Beyond the bale

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PROFIT FROM WOOL INNOVATION
www.wool.com

THE FIBRE OF FOOTBALL

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Beyond the Bale is published by Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI), a company funded by Australian woolgrowers and the Australian Government. AWI's goal is to help increase the demand for wool by actively selling Merino wool and its attributes through investments in marketing, innovation and R&D – from farm to fashion and interiors.

AWI INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

- **On-Farm R&D**
- **Off-Farm R&D**
- **Marketing**
- **Global Business Services**

**OFF-FARM**

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GETTING ON WITH BUSINESS

We are continuing with initiatives to help increase the demand for wool through investments in marketing and R&D – from farm to fashion.

SHEARER AND WOOL HANDLER TRAINING

Adequate numbers of highly skilled professional staff to harvest and handle a high quality Australian wool clip in a timely manner are key to the sustainability and profitability of the Australian wool industry. AWI funds training for shearers and wool handlers across a range of skill development activities. During the 2013/14 financial year, 2269 training visits were made by shearers (a 44% increase from 2012/13) and 1320 training visits were made by wool handlers (a 34% increase from 2012/13) directly through AWI-funded programs across Australia. An additional 781 training visits were made by participants in crutching and other shearing and wool handling workshops. Last year, AWI also provided support to 55 local shearing competitions to help promote excellence within the industry and to encourage young people to join the industry’s ranks.

LIFETIME EWE MANAGEMENT (LTEM)

On-going evaluation of LTEM group members continues to show significant benefits to participants through improved net reproduction rate. The average LTEM participant manages around 3500 ewes and has increased whole farm lamb marking by 10 per cent, reduced ewe mortality by 33 per cent and increased stocking rate by 12 per cent, thereby increasing number of lambs marked per hectare by 23 per cent. Demand for LTEM training increased during the past year from an already strong base, with 85 AWI-funded groups completing the training, and 137 new groups established across all states. In total AWI funding has supported more than 250 groups to complete LTEM training.

FLYSTRIKE R&D REMAINS HIGH PRIORITY

Flystrike continues to be the most significant welfare threat to the Australian sheep flock. AWI has a proactive and committed flystrike prevention research, development and extension program. At the National Wool R&D Technical Update on Breech Flystrike Prevention held last month, attendees heard about the progress of AWI initiatives including breeding for flystrike resistance, genomics, the SkinTraction® intradermal, the liquid nitrogen process, integrated parasite management, and the drug Meloxicam that provides pain relief during animal husbandry procedures. It was pleasing to hear animal welfare organisations that attended the day congratulate AWI on its R&D program. AWI supports all woolgrowers in their choice of best practice animal health and welfare control options to manage flystrike.

INTERNATIONAL WOOLMARK PRIZE

The regional finalists have been announced for the 2014/15 International Woolmark Prize global finals, to be held next year in London for menswear and Beijing for womenswear. The interest in this award from the fashion communities and media globally continues to be phenomenal – over the past two years the initiative has generated more than $105 million in editorial value. It is helping put wool back on the agendas of fashion designers across the world, and consequently into retail stores for consumers to purchase. Items from the 2013/14 International Woolmark Prize winning collection of Rahul Mishra are now commercially available across the world and will be available in the Sydney city store of David Jones next month.

MERINO WOOL. NO FINER FEELING™

This fibre advocacy campaign continues to establish Merino wool as the fabric of choice for fine, contemporary fashion. The campaign involves AWI strengthening its partnerships with well-known designers and fashion houses and promoting wool across the world through numerous high-profile publications. The campaign now has more than 80 partners globally – well above the target of 42 that AWI set out to achieve in AWI’s 2013/14 to 2015/16 Strategic Plan. AWI has recently signed up the campaign’s first sports-related ambassador, international soccer star and World Cup winner Alessandro Del Piero, in a bid to bridge the gap between the use of wool in high fashion and high-performance sportswear.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The AWI 2014 AGM will be held on Friday 21 November at the Swissotel Sydney at 68 Market St, Sydney. Formal notice and meeting papers will be sent to AWI shareholders in October. AWI shareholders who are unable to attend the AGM in person will be able to view the AGM proceedings via webcast. Further details are available on the AWI website at www.wool.com/agm. The AWI 2013/14 Annual Report will also be released next month. It details the progress that AWI has made during the past financial year in achieving the targets that were set out in the company’s three-year 2013/14 to 2015/16 Strategic Plan.

BEYOND THE BALE

You will notice that Beyond the Bale has been given a refresh to make it more readable and contemporary. This flagship publication of AWI will continue as the main vehicle for communicating directly with AWI shareholders and other wool pipeline stakeholders. The magazine is produced in-house by our editorial and graphic design team, ensuring that costs are kept to a minimum. The hard copy of the magazine is complemented by an interactive online version, available at http://beyondthebale.wool.com, which provides access to videos and image galleries.

STUART McCULLOUGH
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
AUSTRALIAN WOOL INNOVATION

UPFRONT
AWI has launched the Fibre of Football campaign to celebrate the rich heritage of the Australian wool industry and Australian Football. The campaign involves placing wool back into football supporter gear and offering wool blend playing jumpers to country football clubs.

Shearers, woolgrowers, agents and studmasters are uniting to celebrate the connection between the wool industry and Australian Football through AWI’s Fibre of Football campaign.

The idea for Australian football was sparked on a sheep station in the 1850s when the son of a pastoralist was thinking of how cricketers could stay fit over the winter.

From Tom Wills’ idea grew a game now enjoyed by millions across Australia, and the fibre and Australian rules football have been knitted together ever since.

Australian football is still played where wool is grown. The local football team is still the centre of many wool-growing communities with signs from agents, contractors, studs, transport companies and merchandise outlets seen around the ground.

To celebrate this deep connection an introductory video ‘Australian Wool – The Fibre of Football’ has been produced, which is available on AWI’s YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/AWIWoolProduction.

AWI has worked with a current AFL licensee to put the fibre back into supporter gear with 100 per cent Merino wool jumpers available from next year. Every club will be selling the soft 21 micron jumpers in a heritage design and colours; no away strip, no clash strip. The jumpers will keep you warm at the footy or on the farm and alongside these jumpers will be fine wool scarves, beanies and gloves.

It has been the source of great pride to place the fibre back into football where it belongs.

The Fibre of Football campaign also involves placing the natural fibre back into the playing tops of country footballers. AWI has worked with a local manufacturer to produce and trial wool blend ‘MerinoPerform’ playing tops with the Coleraine Football Club in western Victoria: a region that has grown fine wool for 175 years.

The wool blend tops keep players warm in winter but also allow for the wicking of moisture away from the body and Coleraine players have commented on how much they enjoy wearing the new wool blend tops.

**NOMINATE SOMEONE FOR THE ULTIMATE WOOL TEAM**

AWI has partnered with The Footy Almanac to compile the Ultimate Wool Team; a team of people who have contributed significantly to both wool and football.

Those already nominated for the team include woolclasser Anthony Daniper (Sydney and Essendon), indigenous shearers Phil and Jim Krakouer (North Melbourne) and Merino studmaster Ross Ditchburn (Carlton), not to mention countless wool industry men and women who have been crucial to the wool industry and their local football club both on and off the field.

To nominate someone, get online and put your case forward on the ‘Greatest footballers from the wool industry’ page on The Footy Almanac website (www.footyalmanac.com.au).

**IMAGES AND STORIES OF WOOLLEN JUMPERS**

Together with the Ultimate Wool Team, the Footy Almanac is also collecting classic stories and images of people and their woollen football jumpers.

Any playing jumper evokes passion and pride but combine that with a love of the fibre and it is well worth recording and this can be done, again via The Footy Almanac.

The Fibre of Football celebrates two Australian icons that have supported each other throughout the evolution of our native game and our natural fibre. Both are central to the livelihoods and identities of many thousands of Australians.

As woolclasser and football fanatic Darren “Strop” Strawford from Dunkeld in
Victoria says, “in country towns the footy club is the lifeblood, we all gather together on a Saturday and we come and watch the football. The wool industry and football are intertwined and they are the most important things going on around here.”

**FYFE AND HAWKINS JOIN THE CAMPAIGN**

AWI is delighted to announce that two of the very best AFL players not only have wool connections but have joined the campaign to help promote the wool industry through football.

From Lake Grace in WA, Nat Fyfe’s family runs its transport business carting wool, livestock and grain. With a road train license, Nat helps out when he can and enjoys the time on the road as a healthy balance to the fishbowl life of being an AFL superstar for Fremantle.

Having completed a shearing school many years ago and currently studying to be a helicopter pilot, Nat certainly has a diverse range of skills beyond being the best footballer in the country according to many expert commentators.

Tom Hawkins and Nat Fyfe feel very at home sitting on quad bikes amongst the sheep at the Poplars Merino stud near Geelong.

His humble nature, love of the country and willingness to give back to the communities that supported him is as clear as his immense natural skill. He is the face of the AFL junior program known as Auskick in WA.

Geelong full forward Tom Hawkins was born an AFL player. Son of Geelong’s “Jumping Jack” Hawkins there was never any doubt about Tom’s destiny.

From a wool, cropping and rice property from Finley, NSW, Tom is also keen to return to the country one day but for now he is clearly enjoying being the focal point of the Geelong Football Club’s best ever run with premierships in 2009, 2011 and 2013. The career of this charming man included his Grand Final winning performance in 2011 where he booted three goals to get his club over the line and send hundreds of thousands of Geelong fans into hysteria.

A colossus, Tom’s strength and power around goal have him etched deeply in the game’s history as one of the great full forwards of the game.

Both Nat Fyfe and Tom Hawkins joined the Fibre of Football because they wish to promote the importance of farming and woolgrowing to the greater community and AWI is delighted to be working with such outstanding men.

The Coleraine Football Club in western Victoria is the first country footy club in Australia to wear the wool blend ‘MerinoPerform’ tops. The club trialled them for a few months and then ordered 70 of them.
AWI has signed Italian soccer legend Alessandro Del Piero as an ambassador for its global Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™ fibre advocacy campaign.

Del Piero is the campaign’s first sports-related ambassador, giving the campaign a fresh look and affirming the fibre’s position in the sportswear industry.

The partnership aims to bridge the gap between the use of wool in high fashion and high-performance sportswear.

AWI’s Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™ global fibre advocacy campaign will continue kicking goals across the world, having signed international soccer star and World Cup winner Alessandro Del Piero as its latest – and first sports-related – ambassador.

Del Piero, who most recently played for Sydney FC in the A-League, returned to Sydney in August to play for the A-League All Stars and confront his former team Juventus – the club for which he played for 19 years and scored a club record of 290 goals. During his illustrious career, he also played in three World Cups with the Italian national team, and was part of the team that won the 2006 World Cup.

