrow normally after harvesting

“This research is about strengthening future options for woolgrowers, not replacing shearing tomorrow.”

CAROLINA DIAZ,
PROGRAM MANAGER
ANIMAL WELLBEING AND
INDUSTRY RESILIENCE

Bioharvesting wool: where the research is heading next

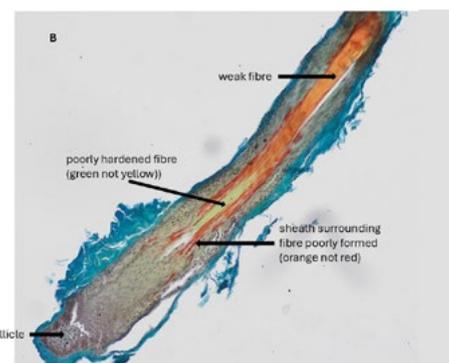
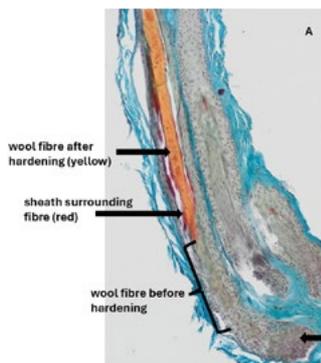
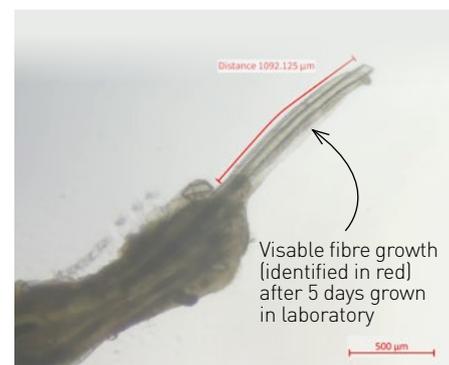
AWI-funded bioharvesting research has been underway for several years. As the project moves into its next phase, the focus is now on refining the most promising injectable agent pathways and moving closer to solutions that could work in real on-farm conditions.

After several years of foundational research led by Adelaide University, we have established that treated sheep do not lose wool in the paddock during the regrowth period; the harvested wool is more uniform than normal shearing; there are no second cuts or skin pieces; and there are no negative effects on sheep health. The bioharvesting program is now entering a more targeted phase. The science has confirmed that wool fibres can be weakened in a controlled way during growth. The work now underway is about what happens next – identifying the best candidate agents, testing them efficiently, and progressing the technology towards practical application.

For woolgrowers, this stage is less about theory and more about direction: what the research has delivered so far, what the next three years will focus on, and how this long-term investment could translate into meaningful on-farm outcomes.

Why this work matters to woolgrowers

From a woolgrower perspective, the value of this research lies in what it is designed to address over time – particularly labour availability, workplace safety and animal welfare expectations, while maintaining fleece quality and value.



If a commercially viable system can be developed, bioharvesting could offer:

- **Improved animal welfare** – no blades and no shearing cuts
- **Better workplace safety** – reduced physical strain and injury risk
- **Cleaner fleeces** – uniform fibre length and no second cuts
- **Greater efficiency** – faster harvesting and streamlined classing
- **Future labour resilience** – less reliance on highly specialised labour

What bioharvesting aims to do

In simple terms, bioharvesting works by creating a temporary weak point in the wool fibre while it is growing.

After treatment, the wool continues to grow normally. However, a defined “weak zone” forms along the fibre. When the fleece is ready to be removed, the wool can be broken cleanly at that weak point using mechanical force, rather than cut with blades.

Crucially for growers, wool growth continues underneath the break point, meaning fibre regrowth providing sheep with protection against sunburn and cold weather.

Where the research is up to now

Research conducted to date has confirmed that it is biologically possible to create a controlled weak zone within the wool fibre.

By targeting specific processes inside the wool follicle during fibre hardening, researchers have consistently weakened fibres so they can be broken using relatively low force. Microscopy studies have shown that the fibre structure is altered at a precise point, while normal wool growth continues below the weakened zone.

This work has moved the project beyond asking whether the concept works, to focusing on how it can be refined into a safe, reliable and repeatable system.



Why AWI is investing

AWI's investment in bioharvesting research reflects a long-term approach to supporting woolgrowers. The aim is to explore technologies that could reduce risk, improve efficiency and strengthen the industry's resilience, while maintaining the value and reputation of Australian wool.

What success looks like for growers

A successful bioharvesting system would:

- Maintain or improve fleece value
- Improve safety for people and sheep
- Fit within existing farm management systems
- Be commercially viable, not just scientifically possible

What a viable on-farm solution must deliver

For bioharvesting to be relevant on farm, any future product must meet strict practical criteria. It must:

- Work at a low dose
- Be safe for sheep and operators
- Have no negative impact on wool growth or quality
- Leave no residues in meat or body tissues
- Be simple to administer, likely by injection
- Be able to withstand on-farm conditions.

These requirements are central to the research program and guide every stage of development.

The next phase: moving closer to application

A new three-year research phase is now being contracted with Adelaide University to take the project forward. This stage focuses on identifying the most promising bioharvesting agents and refining them before progressing to further animal trials.

A key tool in this phase is a wool follicle culture system, where individual wool follicles are grown outside the sheep in controlled laboratory conditions. This allows researchers to rapidly test multiple potential agents and doses before moving to live-animal studies.

This approach reduces time and cost, while ensuring only the most promising candidates move forward.

At the same time, the project will begin engaging commercial partners with experience in bringing agricultural technologies to market and commence work towards APVMA approval, a necessary step for any on-farm product.

Looking further ahead

Once a suitable bioharvesting agent is confirmed, parallel work on mechanical fibre-breaking and automated classing

systems will resume. Early engineering concepts have already been explored, but development was deliberately paused until the biological solution is clearly defined.

This ensures any future harvesting system is designed specifically around the final bioharvesting method, rather than adapted later.

What this means for the wool industry

Bioharvesting is not a short-term replacement for shearing, and it is not being developed in isolation from on-farm realities. Instead, it represents a long-term investment in wool harvesting options that could:

- improve animal welfare and safety outcomes
- reduce exposure to labour constraints
- protect fleece quality and value
- give woolgrowers greater flexibility in the future

As with many AWI-funded projects, the goal is not disruption but building resilience and choice for Australian woolgrowers over the long term.

“The aim is a system designed from the ground up for woolgrowers and real farm conditions.”

CAROLINA DIAZ,
PROGRAM MANAGER
ANIMAL WELLBEING AND
INDUSTRY RESILIENCE

MORE INFORMATION

wool.com/wool-harvesting

Join us at LambEx 26

Inspire. Inform. Innovate.

Adelaide Convention Centre

7 – 10 July 2026

The leading global sheep industry conference uniting 2,000+ national and international delegates

Register Now
lambex.org.au



UNDER SHEARING SHED CLEANOUTS

E: mftrural@gmail.com

PH: 0467 66 66 75

www.undershearingshedcleanouts.com



Merino wool proves its place in elite performance sport

Australian Merino wool is entering a new phase of demand growth in China — not as a lifestyle fibre, but as a trusted material in elite performance sport.

ed in one of the most demanding performance environments.

“I have always believed that ‘professionalism stems from responding to ultimate needs,’” said Ms. Xiaofei

Lin, General Manager of ANTA GUANJUN.

“During my on-site research in Merino wool-producing areas in Australia last year as part of the Woolmark+ Fellowship, I was deeply impressed by the natural properties of Australian Merino wool – its combined features of moisture absorption, temperature regulation and anti-odour capabilities are highly aligned with our positioning of creating professional equipment for elite outdoor scenarios, which became the core driver for the rapid authorization cooperation between the two parties.”

For a brand built around professional-grade performance, deploying Merino wool at this level represents a clear vote of confidence in the fibre’s technical capability.

More broadly, it signals growing willingness among Chinese sportswear brands to integrate natural fibres into performance categories traditionally dominated by petrochemical synthetics.

As these categories scale, trust and verification become critical. The TMIC–Woolmark White Paper, citing data collected in IPSOS’ Woolmark 2024 Global Consumer Insights: China market report, reported Woolmark logo awareness at 88 per cent among Chinese consumers. Seventy-six per cent cite the logo as a key decision factor when choosing between similar products, while 82 per cent are willing to pay a premium for Woolmark-certified garments.

“As performance apparel evolves, brands are looking for materials that deliver both technical reliability and consumer trust,” said Woolmark Managing Director John Roberts.

“Certification continues to play a critical role in validating fibre quality and supporting premium positioning in highly competitive sportswear markets.”

For Australian woolgrowers, developments like this reinforce a clear message: Merino wool is earning its place in elite performance markets on proven performance, scientific validation and consumer trust.

What this means for Australian woolgrowers

- **Performance proof:** Merino wool is being worn and tested in elite sport environments where reliability is essential.
- **Premium demand pathways:** Growth in performance sportswear rewards fibre quality, consistency and certification.
- **Stronger value signals:** High Woolmark recognition in China reinforces the connection between on-farm practices and downstream premiums.
- **Future-facing relevance:** As brands reassess reliance on synthetics, Merino’s natural performance attributes support long-term market competitiveness.



China’s leading domestic sportswear groups are increasingly adopting Merino wool in categories long dominated by synthetics, signalling a shift in how natural fibres are valued in technical apparel.

One of the clearest examples is unfolding through ANTA. Through its premium performance sub-brand, ANTA GUANJUN, the group has incorporated 100 per cent Merino wool into professional-grade sportswear – reflecting growing confidence in the fibre’s ability to perform under sustained physical stress.

Consumer data supports the shift. According to the 2025 Wool Material Consumption Trends Insight White Paper released by Tmall Innovation Center (TMIC) and Woolmark, Merino wool apparel sales in China rose 18 per cent year-on-year in the 12 months to July 2025, with the consumer base expanding by 13 per cent.

Wool sportswear is among the fastest-growing segments, with gross merchandise value up 58 per cent, while Merino wool sportswear products recorded 119 per cent growth over the same period.

ANTA GUANJUN’s launch of a 100 per cent Merino wool trail running series highlights how this demand is translating into product development. The range debuted at the Hong Kong 100 Ultra Trail Race (HK100), where elite athletes competed in custom-designed Merino garments across prolonged distances and challenging environmental conditions.

In this setting, Merino wool’s natural thermoregulation, moisture management and odour resistance were tested in real-world competition – the same fibre attributes woolgrowers rely on in the paddock, now validat-

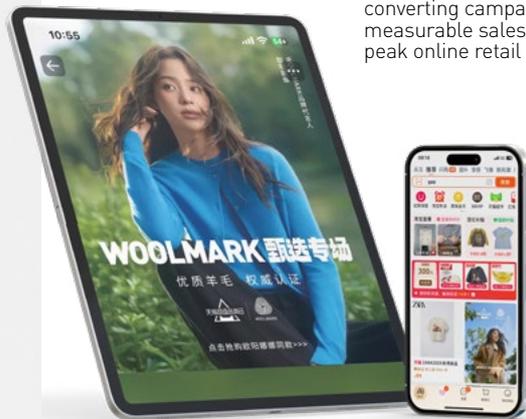




EDITION

China Wool Week and Double 11: what record online sales mean for Australian woolgrowers

China Wool Week: Woolmark's Tmall landing page brought together participating brands and Merino products in one destination, converting campaign visibility into measurable sales during China's peak online retail events.



When wool sells well in China, the effects ripple all the way back to the farm gate. Brands commit to wool programs, processors maintain throughput, exporters stay engaged – and demand for Australian fibre remains resilient.

The latest results from China's biggest online retail events – Tmall Wool Week and the Double 11 shopping period – provide a clear snapshot of how Merino wool is performing in a market that remains central to Australia's wool industry.

As of December 2025, the combined campaign outcomes point to one key message for woolgrowers: **when wool is clearly differentiated and easy to buy, consumers choose it – and they do so at scale.**

Wool Week: strong sales in a competitive market

Tmall Wool Week ran from 23–25 September 2026, marking the seventh consecutive year of partnership between Woolmark and Tmall, part of the Alibaba ecosystem.

The campaign achieved a 28 per cent year-on-year increase in wool sales (GMV) alongside more than 1.5 billion impressions across paid and organic channels. More than 5,000 brands and merchants participated, continuing a steady upward trend in brand engagement.