During his recent visit to Sydney, he officially announced to Australian media his partnership with AWI, holding a press conference – and showing off his soccer skills with a ball of wool – against the iconic backdrop of Sydney Harbour.

A series of photographs featuring Del Piero will be rolled out later this year as part of the Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling™ campaign. The images – photographed by legendary Italian photographer Oliviero Toscani, who shot to fame in the late-1980s and early-1990s with his infamous and controversial United Colors of Benetton campaign – will help bridge the gap between premium fashion and high-performance activewear and feature Del Piero sporting apparel from Z Zegna Sport’s Techmerino collection.

“When I wear Merino wool I feel comfortable. I feel right with myself, because I can do everything. I can go everywhere and this is exactly what I’m looking for. It’s great and I love it,” explained Del Piero.

“The collaboration between Woolmark and myself makes me feel very proud and honoured, because I have always been considered and seen in the eyes of other football players as someone with great natural quality, combined with hard work and great talent, and this is exactly what one finds in Merino wool, an incredible quality and a natural fibre. And so it is not only a great collaboration but it also goes well with who I am and this makes me particularly happy and makes me feel very close to Woolmark.”

AWI’s Global Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer Rob Langtry said the Italian superstar, who has a strong appreciation for fashion, will continue to strengthen the relationship between the Australian wool industry and the Italian fashion industry, highlighting the versatility of Merino wool and affirming the fibre’s position in the sportswear industry.

“Merino wool is well-placed to address the growing global trend of casualisation, producing dynamic fabrics ideal for active casual wear and blurring the boundaries with traditional premium fashion,” Mr Langtry said.

“Educating consumers about the versatility of our fibre and its use in fine fashion, high-tech sports and casualwear is challenging, and who better to help us meet that challenge than the world’s finest.

“Alessandro Del Piero’s natural talent and familiarity with Australia will help us bridge the gap in consumers’ knowledge and demonstrate what happens when the world’s best natural talent meets the world’s finest natural fibre.”
The August edition of British Vogue devoted 16 pages of its Autumn/Winter catwalk issue to the beauty of Merino wool in a seaside fashion spread, featuring apparel from well known international fashion labels such as Victoria Beckham, Vivienne Westwood and Alexander Wang.

The UK remains one of the most important and dynamic markets in fashion apparel, in both marketing and manufacturing terms. The feature is running as part of AWI’s Merino Wool. No Finer Feeling® fibre advocacy campaign, which aims to inform a new generation of consumers – and the fashion community – about the natural attributes and benefits of Merino wool. The campaign continues to establish Merino wool as the fibre of choice for fine, contemporary fashion.

Titled ‘Enduring Love’, the 16-page feature has been inspired by earth and sea and, interestingly, reflects the Cinque Ports theme that was contained in AWI’s The Wool Lab for Autumn/Winter 2014/15, which presented austere but fascinating places on the shores of the English Channel.

The feature also celebrates the 50-year anniversary of the famed Woolmark logo.

“Woolmark has stayed at the forefront of fashion evolution…the Woolmark symbol is a guaranteed luxury,” says Vogue. “Nothing quite beats the feeling of slipping on a love-worn sweater or an enveloping coat that has the esteemed Woolmark sewn in as a sign of high standards.

“Instantaneous comfort is guaranteed, satisfaction is achieved and memories are evoked.”

Wool’s presence as a fibre for all seasons is shown, with British Vogue illustrating a Victoria Beckham coat as a perennial must-have piece. “A coat for every season is that elusive item that we search for with persistence…this Merino coat keeps your internal thermometer constant, so belt up come rain or shine.”

With photographer Yelena Yemchuk behind the lens, stylist Agata Belcen explores the breadth of texture and finishes that can be achieved using Merino wool. Woven, knitted, brushed, felted, sheeping and even a modern take on tweed all feature in the spread, a whimsical journey to the seaside.

The companion video brings the dreamy ambience of the Vogue spread to life as the heroine of the piece pensively takes in the vista and frolics on the beach in luxury apparel and a blanket wrap, evoking next-to-skin comfort in a Marilyn Monroe reminiscent carefree style.

The feature has a digital presence on British Vogue’s website and a competition held by The Woolmark Company, British Fashion Council and Vodafone gave British Vogue readers the chance to win VIP tickets to Vodafone London Fashion Weekend.

And, as British Vogue says, the appreciation for these luxurious pieces knows no end – a love affair with Woolmark is one for life.

MORE INFORMATION
www.merino.com/enduring-love
BRITISH GQ AND ICONIC DESIGNERS CELEBRATE WOOLMARK

Influential menswear fashion magazines British GQ and GQ Style have together dedicated 24 pages of their September issues to celebrating the 50th anniversary of the iconic Woolmark symbol.

The magazines feature 14 of the world’s most inspiring menswear designers, such as Giorgio Armani and Dolce & Gabbana, who all use wool in their collections.

As well as being essential to the Woolmark Licensing Program, the Woolmark logo is pivotal to most of the marketing that AWI undertakes on behalf of Australian woolgrowers.

GQ Style is featuring eight pages in its Autumn/Winter edition, adapting and enhancing the British GQ feature with additional designers including Richard Nicoll, James Long and Angela Missoni.

British GQ is also running a competition to help spread the love for Merino wool, and has created a short film interviewing designers about their love for wool.

In the video, Sir Paul Smith says: “Over the years since I started there’s been lots of other new high-tech fabrics that have arrived but I always tend to stick with my wool.”

Richard Nicoll comments: “I think the way we work with wool now has come along light years. What’s interesting for me is using wool in a more comfortable and lighter, modern way.”

And Vivienne Westwood says: “Wool is the most ecologically friendly fibre.”
Japanese textile company Nikke was one of the first companies to become a Woolmark licensee, back in 1964.

The launch of the Woolmark brand 50 years ago heralded the beginning of the Woolmark Licensing Program through which companies can become Woolmark licensees and use the Woolmark logo as an independent quality endorsement on its products. Any product bearing the Woolmark logo meets strict wool content and quality and performance criteria.

One of the first companies to become a Woolmark licensee, and the first ever Japanese company to become a licensee, was Nikke (The Japanese Wool Textile Co., Ltd) which joined back in 1964. Since then, Nikke has worked with AWI, its subsidiary The Woolmark Company, and their predecessors, in a long-standing relationship with the Woolmark brand.

Established in 1896, Nikke creates 100 per cent wool fabrics and yarns which are supplied to businesses including apparel brands, retailers, fabric wholesalers and designers, and used in a variety of end products such as menswear, womenswear, childrenswear, and school and corporate uniforms.

“The Woolmark brand brought us honour, pride, responsibility and obligation as the first licensee in Japan,” said Nikke spokesperson Mr Sumiyuki Kimura.

“Since the Woolmark brand is only applied to certified products as a proof of high quality, it will provide consumers with value and reliability, and high recognition of Woolmark increases the value of wool products.”

Nikke has collaborated with The Woolmark Company through the years on many events and exhibitions. As part of Nikke’s 100th anniversary in 1996, staff collected school uniforms from around the world for a showcase which Nikke rates as one of the highlights of the relationship with The Woolmark Company.

In 2010 Nikke held one of its biggest exhibitions in the long history of the company. The Nikke Textile & Clothing Materials Exhibition showcased premium Merino wool fabrics and saw Nikke give the nod of approval for the newly launched Campaign for Wool – which was introduced into Japan the following year.

In partnership with AWI, Nikke also launched Wool Man – a children’s ‘hero’ character which offers wool’s benefits to the younger generation and has since been translated in English and Chinese. Wool Man booklets were distributed free-of-charge to primary schools which wore uniforms made from Nikke fabric, helping tell the story of wool.

Nikke has also worked closely with The Woolmark Company over the years to develop product innovations such as Luster Wool (Mercerised Merino) and Sportwool.

“And thanks to its (wool’s) qualities, almost all the designers that British GQ has worked with, featured and photographed for the past 26 years, from Armani to Zegna, have used wool in all its forms to create everything from suits to knitwear, coats to high-performance sportswear and base layers.

“…Australia has become a mecca to the finest designers and tailors from London to Milan and all points in between who come in search of excellence – and, as you can see here, they find it.”

Nikke displaying a large range of mainly wool products at the ‘Nikke Textile & Clothing Material Exhibition’ in 2010.

Mr Kimura lists a number of other innovations that have been beneficial to business: “Various functional finishing techniques that strengthen the natural performance of wool, such as water and oil repellency, anti-wrinkle, natural stretch, and flame resistance. And the development of various hybrid fabrics by intimate blending, combined weaving or co-twisting with synthetic fibres such as polyester.”

However, he said the geniality, warmth and freshness of wool will always be its strength.

“Luxurious, sustainable, traceable and its green credentials are the important words,” he declared.

Nikke creates 100 per cent wool fabrics and yarns which are used in a full range of products including menswear, womenswear, childrenswear, school and corporate uniforms.

AWI works closely with Nikke in co-developing fabric innovations and promoting wool.
At London Collections: Men fashion week, AWI partnered with three leading UK menswear designers that use Cool Wool fabrics in their latest spring/summer collections. AWI also teamed up with Savile Row to present the next installment of ‘The English Gentleman’ promotion, highlighting Merino wool as a premium fibre suitable for travel in warmer climes.

A WI has expanded its activities and partnerships at the menswear-specific fashion week London Collections: Men, including The English Gentleman promotion, as a way to highlight the relevance of Merino wool within men’s fashion for the spring and summer seasons.

With London cementing its reputation as the global home of menswear, and men’s fashion becoming increasingly more prominent each season, AWI sees the importance and value in supporting influential UK menswear designers.

“We collaborate each season with a selection of emerging talent and established iconic designers,” explained AWI Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer Rob Langtry. “We introduce them to the qualities of the fibre and assist them with product development and connections to a wider network of Woolmark licensed Merino wool suppliers.”

Designers Lou Dalton, Christopher Raeburn and Richard James returned to the London Collections: Men runways in June, in partnership with AWI, further embracing Cool Wool fabrics and expressing their own vision and interpretation of the fibre for the spring/summer 2015 season.

Lou Dalton worked alongside UK mill Charles Clayton and was also sponsored with cloth by Lanifico F.lli Cerruti to showcase her signature contemporary classicism and refined tailoring, but engineered in a fresh and less formal garment form.

An online campaign, involving designer participation, was run to spread the message to consumers that Merino wool is a fibre for all seasons.

For Christopher Raeburn, spring/summer 2015 was the designer’s third season working with AWI, specifically on Cool Wool, and he presented an innovative collection containing super lightweight woven Merino wool fabrics in suit jackets, shorts and trousers, as well as knitted casual vests and hybrid hoodies.

The latest collection for Savile Row designer Richard James drew inspiration from the Sahara Desert, with lightweight Cool Wool fabrics returning for yet another season to allow the Richard James man to remain cool in the heat of the moment.

As part of the Cool Wool promotion at London Collections: Men, AWI also ran a Sheep Art campaign in which several leading UK designers were invited to create their interpretation of a Merino sheep, which not only complemented the use of Merino wool for their spring/summer 2015 collections but also embodied the essence of Cool Wool: that wool is a fibre for all seasons. The designers’ artwork was exhibited throughout London Collections: Men and an online competition was held to promote the hashtag Cool Wool (#coolwool) and expose the Cool Wool message to consumers.

**THE ENGLISH GENTLEMAN**

In a similar manner to past seasons in association with London Collections: Men, AWI once again teamed up with the fine tailors of Savile Row to present the modern face of British elegance via ‘The English Gentleman’ promotion. Events in previous seasons have been held at Lord’s Pavilion and the Cabinet War Rooms.

This season however, The English Gentleman was ‘on leave’ – preparing for an overseas trip to Rio. Actor Ed Stoppard, who is famous for playing Sir Hallam Holland in Upstairs, Downstairs, and Bridey Flyte in Brideshead Revisited, stars in images and a film associated with the promotion. The film documents The English Gentleman’s preparation for his trip as he visits the tailors of Savile Row and commissions the bespoke Merino wool pieces he will need, all while delivering to the audience the spring/summer message that ‘Wool is Cool for summer’.

“We highly value our collaboration with Savile Row in producing ‘The English Gentleman’ each season,” says Mr Langtry. “It highlights the craftsmanship and heritage associated with this sector of the menswear industry, bringing the tailors and Merino wool to the forefront of the global fashion arena and international press. The importance of Savile Row never diminishes and in recent years has increased its popularity, and the influence of fine tailoring, on key global markets including the USA, Japan and China.”

**MORE INFORMATION**

www.merino.com/coolwool

www.merino.com/the-english-gentlemen
The International Woolmark Prize reaffirms AWI’s deep connection with the global fashion industry and helps to promote Merino wool at a commercial level. High-profile and important retailers have thrown their support behind the coveted award, committing to stock the global winners’ collection in-store.

2012/13 International Woolmark Prize winner Christian Wijnants enjoyed commercial success with his winning collection, with each retail partner selling out of product.

Now, the highly anticipated six-piece collection from 2013/14 International Woolmark Prize winner Rahul Mishra is being rolled out into stores across the world.

Exclusive online partner mytheresa.com, Saks and Harvey Nichols have already launched the collection, with David Jones in Sydney to stock the collection from next month.

The award reaffirms AWI’s connection with the global fashion industry and highlights the union with the Australian wool industry.

2013/14 International Woolmark Prize winner Rahul Mishra’s collection is being rolled out into stores across the world.

International Woolmark Prize retail partner mytheresa.com, Saks and Harvey Nichols have already launched the collection, with David Jones in Sydney to stock the collection from next month.

The collection is made of lightweight Merino wool featuring progressive hand embroidery on beautifully tailored and sculpturally designed pieces, including a cape-style jacket and fitted tube-style dress.

The graphically designed embroidery tells a story of the evolution from an eight-petal lotus which morphs into complex structures, representing the city landscape reflecting the lifecycle of wool as it comes from the land through to the streets of cities around the world.

“I am thrilled to be stocked in some of the best retailers in the world thanks to AWI,” explains Mishra. “It is going to be really great for our brand on the commercial front; getting into these stores is a dream for any designer.”

AWI CEO Stuart McCullough says the International Woolmark Prize is an ongoing commitment by AWI.

“It is a commitment to the finest emerging talent in fashion design right across the world and a commitment to celebrating the infinite potential of Merino wool,” Mr McCullough said.

“The award highlights how innovative Australian Merino wool is and Rahul Mishra’s winning collection is a fine example of this. Having high-profile retail partners support the award and commercialise the product encourages emerging talent and reaffirms the union between the Australian wool industry and the global fashion industry.”
DOUBLE DELIGHT FOR AUSTRALIAN DUO

Melbourne design label STRATEAS.CARLUCCI has won the 2014/15 International Woolmark Prize Australia regional final for both menswear and womenswear.

The International Woolmark Prize aims to increase the global demand for Australian Merino wool, by promoting the versatility of the fibre and aligning young talent with commercial opportunities.

The expansion of the global initiative into a menswear category this year signifies its strength and its impact on the fashion industry.

A ustralian fashion label STRATEAS.CARLUCCI has weaved its way into fashion history, becoming the first nominee for the International Woolmark Prize to win both the menswear and womenswear categories. The Melbourne-based design duo won the Australia regional final, and will now go on to compete next year at the menswear final to be held in London and the womenswear final in Beijing.

To increase the global demand for Australian wool, it is vital to demonstrate the key role for the fibre in the international fashion industry. Connecting the world’s leading fashion designers with Australian Merino wool is extremely important due to the enormous influence these designers have in setting global textile trends for mainstream retail brands. Through the International Woolmark Prize, AWI also provides the opportunity for the winners’ collections to be stocked in some of the world’s most influential department stores, including David Jones.

Of the judging panel of the Australia regional final, providing valuable advice to each of the young talents, and whose use of wool is an inspiration to many designers worldwide. Mr Mouret noted the importance of awards such as the International Woolmark Prize in fostering the education of emerging designers.

“It was a pleasure to be a part of the International Woolmark Prize,” said Mr Mouret at the awards presentation. “The experience allowed me to have a personal opinion regarding the future of Australian design and I am a big believer that with the support of The Woolmark Company, they will succeed.”

Previous winners Christian Wijnants and Rahul Mishra have seen commercial success, proving that wool has a rightful place in the global fashion arena.

For the design duo from STRATEAS.CARLUCCI, the opportunity to compete...
USA WINNERS
Menswear winners Dao-Yi Chow and Maxwell Osborne of PUBLIC SCHOOL and model (centre), Womenswear winner Marcia Patmos of M.PATMOS, with model (second right).

EUROPE WINNERS
Womenswear winners Odély Teboul and Annelie Augustin of Augustin Teboul from Germany, with model (centre). Menswear winner Asger Juel Larsen from Denmark, with model (left).

INDIA & MIDDLE EAST WINNERS
Womenswear winner Rayya Morcos of Bird on a Wire from Lebanon, with model (second left); the three Golkar brothers of The Emperor 1688 from the UAE, with model (second right) who won the menswear category.

ASIA WINNERS
Womenswear winners Nicole Lin and Victor Zhu of VMAJOR from China, with model (far left); and menswear winner Seishin Matsui of Sise from China, with model (far right).

INTERNATIONAL WOOLMARK PRIZE GLOBAL REACH IN 2013/14 FINANCIAL YEAR

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TWITTER IMPRESSIONS</th>
<th>FACEBOOK IMPRESSIONS</th>
<th>EDITORIAL VALUE</th>
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<tr>
<td>144.4 MILLION</td>
<td>9.6 MILLION</td>
<td>$105 MILLION</td>
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on the global stage and promote their brand at the finals of the award is very exciting for them.

“We’re absolutely thrilled, overwhelmed and grateful for this amazing opportunity,” explained Mario-Luca Carlucci shortly after the announcement. “Having Roland Mouret as part of the judging panel was amazing and his honesty struck a chord with both Peter and myself. The constructive criticism and feedback from someone from that calibre – and from all of the judges – is an amazing experience.”

STRATEAS.CARLUCCI was inspired for their designs by indigenous artist Emily Kame Kngwarreye, even going so far as to research the story behind the artist’s tribe and gaining approval from the traditional landowners.

“It was the commentary surrounding her work which inspired us the most, and we wanted to show that a fibre such as Merino wool could be modern yet traditional at the same time and celebrate the diversity of wool.”

Both the menswear and womenswear outfits created by STRATEAS.CARLUCCI had complementary detailing, and each was created in three stages.

“The overcoat was a hybrid wool jacquard fabric, which the design was inspired by late indigenous artist Emily Kame Kngwarreye. The two-piece suit was comprised of 100 per cent Australian Merino wool, which had been coated in a polyurethane resin, which not only retains the handle and natural properties of the wool, but also prolongs the lifespan of the garment. In the final stage, we created a lightweight fabric with a sheer silk handle using the finest micron.”

STRATEAS.CARLUCCI will now represent Australia at the international finals next year for both menswear and womenswear when regional winners from India and the Middle East, China, Europe and America will vie for the overall prize in each category.

“The International Woolmark Prize is a truly global celebration of emerging talent, providing designers with the opportunity for immediate commercial success on a global scale,” AWI CEO Stuart McCullough said.

“By working across the entire supply chain, AWI is able to provide a launch pad for young designers and promote the versatility of Australian Merino wool. The addition of a menswear award for this year signifies the strength and following of the International Woolmark Prize and its impact over the past two years across the globe.”

MORE INFORMATION
www.woolmarkprize.com
To celebrate the fifth year of the Campaign for Wool in the UK, campaign patron HRH the Prince of Wales held an event at his Clarence House residence to highlight the natural benefits and eco-credentials of wool to the media.

Celebrating wool and how it contributes to global fashion and interior textiles, the lawns of Clarence House were dotted with models showcasing a wide variety of wool apparel, alongside key textile industry guests including Marks & Spencer CEO Mark Bolland, Ermenegildo Zegna chairman Count Paolo Zegna, Loro Piana chairman Pier Luigi Loro Piana and Campaign for Wool chairman Nicholas Coleridge CBE.

A woolgrower himself, HRH the Prince of Wales understands the importance of educating and raising awareness amongst consumers about the unique benefits of wool – the ultimate natural, renewable and biodegradable fibre. The event sought to highlight two particular benefits of wool: firstly, that it is a safe fibre thanks to its natural fire retardant properties; and secondly, it quickly biodegrades when in soil compared to other fibres.

**FIRE RETARDANT**
Of the commonly used textile fibres, including cotton, rayon, polyester, acrylic and nylon, wool is widely regarded as the most flame resistant, and it will neither melt nor stick to your skin or furnishings.

The day before the event at Clarence House, the Campaign for Wool patron, along with the Campaign for Wool chairman Nicholas Coleridge CBE, conducted and filmed a flammability test on wool in a specially constructed fireproof stage.

Put to the test was a wool duvet, a wool jacket and wool carpet, along with their synthetic counterparts.

The flammability test film was screened at the Campaign for Wool celebrations, showcasing the different results achieved between wool and synthetic fibres, with the aim to change the way consumers choose to furnish their homes and ultimately increase the demand for wool home textiles such as carpets and bedding.

**BIODEGRADABLE**
Keen to also demonstrate the biodegradability of wool, HRH the Prince of Wales cast the first shovel of soil into a flowerbed at his Clarence House residence during the event in June. Buried side-by-side in the plot was a sweater made from wool and another made from a synthetic fibre.