For woolgrowers, these numbers matter. They demonstrate that wool is not being pushed aside by cheaper alternatives – it is holding its position as a preferred fibre, even in a price-conscious retail environment.

Conversion confirms real demand

While reach and impressions attract attention, conversion is the measure that counts for demand.

During the 2025 Wool Week campaign, 93 per cent of visitors to the Wool Pavilion went on to purchase wool products, up from 89 per cent in 2024. In addition, 76 per cent of purchases were made directly through Tmall and Taobao, reinforcing the role these platforms now play in how wool is discovered and bought in China.

For woolgrowers, strong conversion signals confidence. It gives brands the reassurance to continue sourcing wool, backing new collections and maintaining longer-term commitments to Australian fibre.

Scale that supports relevance

The campaign delivered reach at a level unmatched by traditional retail:

- 300 million Wool Pavilion page views, up 12 per cent year-on-year
- 6.8 million video views, aimed at younger, digitally native consumers
- 33 million social impressions driven by campaign ambassador Ouyang Nana, a sustainability and fashion advocate

For growers, this scale matters because it keeps wool visible and relevant in everyday purchasing decisions – not as a niche fibre, but as a mainstream choice across fashion, lifestyle and performance categories.

Sustainability is influencing buying decisions

Post-campaign insights highlighted a clear trend: 83 per cent of surveyed consumers cited environmental performance as a key factor in their purchasing decisions.

The campaign also delivered measurable uplifts in awareness and intent:

- Merino wool awareness increased 11 per cent
- Woolmark awareness increased 5 per cent
- Purchase intent increased 12 per cent for Merino and 15 per cent for Woolmark-certified products

These outcomes align closely with what Australian woolgrowers invest in on farm – responsible land management, animal care and natural fibre production – and show those credentials are being recognised when clearly communicated.

China Wool Week 2025 – key results

+28% YoY	Total wool sales (GMV)
1.5 billion+	Total impressions
300 million	Wool Pavilion page views (+12%)
93%	Campaign conversion: visitors purchased wool

Double 11 (11 brand partners) – key results

A\$229 million	Total wool sales (GMV)
+17% YoY	Increase in wool sales (GMV)
+1.12 million	Total wool units sold
+72% YoY	Increase in units sold

Clearer differentiation through Woolmark Select

A notable development in the 2025 campaign was the introduction of a “Woolmark Select” page within the Wool Pavilion. This curated destination directed consumers to Woolmark-licensed brands and products that had been tested and certified.

From a grower perspective, this is a critical step. Clear differentiation between Merino wool and generic “wool” helps protect the fibre’s premium position and reduces the risk of wool’s reputation being diluted in crowded online marketplaces.

Double 11: wool performs during China’s biggest shopping period

Double 11 – now an extended shopping season rather than a single day – ran from mid-October through to 11 November.

Within this environment, Woolmark partnered with 11 brand licensees across womenswear and menswear, supported by 11 key opinion leaders (KOLs) to streamline discovery and conversion.

Across the Double 11 period, participating brands reported:

- AUD \$229 million in wool sales (GMV)
- 1.12 million wool units sold, up 72 per cent year-on-year increase
- 17 per cent growth in wool GMV compared with the previous autumn/winter period



Premium Merino knitwear featured during China Wool Week — reinforcing Australian wool's position as a preferred fibre in one of the world's most competitive retail markets.

Wool coats and knitted base-layers were standout performers. Some brands also reported growing interest in machine-washable and more affordable wool products, reflecting a broader shift toward value-driven purchasing rather than impulse discount buying.

The increase in units sold suggests wool remained competitive and attractive to consumers seeking quality and performance at a reasonable price.

What this means back on farm

Marketing campaigns do not set wool prices. However, sustained retail demand plays a critical role in maintaining confidence and competition throughout the supply chain.

The results from Tmall Wool Week and Double 11 indicate that:

- Consumers are buying wool at scale
- Brands are investing in wool programs and promotion
- Wool's sustainability and quality credentials are influencing purchasing decisions

For woolgrowers, this demand stability supports processor throughput, exporter confidence and ongoing brand commitment to Australian wool.

A measured view

It is important to note that sales outcomes cannot be attributed solely to marketing activity. Seasonal demand patterns, platform-wide promotions and broader consumer confidence also influence results.

That said, the consistency of year-on-year growth, improving conversion rates and expanding brand participation provide confidence that underlying demand for Merino wool remains strong.

Building long-term demand

Digital platforms such as Tmall and Taobao now sit at the centre of China's retail ecosystem. Continued investment in these channels reflects a long-term strategy to ensure wool remains visible, differentiated and easy to buy where consumers are shopping.

For Australian woolgrowers, the 2025 results reinforce a simple truth: when Merino wool is clearly positioned and trusted, consumers choose it — and that choice underpins the long-term value of the clip produced on farm.

Wool futures, and price risk: what history tells us

Wool has always been a volatile market, but the speed and scale of price swings have changed. Instant news, global demand shifts, fashion cycles, exchange rates, shipping disruptions, geopolitics and climate shocks now collide faster – and with greater impact, than most growers have experienced before.

Wool has always been a volatile market, but the speed and scale of price swings have changed. Instant news, global demand shifts, fashion cycles, exchange rates, shipping disruptions, geopolitics and climate shocks now collide faster – and with greater impact, than most growers have experienced before.

That raises a simple but important question: should price risk still be taken entirely at the farm gate, or can it be managed more deliberately?

One tool that keeps resurfacing in that discussion is wool futures – a tool that remains widely misunderstood across the industry.

Why wool is different

Compared with grain and cotton, where global price visibility and hedging are part of everyday business management, only a small number of woolgrowers actively use formal price risk tools. That hasn't happened by accident.

According to Garry Booth from Southern Aurora Markets, history has played a major role.

“From the launch of the Sydney Greasy Wool Futures Exchange in 1960, through till the early 1980s there were solid volumes in wool futures, with Growers, Exporters and Processors active in off-loading risk and locking in their forward prices, it was at that time that the Sydney Greasy Wool Futures Exchange was a globally recognised and quoted market,” Garry said.

“However, its decline closely followed the expansion of the floor price scheme – a system introduced in 1970 that delivered price certainty without growers needing market-based risk tools.

“The irony is that when the floor price was removed and wool prices collapsed, the industry no longer had a functioning futures market to help manage the shock, and that legacy still shapes many attitudes today.”

Why price risk matters more now

Today's wool industry mostly operates without price guarantees and in full exposure to global markets. Wool competes directly with synthetics and other natural fibres, is sensitive to consumer confidence, and is influenced by factors far beyond Australia's control.

Large price moves are no longer rare events.

They are becoming a structural feature of global commodity markets. For businesses operating on tight margins, a 10–20 per cent fall in wool prices can wipe out profitability for an entire season.

“In most global supply chains, managing price risk isn't optional,” Garry said.

“It's considered core to long-term business investment and survival.”

What wool futures actually do

Wool futures are not about picking the top of the market or even to predict prices.

Their role is to manage risk.



A futures contract allows a grower to lock in a price for a forward future period, usually aligned with their shearing or selling windows. Contracts are financially settled against an Auction Price, meaning there is no requirement to deliver physical wool. If prices fall, gains on the futures position help offset lower auction returns. If prices rise, losses on the futures position are balanced by stronger prices for the physical clip, therefore an agreed price on a screen say 3, 6, 9 or 12 months forward can be locked in, or in fact any date between that aligns with an auction date.

The trade-off is deliberate: less exposure to extreme outcomes in exchange for more stable returns.

Protecting margins, not chasing headlines

One key message from Garry is the importance of focusing on margins rather than headline prices.

Many costs – feed, labour, freight, insurance, finance, and compliance – are fixed or slow to change. Wool prices, however, can move quickly.

Futures and other risk tools are designed to help protect the gap between those two forces.

Over time, businesses that proactively try to protect margins tend to be more resilient, even if they don't always achieve the peak prices in strong markets.

Why banks are paying attention

Another shift is happening quietly in the background: lenders are paying more attention to price risk.

Banks are increasingly asking:

- How exposed is your business to sudden price falls?
- Is any production price-protected?
- Is there a documented approach to risk management?

Demonstrating some level of price risk management can improve conversations with lenders, reduce pressure in downturns and support longer-term planning – particularly in capital-intensive, seasonal businesses like wool.

A practical example

Consider a Merino grower expecting to shear around 270 bales in April–May.

With rising costs and uncertain markets, the grower wants more income certainty.

After discussions with a broker, they may decide in stages to hedge somewhere between 25 and 50 per cent of their expected production using wool futures aligned with their shearing window. If prices fall, the futures position helps cushion the impact. If prices rise, the grower still benefits on the unhedged portion of the clip.

The goal isn't to try to pick the top or maximise price – it's to reduce risk, improve cashflow confidence and make planning easier.

A cultural shift, not a silver bullet

Wool futures won't suit every grower or every business as it doesn't remove all risk, however Garry and the team believe risk management is an ongoing strategy and not something only considered in bad years.

"Volatility is now a permanent feature of global markets," he said

"And managing price risk is now part of how businesses have evolved to operate."

Understanding matters – even if you never use them

Even growers who never trade futures can benefit from understanding how they work. Futures markets provide insight into market expectations, sentiment and forward pricing signals.

Leading Australian wool industry figures helped establish the Greasy Wool Futures Exchange, which became a global leader in price risk management.

As markets continue to evolve, revisiting that mindset – using modern tools and safeguards – may help growers navigate an increasingly uncertain future.

MORE INFORMATION

Contact the Southern Aurora Markets Wool Team of Andrew, Garry & Mike for more information.
samarkets.com.au
garry.booth@samarkets.com.au
 0429 012 351

Austshear •
Shearing
Contractors

We are a family owned and operated shearing business with **over 30 years' experience** in the industry.

Quality, cost-effective, professional shearing and crutching services.

Available for **immediate start**
 NSW, VIC, SA,
 QLD, TAS.
 (Prefer Shearing Quarters)

FLY OR LICE PROBLEMS?

The magic eye sheepjetter since 1989

QUALITY CONSTRUCTION AND OPTIONS

.....

GET THE CONTRACTORS' CHOICE

FEATURING...

- Incredible chemical economy
- Amazing ease 1500+ per hour
- Unique self adjusting sides
- Environmentally and user friendly
- Automatically activated
- Proven effective on lice as well as flies
- Compatible with all dip chemicals
- Accurate, effective application

AUSTSHEAR

Phone: Brendan 0427 533 242



ELECTRODIP
 Industry proven since 1989

1800 146 892 | dipping@electrodip.co.nz - www.electrodip.com



From classroom to paddock: building the next generation through the School Wether Challenge

Across Australia, students are stepping out of the classroom and into sheep yards, paddocks and feed sheds as the School Merino Wether Challenge continues to grow state by state.

Backed by Australian Wool Innovation and delivered in partnership with schools, studs and industry volunteers, the program is giving young people a rare opportunity to learn the wool industry by doing it.

Rather than learning about sheep production from a textbook, students take responsibility for a team of Merino wethers over several months.

They manage feeding, monitor growth, handle and prepare sheep, and learn how everyday decisions influence both animal performance and end value.

The challenge culminates in a state-based judging event where students present their sheep and explain the management choices they've made along the way.

It's a simple model – but one that's proving powerful.

A national program with local impact

The School Merino Wether Challenge now operates in every major wool growing state, with participation continuing to build. In 2025, more than 3,000 students from over 160 schools were involved nationally, reflecting strong uptake across regional and rural communities.

While each state delivers the program slightly differently, the fundamentals remain consistent: real sheep, real responsibility, and a strong commercial lens.

Students are assessed not just on how sheep present on the day, but on preparation, understanding of wool and meat traits, animal welfare, and their ability to explain the management decisions behind the outcome.

SA



Lameroo regional Community School, SA – Champion school fleece

Justifying decisions

41 schools involved in 2025

Strong emphasis on **presentation and explanation**, not just appearance

Judging reinforces **commercial meat and fleece traits**

2025 SA Grand Champion:
Lucindale Area School – Pen 1 (Supreme Pen – Overall Meat & Fleece Winner, John Rothwell Perpetual Shield)

“The wether challenge mirrors what happens on commercial farms. Students have to justify their decisions – not just present sheep. That’s where the learning really deepens.”