“I am pretty sure we will discover that wool does no damage to the earth, simply replenishes it, whereas the masses of synthetic material we put in the ground simply stays there and eventually leeches many damaging chemicals,” explained HRH the Prince of Wales during the Campaign for Wool celebrations.

The two items of apparel are to be dug up four months’ after their burial during the UK’s Wool Week in October, to illustrate what – if anything of the wool sweater – is left in the soil.

AWI Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer Rob Langtry said the Campaign for Wool continues to gather momentum.

“Patron HRH The Prince of Wales reinforced his commitment to the campaign and his belief that, for the benefit of future generations, choosing wool is both a safer and more environmentally sound decision.

“In the presence of global leaders of the fashion apparel and interiors industries His Royal Highness drew attention to the compounding problem of synthetic fibres ending up in landfill. He also drew attention to the fact that in the interest of family safety, choosing wool lowers the everyday toxic risk that flammable synthetics made from petroleum products represent. It was heartening to see such a positive response from the media and industry.”

More information:
www.campaignforwool.org
AWI has received a heart-warming email from a lady whose one-year-old son’s sleep has greatly improved by him sleeping on a wool seat liner. Her son has Male Turner’s syndrome, and had previously had problems sleeping in his stroller.

In May this year, AWI received a request from a lady, Paula, in the UK for some washing instructions for the wool seat liner in her Bugaboo stroller.

During the ensuing correspondence between AWI and Paula, a heart-warming story emerged of the difference that the wool seat liner has made to Paula’s life, but in particular to her son, Harrison, who was born in May 2013 with a rare genetic chromosome condition.

Here is Paula’s story, in her own words, that she sent to AWI:

The last year has been like a rollercoaster ride. Harrison spent six weeks in intensive care and we were told to expect the worst. He had many problems including heart failure – he was a born fighter though and proved all the specialists wrong – he was diagnosed at two weeks’ old with a condition called 45x 46xy mosaic or often known as Male Turner’s syndrome.

He is a year old now and the size of a five month baby – he can’t sit, crawl or walk and he has problems feeding so he has to have an NG tube. He has regular physio and specialist appointments and sees doctors at the Evelina London Children’s Hospital at Guy’s and St Thomas’ in London.

He is the most gorgeous little boy and has a beautiful smile that lights up my world.

He has problems sleeping and the wool liner has changed that – his pushchair (the Bugaboo Bee) was too uncomfortable for him – due to his size – he spent the first year in the car seat but I decided to buy and try the liner and it’s changed everything – he loves his pushchair now and will sleep during the day in it. It has been a miracle and has opened up a new world for Harrison and a new chapter in our lives – I don’t feel trapped in the house anymore and I feel relieved he is happy in his pushchair.

We have a long way to go on our journey – but it’s the little things that make our life easier that helps us on that journey.

Thank you so much for the precious wool seat liner. You can’t imagine the difference it has made to our lives. We are forever in your debt.

The Bugaboo Wool Seat Liner is made of Woolmark certified 100% pure new wool pile of 23-27 micron on one side. It is one of three wool accessories in the Bugaboo Wool Collection, the other two being the Bugaboo Wool Blanket and Bugaboo Wool Mattress Cover made of Woolmark certified 100% extra fine Merino wool.

Bugaboo launched the collection, with support from AWI, last year in northern hemisphere markets and in March this year in Australia at the ‘Lal Lal Estate’ property of woolgrower Geoff Fisken – see the June edition of Beyond the Bale.

We wish Paula and Harrison, and the rest of their family, all the very best for the future.

Through targeted research and product development, AWI is building and extending the scientific basis for wool’s health and wellness credentials.

Stories like Paula’s certainly add weight to the claim that better sleep is achieved when sleeping with wool. As part of AWI’s on-going strategy, the company is establishing and building on pre-existing scientific evidence of wool’s inherent health and wellness credentials. This includes research to evaluate the comparative benefits of wool in the areas of sleep quality and quantity.

Previous studies suggest that sleep quality improves when sleeping on or under wool. This appears to be related to wool’s unique temperature and moisture management properties, and texture.

AWI is currently funding sleep research studies with three Australian organisations: University of Sydney, La Trobe University and RMIT University, and in addition, final touches are being put on an international collaboration involving commercial knitters focussed on Merino sleepwear.

AWI-funded research at the University of Sydney, which has featured in articles in previous editions of Beyond the Bale, has found that sleeping in Merino wool apparel can promote the ease of falling asleep and enhance deep sleep.

An AWI-funded pilot study into children’s sleep undertaken by La Trobe University suggests that the sleep environment affects child sleep outcomes and generated preliminary evidence that use of wool was associated with good sleep outcomes in the population surveyed. Follow-on research is under way.

This sleep research is also supported by the work of a team at RMIT University, which uses a high tech life-size manikin (named ‘Newton’) to compare the insulation properties of wool and non-wool sleepwear and bedding.
The Wool Development Centre (WDC) set up only 12 months ago in Shandong Province, China, has already been successful at developing innovative, high-value woven fabrics produced from Australian Merino wool.

Co-funded by AWI along with one of China’s leading woollen textile enterprises The Nanshan Group, AWI has been able to develop high-value woven fabrics with commercial viability.

The centre is successful at driving innovation and research to help create a wide variety of modern products for a growing market for Merino wool.

AWI’s technical team, based in Shanghai, has worked alongside The Nanshan Group and used the WDC to undertake numerous trials for fabric development, based on marketing trends. As a result, the trials have been able to successfully produce sample fabrics quickly and affordably, allowing for major breakthroughs in fabric development.

“Since the Wool Development Centre opened last October it has enabled our design and product development team, working closely with AWI’s technical team, to not only swap and develop ideas, but to very quickly check them out,” said General Factory Director of Nanshan’s Fabric and Garment division Mr Cao Yiru.

“Over the past six months or so, many new innovative wool woven fabrics have been developed, and the best of which we are planning to offer commercially.”

AWI General Manager Product Development and Commercialisation Jimmy Jackson added how AWI was pleased with the results from its collaborations with the Nanshan Group at the WDC.

“It is an important R&D and training base for AWI,” Mr Jackson said. “With the support of R&D at the WDC and the delivery of innovative Merino wool products, the natural benefits and properties of Merino wool will reach a wider consumer audience.”

NEW PRODUCT DEVELOPMENTS

**OPTIMJAM FABRICS**

With special fibre treatment technology, Merino wool fibres are treated to enhance the fibre’s elasticity. After optimising the spinning, weaving and finishing processes, the fabrics made from these elastic wool fibres have enhanced water and wind resistant properties and are also machine washable, without any chemical treatments.

OPTIMJam fabrics were promoted in the Spring/Summer 2015 edition of AWI’s The Wool Lab, released in January, and since then Nanshan has received very positive feedback, particularly from the sports/outdoor market, with major brands requesting sample swatches.

**MERINO AIR FABRICS**

This fabric is made from high-elastic Merino fibres blended with normal Merino wool. During the special finishing treatment, due to the shrinkage of fibres in the yarns, the end product has ultimate bulk and softness, with a luxurious handle feel. The fabric has a unique style which is full of stretch and texture.

The response to Merino Air fabric has been excellent, with customers from China, USA, France, Italy, Germany and Turkey requesting samples, and total sales of the fabric of more than 20,000 metres.

**MACHINE-WASHABLE WOOL SHIRT FABRICS**

The fabric is made from yarns which have been blended with a special treatment of Merino wool, mercerised Merino and a new type of cellulose fibre. The colours and patterns are classic British-style Scotland checks.

The fabrics are machine washable and have a soft, smooth and fluid handle. Spandex fibres can also be added to enhance the natural elasticity. Customers from China, France, the Netherlands and Italy have requested sample swatches, with sales of up to 5000 metres.
A new technology that rapidly moves liquid sweat through Merino wool fabric and away from the body is now commercially available.

Merino wool is well known for its moisture management properties – fabrics made from the fibre can absorb high quantities of moisture vapour and transfer the vapour molecules away from the body, thereby making the wearer less clammy. This is ideal for activities involving light exercise.

However, if the fibres in a Merino garment reach their moisture limit, liquid sweat will develop and remain on the skin, prevented from moving away from the skin by the hydrophobic (liquid repellant) surface of the wool.

The new technology – known as Hydro-duct – addresses the repellency of the wool. It enables the rapid absorption of liquid sweat into the fabric and transfer to the outer side for evaporation away into the atmosphere. This enables the production of Merino wool garments ideal for vigorous as well as light exercise.

This new one directional moisture management technology has been developed by Chinese company and Woolmark licensee Diyang Merino Textile Limited in partnership with AWI.

During a recent visit to Sydney to meet with local sports apparel companies, the technical director of Diyang Merino Textile Limited, Michael Yang, explained how the high-tech finish applied to the company’s Merino Ultimate™ fabrics provides the one directional moisture transfer.

“The Hydro-duct technology applied to Merino wool results in the fibres changing from hydrophobic to highly hydrophilic – that is, prone to absorbing liquid – thereby quickly moving sweat to the fabric’s outer side,” he said.

“This one-way wicking behaviour results in drier garments that feel more comfortable during exercise and reduce post exercise chills.

“Not only is sweat on the skin uncomfortable, but it can potentially be dangerous in cold environments that are encountered during outdoor pursuits such as mountaineering or skiing. Hydro-duct ensures that the wearer remains dry at all times, even throughout the most rigorous of sport or outdoor activities.

“The application of Hydro-duct technology to Merino wool fabrics is very resilient to multiple machine washings so will stay effective long after purchase.”

There is plenty of scientific data to back up the claims of durability as well as effectiveness – see below.

Based at Jiaxing in China, Diyang Merino Textile Limited is a quality knitter with dyeing, finishing, and knit garment production capabilities, specialising in fine micron Merino wool. The company supplies Merino wool circular knits to more than 100 trade customers worldwide mainly for the outdoor and sports markets.

The technical director of Diyang Merino Textile Limited, Michael Yang, demonstrating the new one directional moisture management technology Hydro-duct to AWI’s General Manager Product Development and Commercialisation, Jimmy Jackson.

MOISTURE MANAGEMENT TEST

The treated fabric absorbs most of the water within one second, and all of the water within two minutes. The untreated fabric only starts to absorb water five minutes after application and then at a relatively slow rate.

DURABILITY TO MACHINE WASHING TEST

The sample was washed at 40°C in a delicate cycle, flat dry. The results show that after multiple wash cycles there was no deterioration in the effectiveness of the Hydro-duct treatment.

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The technical director of Diyang Merino Textile Limited, Michael Yang, demonstrating the new one directional moisture management technology Hydro-duct to AWI’s General Manager Product Development and Commercialisation, Jimmy Jackson.
For the past two-and-a-half years, AWI has had its sights set on Russia. Once the second largest buyer of Australian wool, the demise of the political powerhouse in 1991 saw wool trade with Australia virtually stop, that is until 2011 when AWI launched its ‘To Russia with Wool’ project.

With its large population of nearly 150 million people and its extremes in temperature, Russia has emerged as a major retail market.

Since the launch of the campaign, AWI has signed on seven Russian Woolmark licensees. One of the latest licensees is a high-end Russian womenswear brand called ARTWIZARD, which is set to launch a Woolmark-certified collection for the Russian winter with the theme ‘Crazy Sheep’.

At the heart of the collection will be a series of Merino fur coats, hats, skirts, jackets, leg-warmers and bags.

“We call it luxury you don’t have to kill for,” explains AWI’s General Manager of Product Development and Commercialisation Jimmy Jackson.

“The coats and other items of apparel are made from 100 per cent Merino wool fabric, imitating furs of animals such as lama, rabbit, mink and fox. What is produced is extremely warm and stylish fur coats with no animal suffering."

ARTWIZARD will also be releasing a collection of 100 per cent wool jersey sweaters, pants, jackets and skirts in what they call ‘non-winter colours’.

“The collection is of the highest standard, with Italian mills Lanificio Guasti – the leading producer of Merino fur – supplying the Merino fur fabric and Zegna Baruffa Lane Borgosesia supplying CASHWOOL yarns to produce the wool jersey garments.”

ARTWIZARD head designer Natalia Efremova said that in addition to wool being a high-quality fibre, it was its warmth which made wool so attractive to Russia.

“Winter is really long and cold,” explains Ms Efremova. “More and more Russian women want to look good and feel warm during these six months and there are an increasing number of women who are choosing not to buy real fur.

“As a designer I would like to take the time to thank AWI for the chance to create a collection made from Australian Merino wool – the best wool in the world. I discovered unlimited possibilities of wool and would happily use it in a variety of formats, including wool fur. I’m also grateful for the opportunities to work with iconic Italian mills Lanifico Guasti and Zegna Baruffa.”

Another key Russian company to join the Woolmark licensing program is Russia’s largest hand-knitting yarn company, Pekhorskiy Textile and its Pekhorka brand. Opportunities for hand knitting in Russia are extremely large, particularly due to geographical distances.

“A lot of people knit in Russia,” says Mr Jackson. “When it’s sub-zero temperatures outside and you are thousands of kilometers away from a major city, hand-made Merino wool garments are a natural choice.”

Pekhorskiy Textile has worked alongside AWI to develop a new range of machine-washable hand-kitting yarns specifically for baby and childrenswear.

“Pekhorskiy Textile, together with AWI, has started a successful partnership and is now using high-quality Australian wool for yarn manufacturing,” explains Pekhorskiy Textile owner and CEO Elisaveta Tereshkina.

“The first joint project was the creation of a new yarn style called Tender Childhood, made from 100 per cent Australian Merino wool, with an anti-pilling superwash finishing. A new collection, comprising 10 children’s colours, has also been created in pastel shades.”

Owner and CEO of Pekhorskiy Textile Elisaveta Tereshkina with a ball of her machine-washable hand-kitting yarn made from Australian wool.

Merino fur is made from 100 per cent Merino wool backed by a 100 per cent Merino woven fabric.
AWI's 'Out of Vietnam' project has attracted 53 Vietnamese partners and is going from “strength to strength”. As well as garment manufacturers being involved, two Vietnamese spinners are learning how to produce wool yarns.

The transfer of technology in Vietnam has also led to AWI identifying two acrylic yarn spinners and teaching them both to produce a wool-acrylic blend. After a number of successful trials these two spinners are looking to invest in equipment to produce 100 per cent wool yarns.

Since 1999, Viet Nam Wool Company (LenViet) has specialised in producing acrylic yarns, but after working alongside AWI's technicians, the Vietnamese company is now working with wool.

"We now have a worsted spinning line with 3000 spindles, more than 80 flatbed knitting machines, one blanket weaving mill and one fur fabric mill,” explained Viet Nam Wool Company (LenViet) chairman and general director Mr Pham Van Tan.

Vietnamese apparel manufacturer and retailer Canifa, which has about 30 stores in north Vietnam, produced a range of wool sweaters last winter and sold out of stock. The campaign was so successful that Canifa will this year continue to produce wool apparel and run the campaign, with in-store promotions set to educate consumers about the natural benefits of Australian Merino wool.

“Canfa produced 10,000 70 per cent extrafine Merino wool-blend sweaters to sell in stores across Vietnam during autumn/ winter 2013, and the collection was warmly welcomed by Vietnamese consumers,” explains Canifa CEO Mrs Doan Thi Bich Ngoc. “Following the success of this campaign we are going to stock 100 per cent Merino wool sweaters in our stores.”

Mr Jackson said this is a significant step in the Out of Vietnam project.

"Initially we thought there was not a consumer market for Merino wool in Vietnam. However, the success of Canifa’s campaign has proved that the market extends far beyond the trade sector and allows us to introduce apparel made from Australian Merino wool to Vietnamese consumers.”

In March this year, 20 textile manufacturers from Vietnam visited Australia to see first-hand how wool is grown, tested and graded, giving the manufacturers a holistic view on the wool supply chain. This November, another Vietnamese delegation will visit Australia at their own expense to learn more about wool.

"The first visit mostly involved company owners,” Mr Jackson said. “This visit, however, will involve key staff from the manufacturing companies to undertake real hands-on training. The group will spend three days at TAFE Western, Dubbo, learning about wool classing and will then visit AWI’s office to receive in-house training.”
**MERINO TRAVEL ACCESSORIES**

A range of quality travel accessories made in Australia from Merino wool has been released in the Nicole Lobegeiger ‘Voyage’ collection, to provide travellers with a First Class experience.

- Nicole Lobegeiger, who does a lot of long-haul travel with her job as a professional make-up artist, saw a gap in the market a few years ago and promptly set up business to fill it, with support from AWI.

- Perhaps the most interesting item in the collection is the eye mask made from superfine Merino wool that features unique molded eye sockets that help ensure a restful sleep.

Merino wool with its temperature regulating, moisture management and odour resistant properties has long been a favourite for travel apparel.

But an enterprising make-up artist from Sydney, Nicole Lobegeiger, has extended the travel concept further by designing and producing a range of travel accessories, including a cape that doubles as an in-flight travel blanket, a unique contoured eye mask, warm stay-up socks, and a stylish accessories bag, all made from Australian Merino wool.

Nicole knows more than a thing or two about long-haul flights. She says in her line of business it’s not uncommon to be on a plane at a moment’s notice for an assignment anywhere in the world. It was while she was on a month’s long shoot for one of the world’s leading airlines that she had the idea to create a range of Australian-made luxury travel accessories.

Nicole says she immediately started searching for a raw material that typified the essence of the Australian countryside and lifestyle and that was sustainably grown and environmentally friendly.

Merino wool was Nicole’s primary fibre of choice and, with assistance from AWI, Nicole was put in touch with a Woolmark-certified fabric manufacturer based in Melbourne.

The Nicole Lobegeiger ‘Voyage’ range is now available online from her website.

Nicole says each item has been designed to be super light, practical and timeless modern with a focus on maximum in-flight comfort.

“Travelling to distant shores usually involves eight hours or more confined aboard a plane. If you are comfortable and warm you are much more likely to sleep, which is essential if you want to arrive at your destination in peak condition,” Nicole says.

“Your body temperature drops during the flight through lack of physical activity, so the cape in my collection, which is made from 100 per cent superfine Merino wool, is ideal for maintaining a comfortable body temperature.

“It’s a fashionable alternative to a cardigan or throw. Lightweight, extremely cosy and easy to move around in, it’s ideal for keeping warm in flight or lounging around in style in hotel suites, restaurants and bars.”

Feet also need to be kept warm and unrestricted on a flight to encourage circulation, so Nicole includes wool blend socks in her range.

Perhaps the most interesting item in the collection is the eye mask made from superfine Merino wool, designed for ultra-comfort.

“And another important requirement for good sleep during a flight is darkness – because the lights-out effect signals the brain to sleep – so an eye mask is an essential travel accessory,” Nicole says.

The Nicole Lobegeiger ‘Voyage’ collection of travel accessories made from Merino wool provides a First Class experience (dog not included).

The eye mask in the collection is designed for ultra-comfort.

“The eye mask in my range features unique molded eye sockets, which prevent it from sitting flat across the eyes. The absence of scratchy sensations or pressure on the eyes helps ensure a restful sleep – whether you’re in flight, in your hotel room or at home.”

And if you’re wondering how to carry these items, Nicole has also designed a travel accessories bag – made from 100 per cent superfine Merino wool on the outside, and 35 per cent cotton and 65 per cent polyester on the inside – which Nicole says is also roomy enough to carry other travel items such as an iPad, magazine, book and cosmetic bag.

**MORE INFORMATION**
www.nicolelobegeigervoyage.com
Generational change is occurring at Hedrena and a new era has now begun. A family business that began in 1992, the Geelong-based operation pioneered the next to skin base layer market for fine Merino wool. Established by Hedley and Irena Earl, it is now Ben and brother Julian who have taken the reigns and are creating new possibilities beyond the market created by their parents.

The company arose at a time of crisis for the wool industry when fine woolgrowers Hedley and Irena chose to process and ultimately retail fine Merino wool blankets from their own fleece. Since these early days the Earl family have not only survived but thrived by producing a high quality base layer product that keeps people warm and dry.

These days the company, which is a Woolmark licensee, generates an annual turnover of approximately $4 million and has expanded the range significantly from its blanket making days.

Chief Operating Officer Ben Earl believes there is still significant growth in the domestic market. “Next to skin products for women in their 40s and 50s have been the core of the business and this will continue, but we aim to reach all generations of people and attract more men to fine wool,” he said.

The advent of markets that merge sport and leisure have inspired the Earls to develop apparel that is a fusion of the outdoor market with fashion basics, to expand the reach and demographic of their client base.

“We want to introduce fine Merino wool to the next generation and I do enjoy breaking all the old perceptions about wool,” Ben said.

“Branching out into the sustainable lifestyle wear market won’t be easy as there is a lot of activity in and around this space with an ingrained perception that ‘Merino wool’ is expensive. My brother and I intend to break this apart. It’s a false economy because when you invest in a Hedrena basic it will last you many years. Most people will buy 10, 20, 30 other tops only to discard them after a season of wear. I am confident we offer a product that will hold its own. Supported by our sheep to shop experience and world class quality, it’s a powerful prospect.”

“We still manufacture in Australia and I believe many people here are willing to pay a little more knowing 41 passionate Australian wool lovers, 2500 knitting needles and 12 stitches per inch have created the garment you see, touch and feel in store.

Geelong based company Hedrena pioneered the next to skin base layer market for fine Merino wool. The company, which is a Woolmark licensee, believes in producing a high quality product that will last for years.