TOM WILLIAMS,
SA AGRICULTURE TEACHER

NSW



Strathfield South High School, NSW – Encouragement Award

Scale and commercial focus

One of the **largest programs nationally**

450+ Merino wether lambs allocated in 2025

76 schools participating across the state

2025 NSW Grand Champion:
Narrandera High School

“What surprises people is how quickly students take ownership. Once those wethers arrive, they’re checking feed, weighing gains, and debating decisions like real producers. It’s no longer theory – it’s livestock they’re responsible for.”

SARAH MCKENZIE,
NSW AGRICULTURE TEACHER

VIC



Victorian secondary school students participating in the 2025 Challenge

Confidence through handling

Program launched in 2024 and expanded again in 2025

Growing participation from schools new to sheep production

Strong focus on **handling skills and wool literacy**

2025 VIC Grand Champion:
Greater Shepparton Secondary College

“For many students, this is the first time they’ve worked closely with sheep. By the end of the challenge, they’re confident handling stock and talking about wool quality like it’s second nature.”

HANNAH DOYLE,
VICTORIAN AGRICULTURE TEACHER

TAS



Scottsdale High School, TAS – Grand champion

Daily care and consistency

Delivered with strong **stud breeder involvement**

Emphasis on **daily responsibility and animal welfare**

Learning centred on consistency over time

2025 TAS Grand Champion:
Scottsdale High School

“It’s the day-to-day responsibility that makes the difference. Students see firsthand that consistency in care leads to better outcomes – just like it does on farm.”

BEN ROBERTS,
TASMANIAN AGRICULTURE TEACHER

QLD



Queensland secondary schools participating in the 2025 Challenge

Momentum building

Still an **emerging program**, but growing each year

Increasing school and team participation

Strong engagement once schools experience the model

2025 QLD Grand Champion:
Oakey State High School

“Each year we’re seeing more interest from students and schools. Once students experience the challenge, word spreads quickly.”

RACHEL THOMPSON,
QUEENSLAND PROGRAM
COORDINATOR

WA



WA College of Agriculture – Harvey – Overall winner

Pathway to industry

Long-running youth sheep initiatives supported by AWI

Linked with major shows and industry mentors

Clear **pathway into sheep and wool careers**

2025 WA Overall Champion:
Western Australian College of
Agriculture – Harvey

“Programs like this create a genuine pathway into the sheep industry. You’re not starting from scratch – these young people already understand stock, wool and responsibility.”

DAVID CLARKE,
WA INDUSTRY MENTOR



Learning that sticks

For many students, the wether challenge is their first sustained exposure to sheep handling and management. Over the course of the program, they develop skills that are difficult to teach in a classroom alone – stockmanship, observation, consistency and accountability.

Importantly, the challenge reinforces commercial relevance.

Students learn that good outcomes are rarely accidental; they are the result of informed decisions around nutrition, animal care, preparation and timing. By judging day, teams must be able to explain not just what they did, but why they did it.

Growing capability, not just competition

While ribbons and placings are part of the experience, the real success of the School Merino Wether Challenge lies in what happens well before judging day. Students learn to work as a team, manage animals over time, and take pride in preparation and presentation.

As participation continues to expand across the country, the challenge is quietly doing something vital for the wool industry: normalising sheep work for young people and showing them there is a future in it.

For an industry built on long-term thinking, that may be the most valuable outcome of all.

Why it matters to woolgrowers

The School Merino Wether Challenge isn’t just an education program – it’s a pipeline.

At a time when labour availability, practical skills and industry understanding are real constraints, the challenge gives students early, positive exposure to sheep and wool production. It builds confidence around animal handling, reinforces welfare-focused management, and develops a commercial mindset grounded in real-world outcomes.

For woolgrowers, the value is long-term: students who understand sheep, respect the animals, and appreciate how on-farm decisions flow through to wool quality and value. Many participants go on to further agricultural study or straight into industry roles – bringing with them skills that can’t be taught overnight.

All competitions are supported by AWI and made possible through the partnership and organisation of the stud breeder associations in each state. Thank you to NSW Stud Breeders Association, Dubbo National Ram Sale Association, SA Stud Merino Sheepbreeders Association (Merino SA), Stud Merino Breeders’ Association of WA (Merino WA), Australian Sheep Breeders Association, Stud Merino Breeders Association of Tasmania and Queensland Department of Primary Industries.



CLiK™ DUOSTAR™

The new star that delivers
dual protection against flystrike.



Scan here for
more information.

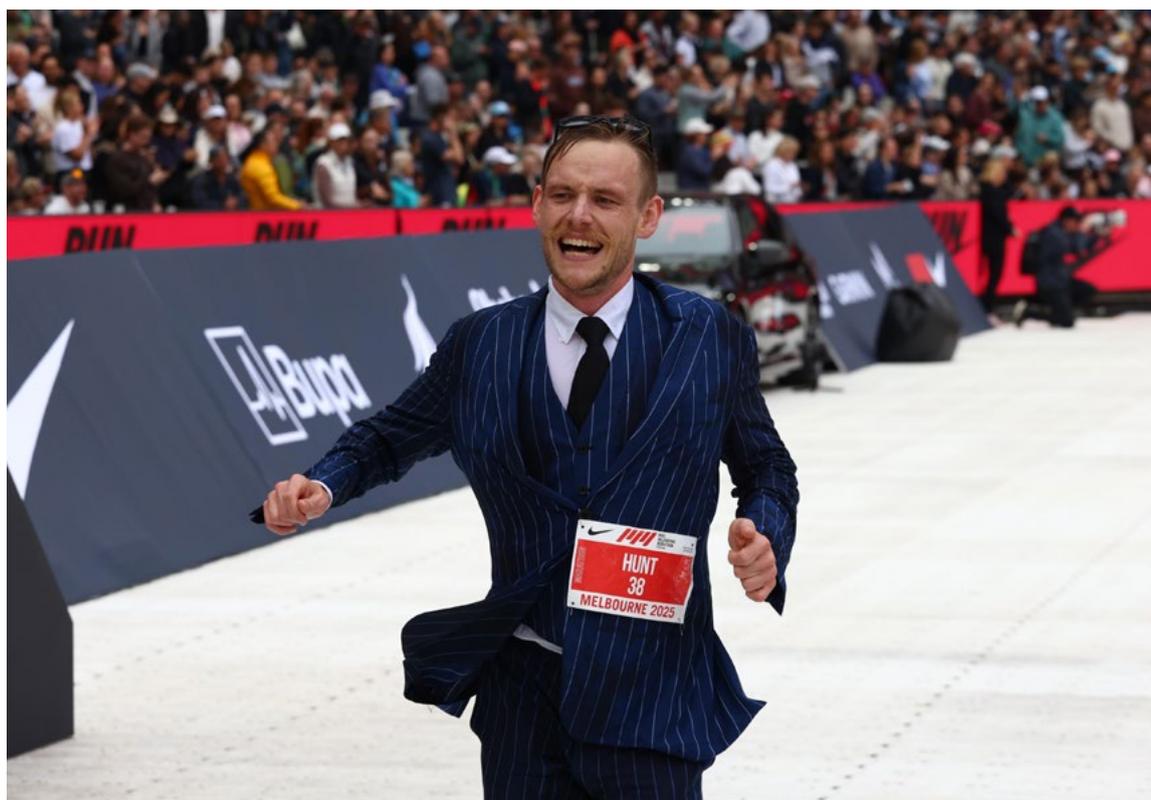
New CLiK™ Duostar™ contains **dual active ingredients** and **dual modes of action** for **dual activity** against blowfly strike. This unique formulation combines the proven power of dicyclanil and ivermectin to protect against blowfly strike for 18–24 weeks when applied off-shears or to sheep with any length wool; treat existing blowfly strike; and protect mulesing and marking wounds.¹ Contact your local rural supplier and give your sheep the dual protection of CLiK Duostar this season.



farmanimal.elanco.com/au
1800 995 709

Always read and follow the label directions. Good agricultural practice is essential for optimal treatment and protection against blowfly strike. 1. Refer to registered label. CLiK Duostar contains 50 g/L dicyclanil and 3 g/L ivermectin. CLiK, Duostar, Elanco and the diagonal bar logo are trademarks of Elanco or its affiliates. ©2025 Elanco or its affiliates. EAH25468. PM-AU-25-0599.

When Jason Hunt crossed the finish line of the Melbourne Marathon in a tailored three-piece suit, it landed as more than a visual surprise. It became a live performance test – one that placed Australian Merino wool under sustained, unscripted pressure in front of a global audience.



Hunt completed the full 42.2 kilometres in 2 hours, 38 minutes and 21 seconds wearing a custom suit by InStitchu, crafted entirely from Woolmark-certified Australian Merino wool – setting a world record for the fastest marathon ever run in a suit.

Designed specifically for endurance, the garment balanced structure, comfort and freedom of movement across nearly three hours of continuous exertion.

“This wasn’t just about turning heads,” Hunt said. “It was about raising awareness and funds for a cause close to my heart.”

Rather than a controlled demonstration or laboratory trial, the marathon presented an uncompromising test environment. Heat, physical fatigue and pace variation demanded consistent performance from the fabric – not just in moments, but across the full distance.

The project was led by Australian made-to-measure tailoring brand InStitchu, a long-standing Woolmark licensee known for combining modern tailoring with premium Australian Merino wool. Founded in 2011, the brand has grown to become Australia’s

largest made-to-measure tailoring business, with showrooms across major cities.

InStitchu Co-Founder James Wakefield said the run reflected the brand’s philosophy.

“Jason’s run perfectly encapsulates what we stand for: custom garments that fit your body, your style and your story. We’re proud to support his mission.”

Designed to perform, not just impress

The suit was milled by Italian textile house DRAGO, using lightweight Merino wool selected for breathability, elasticity and comfort. Construction choices were deliberate: an ultra-light canvas, unlined finish and a pinstripe fabric that reduced weight while maintaining form.

For the design team, garment weight proved critical. Every decision was made to ensure the suit could move naturally with the body, regulate temperature and remain comfortable under sustained strain – all without compromising appearance.

Top: Endurance in motion: lightweight Merino suiting engineered for breathability, elasticity and comfort across the full marathon distance.

Opposite: Crossing the finish line in 2:38:21, the Merino suit demonstrated natural temperature regulation and unrestricted movement under real-world conditions.



Running the distance: Merino wool under real-world pressure



Jason Hunt – key stats

42.2km	Marathon distance
2:38:21	Finish time
\$6750	Funds raised for charity: Movember
Woolmark-Certified	Fabric: Woolmark-certified Australian Merino wool

A different kind of proof point

In an apparel landscape increasingly focused on performance claims, demonstrations like this offer something harder to manufacture – credibility.

Rather than relying on technical specifications or controlled testing environments, the marathon provided an open, highly visible trial.

It showed how Merino wool behaves when pushed beyond everyday conditions – managing moisture, movement and heat in real time.

“For something that’s traditionally associated with tailoring, it handled the physical side better than I expected,” Hunt said.

“It challenged a few assumptions – including my own.”

Where material stories are heading

Across global apparel markets, expectations around materials continue to evolve. Consumers and brands alike are placing greater emphasis on versatility – garments that transition across settings without sacrificing comfort, durability or aesthetics.

Merino wool’s ability to operate in this space has long been recognised, but contemporary demonstrations help keep that story current.

They show how a natural fibre can meet modern performance briefs without leaning on novelty or nostalgia.

Beyond the finish line, the run also supported Movember, connecting the challenge to broader conversations around wellbeing and purpose.

“If this run got people thinking differently about what wool can do, that’s a win,” Hunt said.

“Especially if it also helps support a cause that matters.”