It aims to expand the reach and demographic of its client base by developing apparel that fuses outdoor and leisure garments with fashion basics.

Hedrena’s Woolmark-certified ‘Boatneck 3/4 top’ and ‘Cascade jacket’, both made from 100 per cent Australian Merino wool – examples of sustainable lifestyle wear that the company is now producing.

MORE INFORMATION
www.hedrena.com.au
In an effort to grow demand for Merino wool, AWI has collaborated on developing an innovative new apparel wadding made from wool, marketed as Lavalan. Rather than being worn close to the skin as with most Merino wool apparel, Lavalan was designed as a natural, environmentally friendly alternative to traditional synthetic fillings.

Made using 85 per cent Merino wool, Lavalan is already being adopted by high-profile sporting manufacturers and fashion houses for use inside quilted garments. The textile is washable to 60°C and dimensionally stable to help avoid shrinkage and retain its shape when washed.

As awareness of Lavalan grows, it is becoming apparent to manufacturers that using the world’s finest wool inside a garment ultimately provides greater performance attributes than synthetics. Lavalan is also well-placed to take advantage of increasing demand for more earth-friendly alternatives to traditional synthetic fillings.

Working with Belgian textile processor N.V. Van Riel and German manufacturer Baur Vliesstoffe, Lavalan’s inception began in 2006 during the development of Feltstop, a material created for use in mattresses and bedding. The light weight of the finished Feltstop textile was such that it encouraged the exploration of other uses for the technique, specifically in the apparel category.

“Our company has engineered and provided the technology of making wool washable at 60°C on loose fibres,” explained N.V. Van Riel co-owner Dider Van Riel. “This unique process, in combination with the technology provided by Baur, makes Lavalan a successful product.

“It was necessary to find a way to process and blend wool in a way to be able to produce a down-like wadding that was light, stable and strong enough to be used as the inner layer for active sportswear, without compromising the natural properties and benefits of wool.”

Lavalan is particularly relevant for performance-type garments and the timing of its launch could not be more appropriate, with the growth in the sports apparel market set to continue in coming years. AWI’s Sports and Outdoor program aims to position Merino wool as an established technical and high-performance fibre for sports/active apparel and to achieve a perception of Merino wool as being a technical, modern, comfortable and ‘young’ fibre.

“As said many times before Van Riel has found a strong commercial partner in AWI and paying the annual Woolmark licence fee has become an act of investing in commercial power,” said Mr Van Riel.

“As a rather small family owned company, for us it is simply impossible to come up with all the work and efforts that AWI supports us with. The best possible example for this is the fact that two Woolmark licensees — Van Riel and Baur — who did not know about each other’s existence and productions, were brought together by the German branch of AWI. Ever since the first meeting, AWI has shown strong interest in the mutual technology of both partners, and today we still feel the positive influence of the support given.”

Growth in sales is expected to be very healthy in the early stages of Lavalan’s entry into the market. Initial sales estimates project that several hundred thousand metres of Lavalan will go to market in 2014, with exponential sales increases expected to be seen in the 2015 calendar year during the textile’s growth phase.
Based at Sydney’s iconic Bondi Beach, activewear brand Vie Active is using Australian Merino wool to fuse fitness with fashion for the modern woman.

The company was started in 2012 by Noa and Bryan Ries who wanted to create activewear that was not only high performance but also captured the fun and freedom of their lifestyle by the beach, and importantly didn’t compromise on style.

Both Noa and Bryan grew up living healthy, active lifestyles surrounded by like-minded people. Noa grew up at Bondi Beach running marathons, triathlons and working as a fitness instructor; Bryan was raised in France and the USA, and is a former competitive skier and snowboarder, triathlete and cyclist.

Bondi and its iconic beach rest at the heart of Vie Active. It, along with those who live there, were a major part of the catalyst behind the brand.

“It’s just the most incredibly unique place in the world,” Noa says. “Whenever people come to visit us from overseas they’re really struck by how ridiculously fit and healthy everybody is. It’s a really passionate community of people who prioritise their health and wellness.

“So the culture here and the idea that you can really be active all day long is the inspiration for where Vie Active came from.”

Noa knew the clothes she designed had to be a healthy mix of both function and style. “We decided to start with tops, and it became clear very quickly that Merino wool was the best fibre for us. Functionally, it has unique moisture management properties and it breathes. It keeps you warm when the weather is cold but cool when it’s hot, and has great elasticity.

“From a style perspective, Merino wool looks incredible and can be worn all day long. It retains its shape, has a luxurious super soft feel, and allows garments in a vast array of colours and vibrant prints. The fibre’s excellent odour control also means garments stay fresher for longer, so you don’t have to go home and have a shower straight after your workout.

“Being able to add some style to your workout means you don’t have to compromise between being fashionable or being fit. You can be both.”

AWI has provided Vie Active with support and guidance, by introducing the company to MerinoPerform™ fabric, and putting them in touch with some of the best manufacturers and printers.

The company is endorsed by a collection of fashion conscious athletes and fitness professionals across the world, known as ‘Vie Activists’, who test every piece of Merino wool apparel produced by Vie Active and even drive the brand’s blog.

Physiotherapist, yoga teacher and nutritionist Katrina Loop, who runs her own business Honey Health.Nutrition.Yoga, is one of the ‘Vie Activists’ based in Sydney.

Physiotherapist, yoga teacher and nutritionist Katrina Loop, wearing an attractive 100 per cent Merino wool tank top from Vie Active, while working out on the headland overlooking Bondi Beach.

“Vie Active is an Australian activewear brand that combines fashion with fitness and a Bondi-cool attitude.

• Their apparel is designed for the modern woman who enjoys living an active life but doesn’t want to compromise how she looks and feels.

• The company started in 2012 with just eight products – made from Merino wool – but is already taking its first steps into overseas markets.

• Vie Active is now taking its Australian beach-lifestyle apparel to the world, and in recent months has established a foothold in the lucrative US market with increasing interest from consumers and retailers in their brand.

When I wear Vie Active, I constantly get compliments from people on how cool my outfit is,” Katrina says. “Wearing their clothes makes me feel fashionable and sexy – I like to stand out!

“Plus it is warm and comfortable, which is so important for me when teaching yoga early in the morning. It is super soft and comfortable, and is breathable, which is so unlike many other materials. The Merino fabric feels great on the skin.

“If I build up a bit of a sweat working out, it doesn’t feel sticky, due to the fabric’s moisture wicking quality – so no cold and wet feeling!”

Vie Active is now taking its Australian beach-lifestyle apparel to the world, and in recent months has established a foothold in the lucrative US market with increasing interest from consumers and retailers in their brand.

“We now have a warehouse in Los Angeles to manage distribution for the entire country,” Noa says. “The US is a key potential market for us. Global sales for the sports fitness and clothing industry are projected to reach US$180 billion by 2018 with a compound annual growth rate of 6.8 per cent from 2013 to 2017.

“Our goal from the outset was to build a global brand with a local voice, and we’re making this happen – with the help of Australian Merino wool.”

MORE INFORMATION
www.vieactivewear.com
www.merino.com/Lifestyle/vie-active/
Fashion design talent must be in the water in the NSW central west town of Orange, with another Year 10 student from Kinross Wolaroi School winning AWI’s 2014 Wool4Skool® competition, following on from the win last year by Sophie Aylward of Kinross Wolaroi.

Clancy Davies-Etheridge’s 1960s-inspired design was chosen by the judging panel this year and her entry caught the eye of leading Australian fashion designer Jonathan Ward.

“The design is such a contemporary adaptation of the sixties, utilising Merino wool in a combination of styling and design,” said Mr Ward. “The design lines are fluid, and each individual piece has a lovely relationship with the others offering a nice balance of colour and detailing.”

In this year’s edition of the nationwide Wool4Skool® competition, students were asked to design an outfit inspired by the past 50 years of fashion – a theme which ties in nicely with the 50th anniversary of the Woolmark brand.

1040 very high quality entries from 400 schools across the country were received by AWI this year. With such a large participation rate, Wool4Skool® continues to remain an integral part of AWI’s mission to tell the story of Australian wool to high school students. It offers a real-life fashion design experience whilst teaching students about the versatility, innate luxury and potential of the fibre.

Using 1960s model Twiggy as her muse, winner Clancy Davies-Etheridge designed a three-piece outfit inspired by the 1960s, but with a contemporary look and feel. The tight-fitting dress has been designed using flat-knit single jersey wool, with 12 gauge, 230gsm; the cape – to be the same rust colour as the dress – was designed to use thickly felted wool; and the thigh-high legwarmer are a heavy circular knit, 2x2 rib, 100 per cent machine washable 7 gauge. 750gsm. Both the dress and the cape are 100 per cent Merino wool, with the legwarmer 80 per cent Merino wool.

“I knew a bit about Australian Merino wool before I entered the Wool4Skool® competition, as we used to run Merino sheep on our sheep station, so I knew a lot about where wool comes from, and the process of how Australia breeds the best Merino wool,” Clancy said. “However I didn’t know much about how the fashion industry uses wool, and by going through the process I came to understand just how versatile the product is. In particular, I have become aware of just how many different ways wool can be treated and woven, knitted, felted or bonded to create so many unique properties.”

Planned by teachers and textile experts for the years 7 to 10 education curriculum, Wool4Skool® offers a rewarding design experience without the students actually having to make the outfit. Entrants are aided by fabric samples and extensive educational resources developed in line with the Design and Technology curriculum, tailored for each state. Year 11 teachers are also provided with the same resources and have the ability to alter the provided lesson plans to suit their own requirements.

Once again the winning Year 10 entry will be brought to life by Jonathan Ward and will feature in a photoshoot in Girlfriend magazine.

Year 11 winner Christine Zhou, from Melbourne’s Methodist Ladies College took out the Year 11 division and has won one week’s internship with Australian fashion label Camilla and Marc.

“Christine incorporated interesting prints that had a natural feeling and understanding of the brief,” explained Camilla Freeman-Topper and Marc Freeman after judging the Year 11 entries. “She exhibited a good understanding of wool fabrics and construction, using wool to create modern silhouettes while capturing a fresh, minimal design aesthetic.”

Christine’s design was inspired by the current era, taking inspiration from sportswear, digital prints and architectural shapes to create a modern and contemporary design with a futuristic look and feel.
AWI has hosted a seminar for textile and fashion students in Sydney about Merino wool.

The seminar aimed to educate students at the early stage in their career about the benefits, possibilities and provenance of Merino wool, as well as highlight the fibre’s place in contemporary fashion and textiles.

Hosted by IWTO president Peter Ackroyd, guest speakers included a variety of industry professionals from various facets of the industry.

Part of AWI’s ongoing commitment to nurturing emerging talent includes hosting student seminars to educate of the next generation about entering the wool industry.