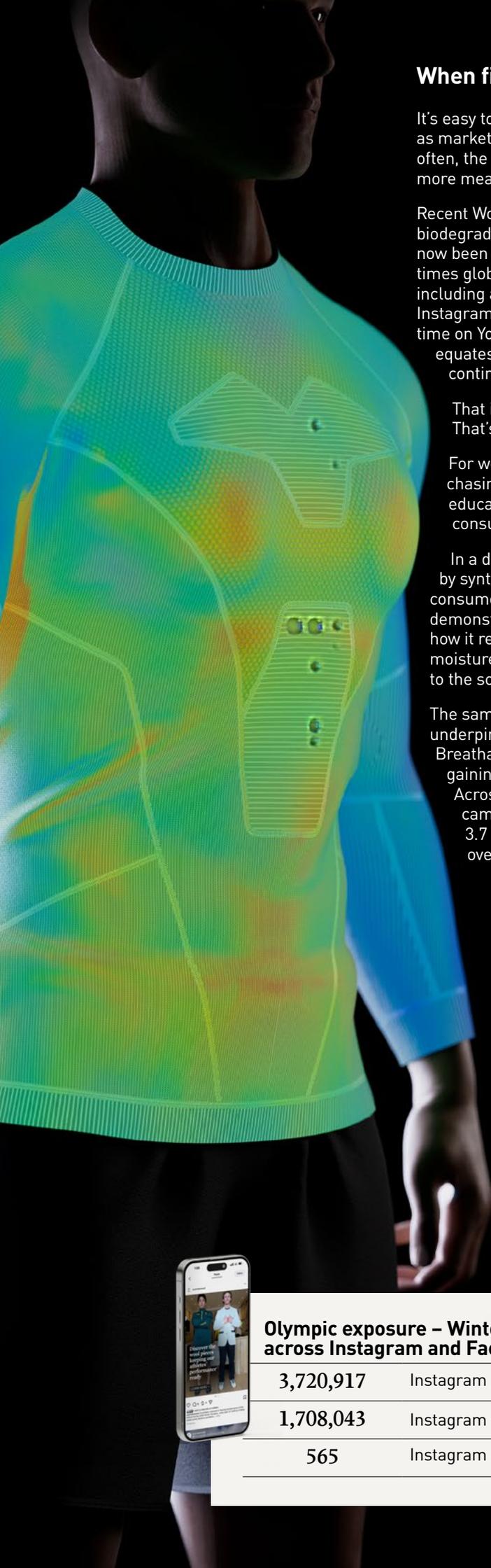
Quiet confidence

In a crowded fibre landscape, the most effective stories are often the least forced. One runner. One suit. One demanding test carried out in full view of the public.

Australian Merino wool didn’t need to announce itself. It simply did the work – and ran the distance.

“For something that’s traditionally associated with tailoring, it handled the physical side better than I expected.”

JASON HUNT,
ELITE MARATHON RUNNER



When fibre cuts through

It's easy to dismiss social media metrics as marketing noise. But every so often, the numbers tell us something more meaningful.

Recent Woolmark content exploring the biodegradability of a wool jumper has now been viewed more than 27.5 million times globally across social platforms, including amplification through AWI's Instagram channel. Combined watch time on YouTube and TikTok alone equates to almost two years of continuous viewing.

That isn't passive scrolling.
That's sustained attention.

For woolgrowers, this isn't about chasing impressions. It's about educating a new generation of consumers on our fibre.

In a digital environment dominated by synthetic performance claims, consumers are stopping to watch clear demonstrations of what wool can do — how it regulates temperature, manages moisture and, ultimately, returns safely to the soil at the end of its life.

The same science-led approach underpins Woolmark's Dynamic Breathability content, which is also gaining significant traction online. Across Instagram alone, the campaign reached more than 3.7 million accounts, generating over 1.7 million views and

76,000 engagements. On YouTube, Dynamic Breathability content recorded more than 1 million views, while LinkedIn activity added further professional audience exposure.

Importantly, the strongest performing content is grounded in proof. Demonstrations of breathability. Visible evidence of biodegradation. Practical fibre science presented simply.

That principle also carried through to AWI's Winter Olympics social media activity. Across Instagram and Facebook, Olympic-related content delivered measurable exposure during one of the world's most watched sporting events.

Attention alone doesn't guarantee demand. But relevance in consumer conversation is a necessary foundation for it.

What these results suggest is steady rather than sensational: wool's inherent performance and environmental credentials are resonating beyond our own industry circles. The fibre's fundamentals are translating clearly into modern consumer language.

In a crowded digital marketplace, wool is not simply participating. It is competing credibly.

And when consumers pause long enough to engage with the science behind the fibre, that is worth noting.

WOOL
ON SOCIALS
- BY THE
NUMBERS



Olympic exposure – Winter Games across Instagram and Facebook

3,720,917	Instagram reach
1,708,043	Instagram views
565	Instagram engagements



Biodegradability video

27,588,257 Global views across social channels

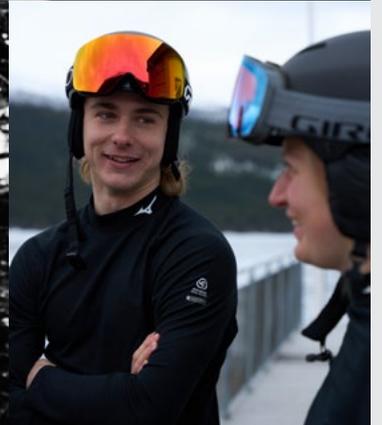
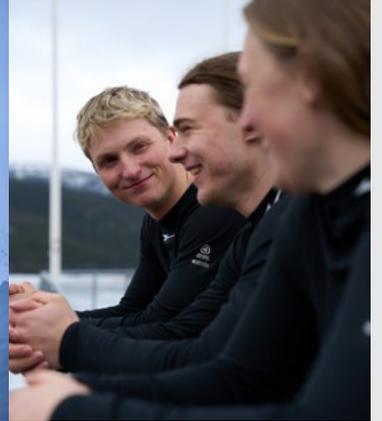
YouTube and TikTok

Combined YouTube and TikTok watch time equivalent to **almost two years of continuous viewing**



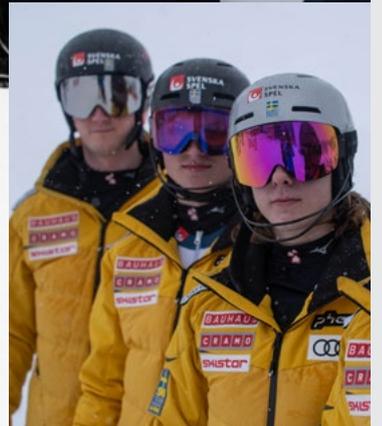
Dynamic breathability content

3,720,917	Instagram reach
1,708,043	Instagram views
76,815	Instagram engagements
1,082,440	YouTube views
15,385	LinkedIn impressions
3,425	LinkedIn engagements
5,509	LinkedIn video views



“Mizuno strives to deliver the highest quality, and that’s reflected in both the collaboration and the product development.”

FABIAN AX SWARTZ,
SWEDISH ALPINE RACER



From the wool shed to the world stage: Merino thriving under pressure

When some of the world's best alpine skiers took to the slopes last month at the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics, Merino wool worked under extreme pressure. Worn as a next-to-skin performance layer, it was selected for its ability to regulate temperature, manage moisture and maintain comfort in conditions where margins are tight and performance demands are absolute.

That's the premise behind a new collaboration between Mizuno and AWI's subsidiary Woolmark, which has seen Merino wool integrated into Mizuno's long-established Breath Thermo technology. The result is a high-performance base-layer and leggings now trusted by Ski Team Sweden Alpine for the 2026 Winter Games.



For woolgrowers, this partnership reinforces where Merino continues to sit in the global apparel market – trusted for performance, backed by testing and chosen by brands and athletes who operate at the highest level.

Breath Thermo was originally developed by Mizuno more than 30 years ago as a moisture-absorbing, heat-retaining base-layer designed for winter sports.

Until recently, the technology relied entirely on synthetic fibres. Through its collaboration with Woolmark, Mizuno has elevated the system by combining Breath Thermo with Merino wool, bringing together engineered heat generation and natural fibre performance.

Merino wool's ability to regulate temperature, manage moisture and resist odour makes it particularly suited to next-to-skin garments worn during high-intensity activity in cold environments. For athletes

training and competing over long periods, comfort and consistency matter as much as warmth – and that's where Merino continues to stand out.

Both the base-layer and leggings are lightweight, soft against the skin and designed to move with the body. The garments carry Woolmark's Wool Blend certification, signifying fibre quality and performance verified against rigorous international standards – an important signal for brands and consumers alike.

The base-layer fabric combines Breath Thermo technology with Merino wool to generate heat from body moisture, while Merino provides natural insulation, breathability and odour control. The result is warmth without bulk, and freedom of movement without compromise. The leggings use the same fabric blend, supporting muscle warmth while maintaining comfort and breathability during extended wear.

According to John Roberts, AWI CEO, the partnership highlights why Merino continues to play a role in elite performance apparel.

"Merino wool has always been trusted by elite athletes, and Ski Team Sweden Alpine's reliance on it says it all," he said.

"Partnering with Mizuno unites natural performance with cutting-edge innovation, proving how Merino wool continues to lead in next-to-skin layers made to perform under pressure."

For Mizuno, the collaboration reflects a broader focus on delivering performance products that meet the demands of modern athletes while aligning with evolving expectations around materials and fibre choices.

"As a global sports performance brand, Mizuno is proud to support the best global athletes with the highest quality products," said Mark Kaiway, Mizuno EMEA Head of Sports.

"By adding technological value through collaborations like this one with Woolmark, we're delivering market-leading products designed to support Ski Team Sweden Alpine for years to come."

That confidence is shared by athletes themselves. Swedish alpine racer Fabian Ax Swartz says the partnership reflects a shared commitment to performance and quality at the highest level of the sport.

"Mizuno strives to deliver the highest quality, and that's reflected in both the collaboration and the product development," he said.

"The drive to perform connects us, which is why I'm very happy to partner with Mizuno."

Importantly for woolgrowers, the story doesn't end with elite competition. The Merino Wool Breath Thermo base-layer and leggings worn by Ski Team Sweden Alpine are also available to consumers globally, bringing high-performance wool garments into everyday use beyond the slopes.

That pathway – from fibre on farm, through innovation and manufacturing, to high-visibility performance markets – continues to underpin demand for Merino wool.

Each time the fibre proves itself in technically demanding applications, it strengthens Merino's position in the global apparel landscape and reinforces its relevance for the future.

MORE INFORMATION

woolmark.com/performance/mizuno-fy26/

From paddock to performance: where wool innovation is heading next

Australian wool has long been valued for warmth, comfort and resilience. What's changing now is where that wool is appearing – not just in base-layers or knitwear, but increasingly in the outermost layer, where performance expectations are highest and competition from synthetics has been fiercest.

That shift is being shaped through The Wool Lab, Woolmark's global trend, material and innovation forecasting platform, which offers a clear view of how wool is being engineered for next-generation apparel. For Australian woolgrowers, it provides tangible insight into how their fibre is moving further down the value chain – into technically demanding products designed for modern lifestyles and working environments.

A window into where wool is heading

Released in alignment with major international trade shows, **The Wool Lab Spring/Summer 2027** reinforces wool's role across sports, active and workwear categories, while maintaining relevance in fashion.

The latest release is aligned with the **Dynamic Breathability** campaign, positioning wool as a fibre capable of responding to movement, changing conditions and real-world use.

More than a trend guide, The Wool Lab showcases commercially available fabrics, connecting brands with leading global wool manufacturers. It linking fibre characteristics with end-use performance, helping the global supply chain understand how wool can be applied in new and evolving product categories.

One of the strongest examples in this release sits within the Active Reset theme, where innovation is centred on movement, adaptability and performance under pressure. Highlighted in that theme is a category wool once dominated – and is now actively re-entering – the outer shell.

Re-thinking the outer shell

Outer shell garments are designed to protect the wearer from wind, rain and abrasion, forming the outermost barrier in a layered clothing system. Historically, wool played a central role in this space, valued for its density, natural water resistance and ability to perform across a wide temperature range.





© Curated Lifestyle @Unsplash.com

Over time, lightweight synthetics came to dominate the category, driven by perceptions of performance, weight and cost.

Today, that dominance is being challenged.

Through targeted R&D and close collaboration with supply-chain partners, wool is being re-introduced into outer shell fabrics using modern yarn blends, advanced fabric constructions and contemporary finishing techniques.

The goal is not to replicate the past, but to develop outer shell textiles that meet the technical demands of today's sports and outdoor markets while delivering the inherent benefits of wool – breathability, temperature regulation, comfort and environmental credentials.

As General Manager, Processing Innovation & Education Extension, Julie Davies explains:

“For woolgrowers, this type of innovation shows how fibre quality and consistency translate into new commercial opportunities further down the value chain, particularly in fast-growing global sports and outdoor markets looking for alternatives to the domination of synthetic fibres,” Julie said.



“These wool innovations are designed to move, breathe, and protect, while still delivering the comfort and inherent advantages wool brings naturally, where synthetic textiles can't.”

Innovation in practice

The outer shell fabrics featured in The Wool Lab demonstrate how far wool engineering has progressed. These textiles combine fine Merino wool with performance fibres to deliver stretch, durability and protection, without compromising wearer comfort or mobility.

Examples include lightweight wool-rich blends in the 120–130gsm range, incorporating nylon, elastane or polyurethane for strength and flexibility, as well as high-wool-content fabrics using superfine 17.5–18.9-micron Merino.

These constructions are suitable for a wide range of applications, including soft-shell jackets, hiking

and running gear, puffers with wool fill, backpacks and even sleeping-bag outer layers.

Importantly, these developments are being driven by leading global textile manufacturers with decades of experience supplying premium apparel markets, highlighting a growing confidence in wool's ability to perform in demanding outerwear applications.

From the grower's perspective

Innovation in outer shell garments signals that wool is being engineered back into parts of the apparel market where performance expectations – and volume – are high. These products reward consistent fibre quality, durability and reliability, opening pathways for Australian wool to participate in fast-moving sports, outdoor and workwear categories.

A fibre moving forward

The renewed focus on wool outer shells reflects a broader shift visible throughout The Wool Lab: wool is no longer positioned simply as a heritage fibre, but as a future-focused material capable of meeting complex technical briefs.

For Australian woolgrowers, it's a reminder that innovation at the product level is closely linked to decisions made on farm.

As brands continue to explore high-performance wool solutions, developments like these outer shell fabrics show exactly where wool is heading – and how it continues to evolve to meet the needs of modern markets.



MORE INFORMATION

woolmark.com/industry/source-wool/the-wool-lab/



“This collaboration shows how design and natural fibres come together to tell a story of provenance and craftsmanship,”

JOHN ROBERTS, CEO
AUSTRALIAN WOOL INNOVATION

Australian wool's story in global wardrobes

When Australian wool appears in an international fashion collection, it is not there by accident. It is there because the fibre has proven itself – in consistency, performance and integrity – long before it reaches a design studio.

That story continues in 2026, as Tod's and Woolmark mark the second year of their collaboration with the release of the 15-Micron Wool Double Bomber Jacket – a garment that places Australian Merino wool at the centre of its construction, design and narrative.

For woolgrowers, this is not about fashion cycles. It is about where Australian wool sits in the world, and how the decisions made on farm shape the way that fibre is valued, used and trusted far beyond the farm gate.

Wool chosen first, design built second

Rather than designing a garment and then sourcing a fibre to suit, Tod's has worked the other way around – developing pieces that respond directly to the natural qualities of superfine Merino wool.

The Bomber Jacket is made from 15-micron Woolmark-certified wool, selected for its softness, comfort and ability to perform in a structured outer garment. The silhouette draws on early 1900s menswear, reinterpreted with modern finishing and clean lines. Ribbed knit edges, piping and patch pockets highlight the balance between structure and softness – something that can only be achieved when the fibre itself is fit for purpose.

For growers producing ultrafine wool, this reinforces a familiar principle: when fibre capability is consistent, it opens doors well beyond traditional end uses.

The discipline behind double construction

A defining feature of the jacket is its double-faced construction – a tailoring technique that places enormous demands on fabric quality.

In this process, the wool fabric is finished without visible seams. Temporary seams are removed, edges are folded and joined by hand using invisible stitching, and corners are trimmed and reinforced to create a clean, seamless finish. There is nowhere for weakness or inconsistency to hide.

This level of construction relies entirely on the strength, handle and uniformity of the wool. For Australian woolgrowers, it underlines a simple reality: high-end manufacturing is only possible when the fibre delivers reliability at every stage of the supply chain.

Provenance built in, not added on

The wool used in the collection is sourced from select Australian farms, including Paling Yards, a long-established property founded in 1935 and now operated by its fourth generation.

From ultrafine fleece to finished garment – fibre from Paling Yards contributing to premium 15-micron wool pieces within the Woolmark collaboration.



At Paling Yards, rotational grazing systems are used to maintain groundcover year-round, preserve grassy woodlands and protect native pastures and biodiversity. These systems support animal performance while underpinning the consistency required to produce ultrafine wool season after season.

What stands out is that this provenance is not treated as a marketing add-on. It is embedded in the product narrative itself – linking landscape, people and fibre directly to the finished garment.

“This collaboration shows how design and natural fibres come together to tell a story of provenance and craftsmanship,” said John Roberts, CEO Australian Wool Innovation.

“By featuring wool sourced from farms such as Paling Yards, we’re recognising the role woolgrowers play in shaping the final product – from paddock to garment.”

A broader wardrobe, a broader future

The Bomber Jacket sits within a wider Woolmark-certified capsule which was released Autumn/Winter 2025, including:

- A 15-micron wool baseball cap with a breathable, water-repellent membrane and leather trim

- Long-sleeved polos and sweaters in 15-micron wool
- A half-zip jumper in 100% superfine wool
- A hooded winter jacket crafted from extra-fine wool

For growers, this breadth matters. It demonstrates how fine wool continues to find relevance across multiple garment types – reinforcing demand beyond any single product category.

What this story says about Australian wool

Rather than positioning wool as a raw input, collaborations like this reinforce its role as a **defining material** – one that influences design, construction and credibility.

It is a reminder that:

- micron, consistency and preparation still matter
- on-farm systems travel with the wool, whether acknowledged or not
- Australian wool’s reputation is built gradually, clip by clip

From paddocks producing 15-micron wool to meticulous hand-finishing overseas, the story holds together because the fibre holds up.

And that story begins – and ends – with growers.

GROWER FOCUS

Charlie Bell

PALING YARDS



Behind the fibre used in the Tod’s and Woolmark collaboration is Charlie Bell, who manages Paling Yards with a long-term focus on flock performance, landscape care and fibre discipline.

Producing ultrafine wool at this level is not about chasing a single market opportunity. For Charlie, it comes down to consistent decision-making over time – breeding choices, pasture management and animal care all working together to deliver a reliable result year after year.

Rotational grazing systems play a central role, maintaining groundcover across seasons and supporting the health of native pastures and grassy woodlands.

These systems underpin both animal wellbeing and fibre quality, allowing sheep to perform while protecting the country they rely on.

While the finished garments may feel a long way from the shearing shed, Charlie sees the connection clearly.

Wool that meets demanding specifications does so because of what happens well before shearing – in flock structure, seasonal planning and attention to detail.

“Recognition isn’t tied to one clip or one season – it comes from getting the fundamentals right over the long term.”

CHARLIE BELL,
PALING YARDS

For Charlie and his family, the story is less about visibility and more about continuity – producing wool that stands on its own merits, wherever in the world it ends up.



What is the Sheep Sustainability Framework?

The Sheep Sustainability Framework (SSF) is an industry owned initiative to monitor, measure and report the Australian sheep industry's performance against sustainability priorities. Sheep Producers Australia and WoolProducers Australia led the development of the SSF with AWI and Meat & Livestock Australia providing funding, together with strategic and secretariat support. The Framework was developed through extensive consultation and launched in April 2021.

MORE INFORMATION

sheepsustainabilityframework.com.au

A photograph of two people, a man and a woman, in a field of tall grass. The man is wearing a light blue shirt, dark pants, and a hat, and is leaning over a wooden post. The woman is wearing a white shirt, blue jeans, and a black hat, and is holding a small green plant. A black and tan dog is sitting next to her. The background shows a line of trees under a clear sky.

Confidence built from the ground up: what the Sheep Sustainability Framework says about Australian wool's future

Australian woolgrowers have always balanced productivity with responsibility. From animal welfare to land stewardship, the fundamentals have long been in place. What's evolving is the way those fundamentals are captured and communicated, giving markets greater confidence in how Australian wool is produced.

The 2025 Sheep Sustainability Framework (SSF) Annual Report provides a comprehensive snapshot of how Australia's sheep and wool industries are tracking across animal welfare, environmental stewardship, people and financial resilience.

For growers, the value of the report lies not just in the data, but in what it signals: where the industry is improving, where

pressure points remain, and how wool continues to position itself as a fibre of trust in an increasingly scrutinised global market

Animal welfare: measurable progress where it counts

Animal care remains front-of-mind for growers and customers alike – and the latest SSF data shows steady improvement in areas that matter both ethically and commercially.

The proportion of producers using appropriate pain management for key husbandry procedures continues to increase, reinforcing industry commitment to improving sheep welfare outcomes.

At the same time, more lambs and sheep are being processed through Australian Ani-

mal Welfare Certification System (AAWCS) accredited facilities, strengthening downstream confidence in the integrity of Australian supply chains.

For woolgrowers, these trends matter because welfare assurance is now a baseline expectation in many markets, not a point of differentiation. Demonstrating continuous improvement protects wool's social licence and reduces the risk of market disruption driven by welfare concerns.

Importantly, the report also acknowledges seasonal variability – particularly dry conditions in parts of southern Australia – reminding growers that year-to-year movements in welfare metrics often reflect climatic pressure rather than a loss of industry intent.

Environment and climate: efficiency gains amid tougher seasons

Environmental performance is one of the most closely watched aspects of modern fibre production. The SSF data shows tangible gains in efficiency, even as seasonal challenges intensify.

Greenhouse gas emission intensity has declined across key areas of sheepmeat processing, while water use per tonne has also fallen over the past two years.

For wool, emissions intensity per kilogram of greasy wool has continued to trend downward – an important signal for brands and regulators increasingly focused on fibre footprints.

However, the report does not shy away from challenges. Net emissions increased during the reporting period, largely driven by dry seasonal conditions and reduced productivity. For growers, this reinforces a critical point: climate metrics are deeply linked to seasonal variability, not just management practice.

The practical takeaway is confidence, not pressure. The SSF does not prescribe how individual farms should operate, nor does it impose new reporting burdens.

Instead, it provides industry-level evidence that Australian wool production is improving efficiency over time – a crucial defence as climate-related financial disclosures begin influencing lending, insurance and investment decisions.

People and communities: recognising the human side of sustainability

Sustainability is as much about people as it is about sheep. The 2025 report highlights ongoing challenges around labour availability, safety and wellbeing – issues growers know all too well.

Lost-time injury frequency rates increased across farming and processing, reinforcing the need for continued focus on safety culture. At the same time, the report introduces new metrics tracking community connectedness and producer wellbeing, acknowledging that resilience is not purely financial.

For woolgrowers, this broader lens matters. Buyers, brands and financial institutions are increasingly assessing social indicators alongside environmental ones. Demonstrating that the industry recognises

and measures workforce and community pressures helps maintain trust and reinforces wool's reputation as a responsibly produced fibre.

Market confidence: why sustainability data protects demand

One of the most encouraging signals for woolgrowers comes from the consumer data. According to the report, 62% of consumers indicate they would consider buying wool apparel, positioning wool as one of the most preferred natural fibres globally.

This matters because sustainability frameworks like the SSF underpin these perceptions. Brands and retailers rely on credible, industry-wide data to substantiate claims, avoid greenwashing risk and meet tightening regulatory requirements – particularly in Europe and key Asian markets.

For growers, the SSF acts as quiet but powerful infrastructure. It supports market access without requiring individual certification, protects wool's reputation at scale, and ensures Australian fibre remains credible in conversations increasingly dominated by environmental and social scrutiny.

Financial resilience: sustainability and profitability are linked

Perhaps most importantly, the SSF reinforces a message growers understand instinctively: sustainability and profitability are not opposing forces.

While the report notes declines in gross value for wool and sheepmeat during the period – reflecting difficult trading and seasonal conditions – it also shows continued investment in research, development and adoption across the sheep industry. This investment underpins productivity gains, genetic improvement and on-farm efficiency that ultimately flow back to business performance.

The framework itself is designed to support access to capital, markets and customers. As banks and insurers factor climate and sustainability risk into decisions, having a credible, industry-led framework strengthens the position of woolgrowers collectively.

What this means moving forward

For woolgrowers, the Sheep Sustainability Framework is not about adding red tape or changing how you farm tomorrow. It is about ensuring the story of Australian wool is told accurately, credibly and consistently – by the industry, for the industry.

The 2025 report shows an industry that is improving, adapting and investing, even under pressure. It reinforces confidence that Australian wool is well-placed to meet future expectations, not through marketing spin, but through measured progress backed by data.

In a global market demanding proof, the SSF provides something increasingly valuable: evidence that Australian wool is produced responsibly, resiliently and with a clear eye on the future.