Earlier this year a seminar was held in London explaining the benefits and versatility of wool to textile and fashion students. More recently in August, Sydney played host to a seminar titled Naturally Inspiring, which attracted more than 130 students and teachers from the city’s design colleges.

Hosted by AWI consultant and IWTO president Peter Ackroyd – who also gave a presentation on international buying trends and the role of AWI – the seminar affirmed AWI’s role as the leading authority in the textile and fashion industry and showcased a variety of career possibilities available for those wanting to work with wool.

Guest speakers included:
- AWI Global Innovations Manager Roy Kettlewell who presented AWI’s Wool Appreciation Course and spoke about some of the latest innovations using Merino wool
- AWI Category Manager (Mothers and Babies) Carol Stubbs presenting the autumn/winter 2015/16 edition of The Wool Lab
- AWI Global Marketing Communications Manager Melissa Grace discussing the importance of the International Woolmark Prize and how to prepare for the coveted award
- Creative Director Rachel Allen of apparel brand and retailer MARCS discussing opportunities within the industry
- STRATEAS.CARLUCCI co-designer Mario-Luca Carlucci – the International Woolmark Prize Australia finalist for menswear and womenswear – giving a rare and personal insight into the International Woolmark Prize journey and how the brand is preparing for the global finals.

Raffles College of Design teacher Leonie Smith praised The Wool Lab, saying it was fabulous for students to see and it opened the students’ eyes as to the variety of wool fabrics available, adding she would be interested in sourcing wool fabrics for her students to work with.

Whitehouse Institute of Design student Sarah Perry said she thought the seminar had “the perfect mix of science and the fashion of wool”. Fellow student Felicity van Elst from Open Colleges echoed this sentiment, saying the seminar was “extremely useful, inspirational and educational – a perfect mix of technical background, design implications and practical applications”.

Textile and fashion students view The Wool Lab at the Naturally Inspiring seminar in Sydney.
With a strong focus on Asian markets, Australian-owned and operated bedding manufacturer Wool Products Australia which trades as Woolstar has enjoyed strong growth in recent times, particularly in China.

Woolstar is a long-term Woolmark licensee and has found that ingredient branding in these markets, such as the use of the Woolmark logo on its packaging, adds value to its product. The company also believes that consumer education about wool products and their provenance story are important selling points.

“Customers are becoming more conscious of the benefits of using natural and accredited products,” says Woolstar owner Graeme Kerr. “We are proud to be able to offer the sheep to shelf journey to our customers, allowing the entire supply chain to be showcased.”

‘Springwaters’ Poll Dorset Stud in the heart of Merino country at Boorowa, NSW, supplied about 3500 kilograms of fleece to Woolstar last year.

Owned and run by Dennis Rowley, his wife Jo-Anne and their son Dane, their enterprise has about 1000 breeding ewes and is split across three properties, totalling about 2300 acres of land. The Downs wool produced at ‘Springwaters’ is well suited to home textiles such as quilts and underlays because the broader micron fleece has memory.

“There’s a certain spongy-ness, a certain elasticity in Dorset wool which is good for what Woolstar needs,” says Dennis.

“Jo-Anne, Dane and myself are pretty passionate about breeding Dorsets. We find that with our operation we can dedicate ourselves to giving full-time attention to the sheep and doing the best job possible with them.

“It’s a natural operation; we rotate the animals to ensure they all have pasture and fresh water, eliminating the need for supplementary feeding.”

The ‘Springwaters’ operation is now available for the world to see, after Woolstar recently visited the property to film a short promotional video. The footage, which shows Dennis explain to Graeme farming practices and how wool is produced, is being used by Woolstar to tell the provenance story of Australian wool.

“All of our packaging – from blankets to quilts and underlays – includes a QR code so that customers can scan the code with their smart phone or tablet and watch the video,” Mr Kerr said.

“Currently, this marketing campaign is being rolled out across Asia to tell our customers the story of how the wool bedding products came to be. It not only adds authority and assurance that a quality product is being purchased, but also allows the customer to buy more than a tangible good – they are buying a story and experience.”

For the Rowleys, knowing where their wool ends up and seeing the end product on the shelf both here in Australia and overseas is fulfilling.

“The Woolstar story is a very satisfying one,” says Dennis. “Firstly, to know where our wool is going is very rewarding, but more importantly, to know that an Australian company is making something in Australia to be exported to China is great news – quite the reverse situation to what happens with most of our industries.”

Woolmark licensee and bedding manufacturer Woolstar is using the sheep to shelf story as an important selling point, especially in Asian markets.
UNIQUE DESIGNS
GRACED WITH WOOL

Young textile designer Grace Wood has created a unique range of hand-crafted felted homewares including cushions, throws, blankets and bedcovers.

Grace is a big supporter of the Australian wool industry, sourcing most of the wool for her designs from the family farm near Bathurst, NSW.

She values the natural and renewable aspects of wool production which she carries through into her designs.

In her parent’s shearing shed nestled by Clear Creek north-east of Bathurst, textile designer Grace Wood is admiring the newly shorn fleeces from the flock of Merino sheep run on the property.

Grace is here to source wool for her newly established business as a designer of handmade felted homewares including cushions, throws, blankets and bedcovers.

She recently graduated from the College of Fine Arts at the University of New South Wales, majoring in textiles, and says she is building up her skills and experience with the aim, ultimately, to produce large felted-wool art installations to be used by interior designers and architects for homes and public spaces.

Grace says the incorporation into her designs of wool from the farm at Clear Creek is an instinctive and natural progression.

“I was brought up on the land, originally at Barry, an hour or so south-west of Clear Creek, where my parents at that time had an orchard and also farmed sheep. I’ve always had a strong affinity with the beauty of the natural environment – its colours and textures – and those early influences carry through into my work. In particular, I am a big devotee of wool, which I use in all my products.

“I’ve been interested in art and design, and textiles in particular, since I was a child. My university degree exposed me to a broad range of traditional textile and craft techniques, but I fell in love with the art of felting during a four-month internship with Dutch textile artist Claudy Jongstra.”

Claudy Jongstra is a renowned designer whose work is on display in the United Nations headquarters in New York and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. Claudy has been a participant in the Campaign for Wool’s Wool Week in Amsterdam for the past two years. She also exhibited two commissioned tapestries in London last year at the Campaign for Wool’s ‘Wool House’ event which was the world’s largest showcase of wool, attracting more than 15,000 visitors during its two week opening.

Grace’s design philosophy is inspired by the old Aboriginal proverb: “Touch the earth lightly”. She describes this as using the earth’s resources gently, by only taking that which leaves no void and is replenishable. Consequently, as a biodegradable and renewable fibre, wool is the predominant fibre in Grace’s designs.

In her studio at Woodford in the Blue Mountains, she crafts her high-end design pieces which she says are “a crossing between art and design”. “The objective is to provide the audience with a context through which to encounter feelings of curiosity, delight, comfort and connectedness. I hope to stimulate an emotional response as well as a sensory impression.”

Grace goes on to call herself modestly “a maker of things”. In reality she is a true craftswoman, showcasing the versatility of wool through design pieces that can best be described as uniquely beautiful – just like the fleeces in the shed by Clear Creek.

MORE INFORMATION
www.gracewooddesigns.com
etsy.com/au/shop/GraceWoodDesigns
facebook.com/gracewooddesignsstudio
Teen Ryan – a mother of three and a grandmother of seven – is one of the few women in Australia who work as a professional dogger.

Teen, a former pastoralist and farmer, has about 14 years dogging experience and is currently working as a professional dogger in the Goldfields Nullarbor region of Western Australia.

Teen wants to see links between farmers and pastoralists, doggers and government continue to strengthen in the fight against wild dogs.

Teen Ryan can’t restrain a quiet smile – though that’s a shock when people first meet her. It’s what she does for a living that often leaves them lost for words.

Teen is one of the few women in Australia who work as a professional dogger – tracking and culling roaming wild dog populations that viciously attack sheep, cattle and native fauna in remote farm and bush land.

Being a dogger is a rugged, lonely and difficult job, which Teen handles with aplomb.

“They need us at their own risk,” she says with a resigned smile.

Teen Ryan.

Teen soon found the family property was riddled with wild dogs, with sheep being attacked every night. “Bacteria from the dogs’ teeth would result in septicaemia developing in sheep and they would die. The dogs would also chase the sheep, causing them to scatter. This played havoc on lambing, as stressed animals often aborted,” she says.

By the time the family sold Fraser Range Station, six years ago, there was only one dog left.

Teen, by then, was not only a pastoralist but a farmer, Teen has about 14 years dogging experience and is currently working as a professional dogger in the Goldfields Nullarbor region. She previously worked on the south east coast at Ravensthorpe, so has experience working with farmers and pastoralists.

She finds clients are often surprised and sometimes apprehensive when they meet a woman taking on the task of wild dog management.

“To their credit, there has been no negativity or sexism,” Teen says.

“The local pastoralists give me great support and allow me to do the job the way I need to do it. Because of past experiences, they know too well the devastating effects wild dogs can have on their livelihood.”

Many of Teen Ryan’s dogging skills were honed growing up on her parents’ farm in South Australia.

She learnt how to shoot, set rabbit traps and help out with the livestock.

Wild dogs were something she’d never heard of until she and husband, Paul, together with her family, purchased Fraser Range station – a 176,848 hectare property on the Nullarbor in 2001.

Teen recalls her first encounter with wild dogs as a shocking awakening.

“We introduced our sheep onto the property, pushing them straight from the truck to water,” she says.

“Checking them the next day, I noticed several standing off on their own. From a distance it was clear to see their necks were grossly swollen and I found they were whistling through their throats and frothing at the mouth.

“The sheep had come from coastal country, so we thought they had either eaten something poisonous or we were dealing with Barbers Pole worm. The following day, there were even more with the same symptoms.”

Perplexed, Teen turned to another Mum she’d met through the Kalgoorlie School of the Air for more information.

“Bloody hell mate, you’ve got wild dogs,” Teen says her friend replied, without hesitation.

“I had no idea what she meant. I’d never heard of wild dogs among stock and listened in horror as she told me about wild dogs and the damage they inflict.

“I immediately thought my husband would deal with it. But Paul was so tied up with all the other pressures of getting the station functional again, he hand-balled the problem to me and that was the beginning of what has become a huge part of my life.”

Teen says she luckily found a great teacher in Danny Graham, a dogger who worked for the Nullarbor Declared Animals Group (DAG) and still operates in the Kalgoorlie region.

“If they can do it, why can’t we,” Teen says.

“We can all learn from each other in this battle against wild dogs. A lot can be gained by listening to and working with doggers and farmers on the ground.”

Teen Ryan.

“We can all learn from each other in this battle against wild dogs. A lot can be gained by listening to and working with doggers and farmers on the ground.”

Teen Ryan.

“He took me around our property to show me how to look for dog signs, how to set dog traps and how to lay baits.