Moving toward on-farm Implementation

The Woolmark+ Australian Wool Insetting Program is progressing as a three-year pilot testing how greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions and removals generated on Australian wool properties can be retained within the wool textile value chain.

The framework aims to deliver measurable Climate and Nature Outcomes, enabling woolgrowers and participating brands to report verified progress against climate targets. It is also testing whether insetting can function as a practical market mechanism – responding to brand demand while creating long-term opportunity for growers.

Brand participation advancing

Participation agreements are being negotiated with several global fashion and textile brands, with financial commitments expected shortly.

Investing brands will support scalable on-farm activities aligned with their climate and nature objectives, supported by transparent reporting frameworks. Additional brands have expressed interest as the program seeks broader value chain participation.

On-farm assessments completed

Pre-feasibility studies across 38 woolgrower properties have identified cost-effective emissions reduction opportunities spanning diverse production systems and regions.

This information is informing updated modelling of potential net emissions reductions and removals, helping prioritise activities once funding is confirmed.

Building the framework

Work continues on the financial vehicle, governance structure, measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) approach, service provider engagement and risk management.

Together, these elements are laying the foundation for insetting to operate with integrity, with focus now turning toward on-ground delivery.

What this means for woolgrowers

- Potential access to brand-funded emissions reduction activities
- Recognition of measurable climate and nature outcomes within the wool value chain
- Alignment with evolving market expectations
- Opportunity to test new revenue streams linked to sustainability performance
- Greater clarity around how insetting could operate commercially

As global markets evolve, this pilot is testing how sustainability performance may translate into tangible opportunity for Australian woolgrowers.

Full circle: Greenwich Pastoral's Merino story from paddock to product

For six generations, the Downie family has run Merinos. Today the family business continues to evolve, balancing wool production with broader business realities while remaining committed to the long-term role of Merino sheep in their system.

In the Upper Derwent Valley near Hamilton, Tasmania, Merino sheep have shaped both the landscape and the livelihood of Greenwich Pastoral for generations.

"We are the sixth generation of the Downie family to farm in this area so there is a strong connection to the land and family history on the land we farm on," Hannah and Chris explain.

That history is closely tied to wool production. The country itself is well suited to Merino sheep, and wool has long played a central role in the business.

"Merino wool has been the staple income for generations, a large portion of our land is well suited to running Merino sheep producing high quality wool," they said.

Like many Merino enterprises across Australia, Greenwich Pastoral has adapted over time. While wool remains an important contributor, the business has diversified to manage market fluctuations and maintain long-term resilience.

"Wool currently making up 30–40% of our income, for us, wool is an integral part of our business, but like any bulk commodity we have to continually work on efficiencies to remain viable in a commodity driven market."

Breeding for balance and adaptability

At the centre of Greenwich Pastoral's Merino enterprise is a breeding program focused on flexibility and long-term resilience.

"Our breeding focus is dual purpose Merinos; to achieve high growth rates for an earlier turn off of wether lambs while maintaining moderate wool production.

"We strive to be able to establish a Merino-based flock that can be easily adapted to a changing climate and economic conditions year on year."

For many Merino growers, this balance between wool and meat production has become increasingly important.

Maintaining productive, adaptable sheep allows enterprises to manage risk while continuing to produce high quality wool suited to a range of markets.

From bulk commodity to branded yarn

Like most Australian woolgrowers, Greenwich Pastoral sells the majority of its clip into the wool market auction system. Once it leaves the farm gate, it typically becomes part of a much larger global supply chain.

However, their involvement in Cleckheaton Midlands Merino 8 ply and 12 ply yarn has provided a rare opportunity to see that journey more clearly.

"It's definitely a full circle moment... they can wear a jumper with wool produced in the paddocks surrounding them."

HANNAH AND CHRIS DOWNIE,
GREENWICH PASTORAL
UPPER DERWENT VALLEY

“The majority of our wool clip is sold as a bulk commodity so it’s quite unique for us to be able to actually see and feel our own wool in a single-origin yarn product,” they said.

For Hannah and Chris, seeing wool grown on their farm transformed into a finished product brought a new perspective to something that is usually distant from daily farm operations.

“It’s definitely a full circle moment,” they said.

“The children’s grandma knits jumpers and beanies for them, they are quite thrilled that they can wear a jumper with wool produced in the paddocks surrounding them.”

Experiences like this highlight the connection between on-farm decisions and the final products used by consumers. Breeding, animal health, nutrition and wool handling all contribute to producing fibre capable of meeting the requirements of specific yarns and products.

Seeing their wool become Cleckheaton Midlands Merino yarn has also reinforced the importance of maintaining consistent breeding and management decisions over time.

While most wool is sold into the broader market, the same fundamentals underpin all production — sound animal health, clear breeding direction and careful wool preparation.

Their experience reflects the reality for many growers, where wool remains part of a diversified enterprise but continues to provide stability and long-term value. Maintaining a Merino flock allows flexibility to respond to changing markets while ensuring wool remains a reliable and relevant component of the business.

For growers, it also reinforces the broader role Australian wool continues to play across global textile markets — often in ways not immediately visible from the farm gate.

Breeding for balance and adaptability

At the centre of the enterprise is a breeding program focused on flexibility and long-term resilience.

“Our breeding focus is dual purpose Merinos; to achieve high growth rates for an earlier turn off of wether lambs while maintaining moderate wool production.

“We strive to be able to establish a Merino-based flock that can be easily adapted to a changing climate and economic conditions year on year.”

For many Merino growers, this balance between wool and meat production has become increasingly important.

Maintaining productive, adaptable sheep allows enterprises to manage risk while continuing to produce high quality wool suited to a range of markets.

Sustainability through everyday management

“Sustainability is implemented and achieved on our property in a number of ways; through improved animal welfare practices targeted at optimising nutrition and resource use, monitoring animal health closely and promptly, low stocking rates and providing low stress handling,” they explain.

Land management has also evolved to protect natural assets and support the long-term viability of the property.

“Changed land management practices such as fencing off waterways and environmentally sensitive areas and developing a biodiversity plan” have become part of their approach.

Like many producers, they emphasise that these decisions must work within the realities of running a commercial farming business.

“At times, it’s a balancing act, trying to produce an economically viable product while continuing to improve our practices,” they said.

“However, at the end of the day it’s important to us; and we want to and have succeeded doing the right thing by the stock and the land we not only farm on but live on too.”

These practical steps reflect the broader direction of many Merino enterprises — focusing on animal welfare, land stewardship and production efficiency to support both business sustainability and long-term productivity.

Pride in production and continuity

Producing wool remains an important part of Greenwich Pastoral’s identity as well as its business.

“We take great pride in the wool we are producing,” they said.

That pride reflects both the effort required and the long-term commitment involved in maintaining a Merino enterprise across generations.

“Farming is certainly a way of life, it requires a lot of hard work, dedication, determination and passion but also care; care about the animals and animal welfare practices we implement; and improving environmental sustainability and our own land management practices.”

This long-term perspective shapes decision-making across the enterprise, with a clear focus on ensuring the business remains viable into the future.

“Our ultimate goal is to be able to pass on a successful and thriving farming enterprise to our children and ensure that we leave the land in a better place than when we became its custodian.”

A continuing role for Merino wool

“We are committed to producing wool in the future in the most sustainable and ethical

way that we can and would hope that future generations will be able to achieve this too,” they explained.

Their experience reflects the reality for many Australian wool-growers — adapting to changing markets while maintaining the core strengths of Merino production.

Wool may now sit alongside other enterprises, but its importance remains clear. It continues to contribute to business stability, supports flexible breeding systems, and connects the farm to global textile markets.

From the paddocks of the Upper Derwent Valley to Cleckheaton Midlands Merino yarn, the journey of Greenwich Pastoral’s wool reflects both continuity and adaptation — and the enduring role of Merino sheep in Australian agriculture.



Top: A family-led Merino enterprise shaped by adaptability, consistency and a clear breeding direction.
Bottom: From shed to fleece: building early understanding of wool production while maintaining a focus on fibre quality and enterprise sustainability.

The woolgrower's guide to containment feeding

Containment feeding has become a vital tool for many woolgrowers to manage the summer-autumn feed gap. Read on for practical steps on site selection, nutrition and infrastructure, featuring insights from Esperance woolgrower Simon Fowler on how to lift flock performance while reducing costs through containment feeding.

Why containment feeding?

More than just a drought strategy, containment feeding helps woolgrowers:

- Protect soil and groundcover.
- Bridge the summer-autumn feed gap.
- Defer grazing at the break so pastures can establish properly.
- Maintain or lift body condition to improve reproductive performance.
- Finish lambs and manage weaners to reach growth targets for turnoff or to first joining.
- Strengthen drought preparedness and farm resilience.

Five key factors to consider when setting up a containment area

1. Location and site selection

Choosing the right site is essential. The goal is a simple, functional site that balances practicality and sheep comfort and welfare, while protecting your soil and waterways. Consider:

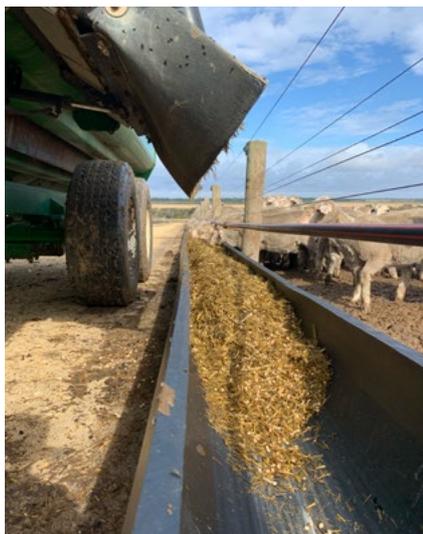
- **Proximity to infrastructure** – a site that is near yards, silos and water for easy daily management and monitoring.
- **All-weather and easy access** – accessible year round so feeding is possible in all conditions.
- Situated on **well-drained soils with a slope** of around 2–4% to avoid bogging. Avoid heavy clays that bog up and sandy soils that become dusty.
- A **low risk of nutrient run-off** and is at least 50 m from creeks and 100 m from streams, rivers and dams to avoid runoff issues.
- **Provide shade and wind protection.** If trees inside pens, protect them from ringbarking.

2. Pen size and stocking density

Pen design directly affects welfare and management efficiency. Design your containment layout based on flock numbers and

recommended stocking densities to ensure adequate space and trough access. Key factors include:

- **Dry ewes** – aim for **5 m² per head** (a mob of 500 requires around 2,500 m²)
- **Pregnant ewes** – **5–10 m² per head**
- **Maximum mob size of 500** (200–300 for younger sheep) is preferable
- Use **multiple pens to separate classes or ages** and spell pens when needed
- It is **not recommended** to use containment areas for lambing.



Accurate, repeatable feed delivery supports rumen function, reduces feed wastage, and helps maintain target condition scores or growth rates – all fundamental to animal welfare and productivity.



Purpose-built laneways improve efficiency and safety during feeding, allowing machinery access without disturbing sheep and keeping traffic off the containment surface to reduce soil damage and dust.

3. Water supply and delivery

Water quality and supply are critical in containment – constant access to high-quality water is essential for optimal sheep health and performance. Tops tips include:

- Sheep need **4–6 L/day** and up to **10 L/day** in hot weather.
- Use **water troughs** rather than dams and clean them regularly.
- **Shade troughs** where possible and position them **away from feed areas**, ideally at the rear or lower end of the pen to reduce contamination.
- Provide at least **30 cm + 1.5 cm/head of trough space** for mobs up to 500 head.
- Make sure you check that the system has a **sufficient flow rate** to handle peak water demand.

4. Feeding system and feed budgeting

When designing your pens, decide how you'll deliver feed. Think about:

- For daily or restricted feeding, provide **30–40 cm of single-sided trough space per sheep**.
- Less trough space is required for self-feeders – **4–5 cm per lamb** and **5–10 cm per adult**.
- Include **10–15% roughage** to maintain rumen function and avoid acidosis. Seek

expert advice on your ration during the planning phase.

- Complete a **feed budget** before starting containment feeding with a **5–10% buffer**. This buffer accounts for weather-related intake spikes and waste. Feed budgets ensure feed supply continuity and help track costs and refine feeding strategies season to season.
- **Test the quality of your feed** to ensure that you have an accurate understanding of how much you need for different stock classes.

5. Regulatory and animal health

Before setting up and using your containment area, ensure both your paperwork and your livestock are protected. Sheep containment increases the risk of disease spread, so a 'prevention is better than cure' approach is essential.

- **Compliance** – check with your local government and state department to see if approval is needed before setting up your facility.
- **Induction and health checks** – vaccinate for diseases before entry and gradually introduce grain over 10–14 days to avoid grain poisoning.
- **Ongoing monitoring** – for signs of acidosis, salmonella, worms and pulpy kidney.



Simon Fowler from Chilwell Farms at Esperance, WA, pictured with one of their containment feeding setups.

GROWER FOCUS

Simon Fowler

CHILWELL FARM

enter paddocks in peak condition, leading to superior milk production.

Key takeaways

Simon's experience is straightforward: containment feeding doesn't have to be expensive if you use what you already have and build slowly over time. Simon's advice for starting with containment:

1. **Keep it simple** – start with an existing holding paddock
2. **Use what you have** – machinery, grain, homegrown silage, existing fences or panels
3. **Invest in good staff** who care about your sheep and enjoy the work
4. Get nutrition advice, especially for pregnant ewes.

When managed correctly, containment feeding delivers a lift to the bottom line:

- **Premium wool** – higher fleece weights and superior staple strength.
- **Reproductive success** – higher scanning percentages and ewes in peak condition for lambing.
- **Market flexibility** – the control to finish your own lambs, grow weaners or put condition on your ewes, regardless of the season.
- **Additional gains** – improved groundcover and protected soils for better crop and pasture establishment.

For Simon Fowler, who manages 30,000 Merino ewes at Chilwell Farms near Esperance in southern WA, containment feeding has transitioned from a drought strategy to a core management pillar. The shift was driven by the reality of modern cropping – efficient headers leave minimal grain in stubbles, creating an earlier feed gap. Furthermore, containment is essential for protecting fragile soils at Chilwell Farms following deep ripping and clay spreading, while allowing pastures like ryegrass and serradella to establish without grazing pressure.

Design and infrastructure

Simon emphasises that a successful containment system must be built for efficiency and animal welfare. Key design principles include:

- Strategic siting – pens should be located on well-drained ground near existing infrastructure—silos, silage pits and yards—to minimise travel and labour.
- Feeding efficiency – Simon utilises 100 m x 150 m pens that hold 700–800 ewes each with ~100 m of trough space. Simon employs an 'outside-the-fence' feeding model, which allows staff to deliver rations in a straight line without entering pens, significantly reducing labour requirements.
- Water quality – clean, daily-maintained water troughs are prioritised over dams to ensure high water intake and flock health.

Cost-effective production

A central philosophy at Chilwell Farms is to 'use the synergies' in their business. By utilising existing machinery and feeding a ration of pit silage and second-grade grain, Simon keeps input costs low. He maintains that a system doesn't need to be high-tech; woolgrowers can start with simple yard extensions or holding paddocks and scale up from there.

Productivity and management

The benefits extend beyond soil health to significant production gains, including increased wool cuts, improved staple strength and higher pregnancy scanning rates. By containing ewes for eight weeks pre-lambing, they

“We're certainly cutting more wool per head. We're also getting better staple strength. We're certainly getting better conception rates in our ewes. Through that feeding for a good eight weeks before lambing, ewes are going into lambing in better condition... So you end up with a better lamb size, better body condition on the ewe, better milking ewe.”

SIMON FOWLER,
CHILWELL FARMS, WA

To hear more tips from Georgia and Simon, check out:



THE YARN EPISODE 281
Containment feeding
LISTEN TODAY



EPISODE 2
Containment feeding, made simple
WATCH NOW

For more information and to check out the resources used throughout this article, visit the following:

- Managing sheep in droughtlots
- Managing breeding ewes in containment areas: A guide for producers
- Confined paddock feeding and feedlotting of sheep
- Releasing sheep from containment feeding
- Key considerations for setting up containment feeding areas
- Considerations for containment feeding

There are numerous resources on hand to assist producers in the challenges and daily tasks that come with growing wool – the expected, the unexpected and everything in between.

Find here a list of timely resources to keep in your toolbox. For more resources, head to AWI's Grower Menu (wool.com/menu) and AWI and MLA's Making More From Sheep (makingmorefromsheep.com.au)

<p style="text-align: center;">Emergency resources</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Drought resources</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Bushfires – Livestock safety and recovery</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Flood Resources</div>  </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">Pregnancy scanning</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>The value of pregnancy scanning</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Ewe scanning and management checklist</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Pregnancy scanning: an ultrasound investment</div>  </div>
<p style="text-align: center;">Supplementary feeding</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Feeding and managing sheep in dry times</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Using lick feeders to supplementary feed ewes</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Making More From Sheep: Keep your sheep in good condition</div>  </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">Nutrition</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Ewe nutrition</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>AWI Feed On Offer Library</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>AWI Standard reference weight calculator</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Feedbase options</div>  </div>
<p style="text-align: center;">Worms</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>WormBoss</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Making More From Sheep: Worms fact sheet</div>  </div>	<p style="text-align: center;">Flystrike</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>FlyBoss</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>It's Fly Time! Recognising and monitoring flystrike fact sheet</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>It's Fly Time! Preventing and treating flystrike fact sheet</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Making More From Sheep: Management of flystrike</div>  </div>
<p style="text-align: center;">Foot health</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Put your (sheep's) best foot forward</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>AWI Footrot information and state resources</div>  </div> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div>Making More From Sheep: Footrot fact sheet</div>  </div>	

Get connected online to AWI

AWI offers a range of online choices for Australian woolgrowers and other stakeholders to access the latest information about AWI activities – available on their computer, tablet or smartphone.



To ensure you keep up to date with the latest information from AWI, subscribe to AWI's monthly online Woolgrower Newsletter. Visit wool.com/subscribe or use the QR code for your free subscription.



Wool.com website

Wool.com is designed specifically for Australian woolgrowers seeking information from AWI on lifting their productivity.

AWI e-newsletters

AWI produces several free e-newsletters:

- Wool Market Weekly Report, including weekly price movements and commentary
- Woolgrower Newsletter (monthly)
- Beyond the Bale e-newsletter (twice-yearly)

Visit wool.com/subscribe for your free subscription.

AWI social media channels

Followers at January 2026 and percentage increase during the year, were:

- Facebook 14.6K followers
- X 8K followers
- Instagram 8.6K followers
- LinkedIn 5.7K followers
- YouTube 4.5K 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. 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 R&D and marketing. Each episode is about 20 minutes in length. *The Yarn* can be listened to at wool.com/podcast, Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

Woolmark digital and social channels

AWI subsidiary Woolmark also has a range of digital channels including the [woolmark.com website](http://woolmark.com), e-newsletters, and social media channels through which woolgrowers and other stakeholders can view the company's marketing initiatives.

A note from the Editor

As a woolgrower as well as Editor-in-Chief, I see this publication through two lenses — from behind the editor's desk and from within the paddock. At our family's property, Thalaba, in the New South Wales Southern Tablelands, the decisions we make each season reflect the same challenges and opportunities facing woolgrowers across Australia.

In my role as Manager, Woolgrower Communications at Australian Wool Innovation, and through an extensive background in agricultural journalism, I have had the privilege of working closely with producers, researchers and industry leaders across the wool supply chain. These experiences have reinforced the importance of clear, trusted communication that reflects the realities of wool production while connecting growers to the broader forces shaping the future of the industry.

That perspective guides my editorial approach. My aim is to ensure *Beyond the Bale* remains grounded, practical and relevant, while helping growers understand the research, innovation and global demand that underpin confidence in Australian wool. Above all, I am committed to delivering information that strengthens grower confidence and reinforces the enduring value of the fibre we produce.

This publication is written not only about woolgrowers – but alongside them.



Kristen Frost
Editor-in-Chief
Manager Woolgrower Communications
kristen.frost@wool.com



Kate Rice
Communications Project Officer
kate.rice@wool.com

Editorial and Communications

Kate Rice is the Communications Project Officer at Australian Wool Innovation and plays an integral role in supporting the development and delivery of *Beyond the Bale*. Having grown up on a mixed farming property near Parkes, New South Wales, Kate brings both an agricultural perspective and a background in Design and Visual Arts to her work.

She joined AWI through the 2023 Graduate Training Program, recognising the opportunity to contribute her visual communication skills to an industry she has long felt connected to. Kate is committed to ensuring woolgrowers and industry stakeholders remain informed, engaged and connected, and is passionate about strengthening the relationship between producers and consumers – helping to ensure the value and appreciation of wool continues across generations.

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 avoid discounts for their wool.

The National Wool Declaration (NWD) is a simple way for woolgrowers to tell the market more about the wool they produce. By completing an NWD, growers provide information that buyers can't determine from testing alone – such as mulesing status and other management details – helping the wool move through the supply chain with fewer questions and more certainty.

When AWI engages with brands and retailers, one message comes through consistently: they want to see stronger participation in the NWD. Clear declarations give buyers confidence, support transparency across the supply chain and ensure growers receive clearer market signals about demand and pricing preferences.

Filling out an NWD is voluntary and once lodged, the information automatically flows into sale catalogues and wool test certificates. This means buyers have the details they need at the point of sale, without any extra steps for growers.

All woolgrowers are encouraged to complete an NWD, regardless of breed, wool type or management system. Taking part helps protect market access for Australian wool and ensures growers remain well positioned as customer expectations continue to evolve.

Table 1. NWD declaration rates (%) by Mulesing Status by Season

		2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 YTD
Merino	Non M.	15.30%	16.50%	18.10%
	Ceased M	3.30%	2.80%	3.80%
	Liq Nit	0.20%	0.30%	0.10%
	AA	50.90%	52.60%	53.20%
	Mulesed	9.10%	7.70%	6.60%
	Not Decl.	21.20%	20%	18.20%
	Total	1,174,129	1,013,020	573,749
Non-Merino	Non M.	45.60%	48.20%	52%
	Ceased M	1.50%	1.40%	1.90%
	Liq Nit	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
	AA	12.20%	11.80%	11.60%
	Mulesed	3.40%	2.70%	2.80%
	Not Decl.	37.30%	35.90%	31.80%
	Total	299,951	250,241	140,572

Seasonal Trends in NWD Rates

The table highlights a continued shift toward greater use of the National Wool Declaration (NWD), with declaration rates improving across both Merino and Non-Merino wool in the 2025/26 season to date.

For Merino wool, the proportion declared as AA (Non-Mulesed) has steadily increased over the past three seasons, rising from 50.9% in 2023/24 to 53.2% in 2025/26 YTD. Over the same period, the share of mulesed wool has declined from 9.1% to 6.6%, while the Not Declared category has also fallen significantly. The data highlights steady engagement with the NWD across different

wool types and production systems, reinforcing its role as an information tool used by growers to communicate with the market.

A similar pattern is evident in the Non-Merino sector, where Non-Mulesed wool now accounts for more than half of all declared bales (52%) in 2025/26 YTD. This is the highest level recorded across the three seasons shown. The decline in the Not Declared category – from 37.3% in 2023/24 to 31.8% – further reinforces improving uptake of the NWD among non-Merino producers.



Don't let your Declaration be wasted!

If you don't sign and date your NWD, the Mulesing Status of your mobs/lines of wool will not be shown on the sale catalogue and test certificate. This can reduce the number of buyers bidding on your wool, as well as the price you receive.

To ensure the Mulesing Status of your wool is known by potential buyers prior to sale, sign and date the NWD.

It is good practice for owner/managers to talk to the wool classer at the start of shearing to detail all mobs and to sign/date the declaration. Note, eSpecis can be electronically signed.



For further advice on achieving Premiums for your wool, contact your wool broker.

Table 2. State Breakdown of NWD Declaration Rates

	2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	Declared	Not Declared	Declared	Not Declared	Declared	Not Declared
NSW	79.2%	20.8%	81.7%	18.3%	84.5%	15.5%
Qld	83.9%	16.1%	87.8%	12.2%	87.1%	12.9%
SA	80.6%	19.4%	81.2%	18.8%	83.5%	16.5%
TAS	85.2%	14.8%	85.9%	14.1%	87.1%	12.9%
VIC	78.2%	21.8%	79.0%	21.0%	79.3%	20.7%
WA	58.5%	41.5%	55.1%	44.9%	59.2%	40.8%

State Trends in NWD Declaration Rates by Season

The table shows changes in NWD participation by state over the past three seasons. Overall, most states recorded higher declaration rates in 2025/26 year to date compared with 2023/24, alongside a corresponding reduction in the proportion of wool listed as *Not Declared*.

New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria each show gradual increases in declared wool across the period. Queensland's declaration rate remains high relative to earlier seasons, with minor variation between 2024/25 and 2025/26 year

to date. Tasmania continues to record one of the highest declared proportions, with more than 87% of wool declared in 2025/26 to date.

Western Australia differs from the national pattern, with declaration rates lower than other states across all three seasons shown. However, WA also recorded an improvement in 2025/26 year to date compared with the previous season, indicating a partial recovery from the decline observed in 2024/25.

Queensland and Tasmania continue to lead declaration and Non-Mulesed rates.

Both states benefit from lower flystrike risk – Tasmania due to its cooler climate and Queensland due to shorter fly seasons – making Non-Mulesed production more achievable and sustainable. As a result, these regions consistently set the benchmark for Non-Mulesed wool volumes.

While total bale numbers in 2025/26 are lower year-to-date compared with full previous seasons, the underlying shift toward increased declaration rates and higher participation remains evident.

Table 3. NWD Declaration Rates by Micron for 2025/26 season

Category	Merino <18.6	Merino 18.6-20.5	Merino 20.6-24.6	Merino >24.6	Merino Total	Non-Merino <18.6	Non-Merino 18.6-20.5	Non-Merino 20.6-24.6	Non-Merino >24.6	Non-Merino Total
Non M.	23.2	13	11.4	24.8	18.1	43.3	50.2	48.5	52.9	51.9
Ceased M.	3.7	3.9	3.7	0	3.8	0	1	1.2	2.1	1.9
Liq Nit	0.2	0	0.1	0	0.1	0	0	0	0	0
AA	53.4	53.6	50.1	16.8	53.2	10.4	13.5	13.5	11	11.6
Mulesed	4.8	8.4	10	20.1	6.6	0	0.5	2	3.1	2.8
Not Decl.	14.8	21.1	24.7	38.3	18.2	46.3	34.7	34.8	30.8	31.8
Total (Bales)	293886	235231	44483	149	573749	164	1465	32202	106741	140572

Micron trends in NWD Declaration Rates for the 2025/26 Season

Merino wool in the finer micron ranges is more likely to be declared, with wool under 18.6 microns recording the lowest proportion listed as *Not Declared* (14.8%). As micron increases, the proportion of Merino wool sold without a declaration also rises, reaching 38.3% in the broadest micron category (>24.6 microns).

Across the Merino clip, the overall declaration rate is 81.8%, while the Non-Merino declaration rate is lower at 68.2%. For Non-Merino wool, the *Not Declared* category remains highest in the broader micron ranges, although declaration rates improve in the finer microns

The table shows a clear contrast between

finer and broader micron ranges, with *Not Declared* wool accounting for a smaller share in finer microns and increasing progressively as microns broaden. This pattern is consistent across both Merino and Non-Merino wool, indicating that micron range is closely associated with declaration outcomes.

Table 4. Premiums and Discounts for Mulesing Status (c/kg clean) for the past three seasons (comparison with declared as Mulesed)

		Micron										
		16	17	18	19	20	21	23	25	28	29	30
Non Mulesed (NM)	2023/24	19	17	17	7	2			0	5	4	
	2024/25	25	20	9	8	5				5		
	2025/26			70	48	52	45	50	30			50
Ceased Mulesing (CM)	2023/24			9	5	2	1					
	2024/25		20	8	6	2				2		
	2025/26			52	45	33	25	28	23			25
Mulesed with Analgesic &/or Anaesthetic (AA)	2023/24			8	5	2	1		0	4	4	
	2024/25	8	7	7	6	2				2	2	
	2025/26			2	5	3						

Source: AWEX

This table outlines the premium and discount outcomes for different NWD declaration categories over the past three seasons, using mulesed wool as the pricing baseline. In the current season, premiums available for both non-mulesed (NM) and

ceased mulesed (CM) wool are notably higher than those seen in previous years.

If these premiums continue to be available, they are likely to influence the mix of wool offered under each declaration category over time, which may in turn

affect premium levels. Overall, the data reinforces the importance of providing declaration information, as wool sold without an NWD is more commonly subject to discounts compared with declared wool.

'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 AWI Communications Officer, Kate Rice, at kate.rice@wool.com



Shearing for Hope

Home to just over 250 people, the small town of Wanalta in Victoria comes together each year for a very special event. The initiative of local Katrina Ogden, Shearing for Kids with Cancer, is an annual fundraiser that wrapped up its eleventh event in July 2025.

Shearers, young and old, along with a crowd of locals and supporters, make their way to the Barlow family farm, 'Corydon',

showcasing what being part of a small rural community is all about.

The fundraiser began when the 3-year-old daughter of a local family was diagnosed with a Wilms tumour. Needing treatment, the local community saw an opportunity to assist, holding a goods and services auction. At this auction, Bill, Katrina's husband, donated a day of shearing and from there the event grew.

In 2025, the event raised \$84,377.84 for My Room Children's Cancer Charity, totalling well over half a million dollars since the fundraiser's inception.

The 2025 fundraiser was captured beautifully by Lill Daley Photography ([lovedbylill.photography](https://www.lovedbylill.com)). Lill is a photographer based in Central Victoria who enjoys capturing rural farming families.



A day's work at Delatite

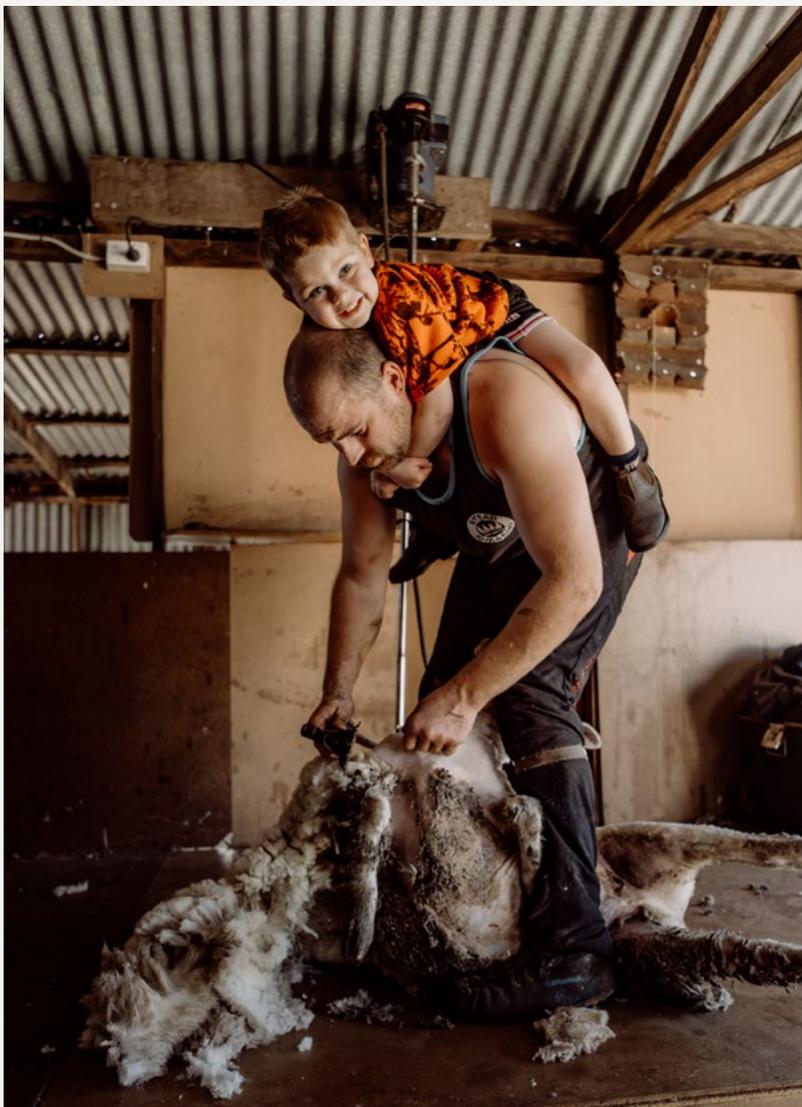
Situated at the foot of the Victorian high country, Delatite Station ([@delatite_station](https://www.delatitestation.com.au)) is a fourth-generation family-operated grazing enterprise. Established in 1861, the property boasts a rich history with many of the original sheds and buildings still standing.

During a day of jetting Merinos, Amelia Bruggy ([@ameliabruggy](https://www.ameliabruggy.com.au)) caught Kelly Walker in action.



Living history in the shearing shed

Holowiliena Station ([@holowiliena_station](https://www.holowiliena.com.au)) is the only South Australian pastoral lease still held by the family of the original lessees, dating back to 1852. With forth, fifth and sixth generations actively involved with the station, history is alive and well; ingrained in everyday life.



Generations in the Shed

Rural photographer Tanya Eather (@fitzroyflats_photography) captures the family affair that is a day in the sheds with the family-owned and operated South West Shearing.

Based in Southwest Victoria, South West Shearing is owned and operated by Brett Caldwell. Here, Tanya captures Brett in action. With his son keeping a close eye on business, the image tells a story of how rural knowledge is passed on – not through words, but through presence and a shared passion for the rural way of life.



Galari bila Embrace

Mary-Ann Wright discovered felting 15 years ago and has been hooked ever since. On her mixed family farm near Cowra, NSW, Mary-Ann makes wearable art using 17–19 micron Australian wool.

Now branching into felt sculpture, pictured here is Mary-Ann's latest creation. Winning the judges' award at her local gallery, the piece, entitled 'Galari bila Embrace,' is an ode to the Lachlan River.

Racing Santa's sleigh

The hustle, bustle (and dust) of shearing two days before Christmas. With Santa and rain on the horizon, the race was on. Amid the action, photographer and Southwest Victorian sheep and cattle grazer, Edwina Moutray (@e.m.images_) snapped this beautiful shot.



AUTUMN 2026 EDITION
PUBLISHED MARCH 2026

EDITOR
Kristen Frost
kristen.frost@wool.com

Australian Wool Innovation Limited
L3, 24 York Street,
Sydney NSW 2000
GPO Box 4177, Sydney NSW 2001
02 8295 3100
info@wool.com
wool.com

Beyond the Bale is published by Australian Wool Innovation Ltd (AWI), a company funded by Australian woolgrowers and the Australian Government.

COPYRIGHT

Material in *Beyond the Bale* is copyright. Reproduction of the material is encouraged. However prior permission must be obtained from the Editor.

DISCLAIMER

To the extent permitted by law, Australian Wool Innovation Ltd excludes all liability for loss or damage arising from the use of, or reliance on, the information contained in this publication. The Woolmark symbol is a Certification mark in many countries. © 2026 Australian Wool Innovation Ltd. All rights reserved.

ADVERTISING SALES

Justin Bowler, Pulse Hub Pty Ltd
P 0429 699 553
E justin.bowler@mmg.com.au

Advertising is subject to terms and conditions published on the ratecard, which is available from Pulse Hub.

ISSN
1447-9680

AWI STATE-BASED GROWER NETWORKS

AWI Extension Networks are present in each state.

- AWI Extension NSW
- AWI Extension QLD
- AWI Extension SA
- AWI Extension TAS
- AWI Extension VIC
- AWI Extension WA

Find your AWI Extension Network at wool.com/networks or call AWI on 02 8295 3100.

Shearwell
Data

Livestock Systems



NLIS & visual tags for sheep, goats & cattle



High Quality
Products



Excellent
Customer Service



Speedy
Turnaround

PLUS FREE postage when you order 1,500+ tags!



Two-Piece Visual BOS Tag

Durable visual management tags with excellent retention rates.
Customise your tags with a wide range of size, layout &
colour options. **For sheep & cattle.**



NLIS eID **One-piece**
Easy to apply, great retention.



**Don't miss our eID tag
offers for 2026!**

10% BONUS Tags
on first order of 200+ tags

or

FREE Applicators
on qualifying orders of 200+ tags

Offers apply to the first qualifying order of NLIS Sheep eID
one-piece tags in 2026. T&Cs apply - See our website for details.

**Tag well with
Shearwell**

All your tag requirements covered - Sheep & Cattle tags you can rely on

Available at your local rural retailer | shearwell.com.au | Call 1800 998 934