“Danny grew up on Fraser Range, so he knew the station like the back of his hand. His patience and sound knowledge of the industry gave me the confidence to have a go.”

Teen soon found the family property was riddled with wild dogs, with sheep being attacked every night.

“Bacteria from the dogs’ teeth would result in septicaemia developing in sheep and they would die. The dogs would also chase the sheep, causing them to scatter. This played havoc on lambing, as stressed animals often aborted,” she says.

By the time the family sold Fraser Range Station, six years ago, there was only one dog left.

Teen, by then, was not only a pastoralist but had become a very successful dogger.

The family moved to Scaddan, close to Esperance on the south east coast of Western Australia, where Paul found...
employment on a farm and Teen took time out.

“I relished in recharging my batteries for the next six months, visiting our kids, grandkids and friends,” she said.

“But boredom set in. I missed the bush and the solitude that comes with it, so I decided to go through the formal channels and register myself as a professional dogger.”

Teen is now contracted to the Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association (GNRBA) on wild-dog-related activities.

She is a dogger for the GNRBA, laying baits and traps and liaising with landholders, giving them the confidence that a dogger provides, who is prepared to assist them in maintaining a sustainable livestock enterprise.

“A usual day for me can involve laying baits in the Shires of Kalgoorlie, Menzies and Dundas and looking for new areas of dog activity,” Teen said.

“Another role of mine is working as a dogger for the GNRBA on a local Royalties for Regions-funded project.

“I also deal with poisons such as 1080 and strychnine, making the baits and distributing them to pastoralists who are members of the recognised biosecurity group.”

(While legislation in WA allows use of strychnine, not all states in Australia allow it. Refer to your local legislation.)

Teen is respected for the dedication and detail she applies to her work and her willingness to make a difference is well appreciated.

Teen camps out when she’s working. Her ute is fully set up as a home away from home. She admits the life can be lonely.

“You have to enjoy your own company and it is frequently dirty and smelly work, dealing with baits, and removing dead animals from traps,” she says.

“You have to handle vehicle problems, find ways to get into inaccessible areas, deal with flies, heat, the cold and all those other elements that can make for a difficult time.”

Teen says wild dogs can be both arrogant and highly intelligent. A high level of patience is also required to deal with cunning old dogs.

“On occasion, it has taken me two years to catch a particular wild dog, which was a rewarding outcome,” she says.

Wild dog families mature, continue to breed and fan out to neighbouring territories. Once a dominant dog is taken out, more dogs can come in to take its place, so it’s important to remain vigilant.

Teen sees her liaison work with local pastoralists as very important.

“Nobody knows their country like a farmer or pastoralist and I value any knowledge or thoughts they are willing to pass onto me in regards to wild dogs,” she says.

“I also liaise with the bordering doggers as there are times we all ‘share a dog’ and it becomes a team effort to get rid of it.

We talk about different methods and what they’re contending with on their patch. We may have our boundaries mapped out, but the dogs’ territory is totally different and one dog may operate through several shires.”

Teen wants to see links between farmers and pastoralists, doggers and government continue to strengthen in the fight against wild dogs.

“We can all learn from each other in this battle against wild dogs,” she says.

“A lot can be gained by listening to and working with doggers and farmers on the ground.”

Teen says it’s the rewards that outweigh the negatives of the tough life the job involves.

“There is a lot of responsibility that comes with the position,” she says.

“Doggers cover vast areas and our priority is to prevent stock attacks. We deal with toxic chemicals, soft-jawed traps and high-powered rifles. We’re away from home, family and friends a lot, out in the bush alone much of the time.

“But as a former pastoralist and now as a dogger, I know first-hand the damage wild dogs inflict. So I am passionate in my role as a paid professional to achieve optimum results for the farmers.”

This article is based on text provided by the Department of Agriculture and Food, WA.
Woolgrowers who tuned in to a recent webinar run by AWI’s Leading Sheep network in Queensland learnt a wealth of practical tips on how to use electric fences to help keep wild dogs and other feral animals off their properties.

For those who missed it, the ‘Electric Fencing – The Ins and Outs’ webinar was recorded and is available free on the Leading Sheep website www.leadingsheep.com.au to anyone across the country.

The guest speakers at the webinar were Rob Doro from electric fencing manufacturer Gallagher who has helped many producers design and build electric fences, and Alan Forrest a producer who is using electric fencing on properties at Ilfracombe and in the Traprock district of southern Queensland.

Rob explained that electric fences work as a psychological barrier, as well as a physical barrier, and are respected by all animals.

“The animals remember the short, sharp but harmless shock they receive from the fence and learn to stay away from it,” Rob said.

“This means that electric fences remain in good condition and last longer than non-electrified conventional fences which tend to experience constant wear and tear from stock and pests.

“Electric fences are a very cost effective alternative to traditional fences and, depending on fence design, can be erected in a shorter period saving time and labour. Savings may also be made on material costs, again depending on fence design.

“But it’s not always all about building a brand new fence, electric fencing can also be added as extra protection to existing conventional fences.

Alan Forest also advises talking to an expert and planning your whole property’s requirements prior to purchasing equipment.

“Plan for all future fencing and sub-divisions, and if you don’t have mains power, install an energizer which will cater for your future fencing needs,” Alan says.

“Don’t underestimate the size of the energizer you’ll need. Once you have it working, you’ll be so impressed that you’ll see lots of other opportunities for electric fencing on your property. A large energizer will give you the versatility to keep extending without having to upgrade the energizer.

“Seasonal grass will also increase the need for a large energizer due to high resistance.

“Invest in quality products. There are a lot of good products on the market. Talk to manufacturers or consultants, not just other producers, because there are always innovations coming onto the market, such as remote monitoring equipment that can save you time on maintenance.”

If you are installing electric fencing to keep wild dogs out, it is important to do so as part of a coordinated approach to wild dog control with local landholders and integrate it with other control measures in the area such as baiting and trapping.

MORE INFORMATION
www.leadingsheep.com.au
At the recent Predator Control Field Day held at Mitchell in southern Queensland, visitors had the opportunity to see the Dingo Fencing Machine (DFM) which could provide an easier and more cost effective way of erecting electric exclusion fencing.

While the DFM can run barb wire, plain wire and most fabricated wires, when it is used in conjunction with modern electric fence technology it produces, according to its manufacturer Dingo Australia, the “absolute best and most effective fence in the world”.

Intended for use on large grazing properties, the DFM enables two men to easily erect at least six kilometers of fencing in a day – something that it would traditionally take a dozen men to do.

“The advent of serious fence energizers and solar systems has meant that electric fences to keep out wild dogs are finally available to big acreages,” says the Managing Director of Dalby-based Dingo Australia, Gary Briggs. “Along with Dingo’s new fencing machine, long electric fences can be built quickly, easily and cheaply.”

The DFM is mounted on a large trailer that is towed across the paddock (ideally by a six-wheeler dual cab ute), advancing and then stopping, with the operator pounding in the posts and leaving an erected fence behind.

Dingo Australia has designed unique aluminium posts that are lightweight and strong, but at the same time are shaped in a way that the posts can be stacked in a straight line in a magazine on the trailer. The wires (normally six wires but more or less can be accommodated) are mounted on precision-wound reels and already threaded through the posts. The magazine dispenses the posts off the back of the DFM one by one to be driven into the ground by the hydraulic hammer that is mounted on a long cylinder. The posts need never to be touched again.

“The problem of erecting electric fences on larger properties has often been the cost and the lack of manpower,” says Gary. “So we have come up with a solution that costs a lot less and the construction can be done straightforwardly with two people working easily, in the shade.

“It takes just two old guys to build six kilometers of fence a day. However if the team wants maximum efficiency, then a team of four is ideal – but it doesn’t need four trained men; husband and wife and two older kids is fine, or two older couples. Only one of the team needs fencing experience to lead them.

“Driving the vehicle is a very important job. They are responsible for keeping the fence straight and spacing the posts. But anyone can do it with a day’s training.”

The Predator Control Field Day was organised by AWI’s Leading Sheep network in Queensland and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Queensland.

MORE INFORMATION
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The Dingo Fencing Machine's hydraulic hammer driving into the ground a post that has been dispensed from the machine with the wires already threaded through it.

The Dingo Fencing Machine produced by Dingo Australia can be a fast and economical way of fencing large rural properties to keep livestock in and wild dogs out.
Extinosad® Pour-On delivers four important benefits for Australian sheep and wool producers. Its unique knockdown chemistry is ideal for rotation programs. It can be used off-shears, on unshorn lambs and long wool sheep. It has no wool withholding period and minimal ESI. And best of all, it’s a convenient water-based formulation. For more information about why Extinosad Pour-On is the dead fast, dead easy way to control sheep lice, contact your local rural store, call Elanco Animal Health on 1800 226 324 or visit extinosad.com.au

"Elanco", Extinosad® and the diagonal colour bar are trademarks of Eli Lilly and Company. EAH13438A4
Having influenced more than 20 per cent of the national flock through 2000 sheep producers, the Lifetime Ewe Management (LTEM) course now has a smartphone application (App) currently being paddock trialled by 60 woolgrowers. The App has been developed in-house at AWI and is a natural development for those who have completed or are in the process of completing the LTEM course.

The 12-day course takes two-years to complete and involves small groups of farmers learning from each other. Producers learn to best match the energy requirements of animals with pasture production and supplementary feeding to maximise animal welfare and production.

The average LTEM participant manages just over 3500 ewes and has increased whole farm lamb marking by 10 per cent, reduced ewe mortality by 33 per cent and increased stocking rate by 12 per cent, thereby increasing number of lambs marked per hectare by 23 per cent.

Demand for LTEM training increased during the 2013/14 financial year from a strong base, with 85 AWI-funded groups completing the training, and 137 new groups established across all states. In total AWI has assisted more than 250 groups complete the training, with an average of five enterprises represented per group.

In July, AWI announced further funding of the popular LTEM course with an additional investment of $800,000 for the expansion of the course to 2017.

Alex Coole, woolgrower from Frankland, WA said she had significantly benefitted from the LTEM course.

“Having evolved from the course notes, the LTEM App incorporates all the key estimations and calculations of feed on offer, condition scoring, feed budgeting and supplementary feeding calculations. One of the new features placed within the App is the ability to find the most cost effective supplementary feed based on set energy requirements. This feature as well as the overall usability of the App is being tested and feedback from this will be incorporated before a final release later this year when it will be available free of charge.

AWI Research General Manager Paul Swan said AWI was a proud developer and supporter of the LTEM program from its inception.

AWI was a principal funder of the Lifetime Wool research project from which LTEM evolved and has contributed more than $10 million over the past 12 years to the overall initiative.

“It is a great example of where investment in initial research, its further development and an effective extension model has paid off handsomely for the woolgrowers we work for and it will continue to generate benefits for many years to come,” Dr Swan said.

On-going evaluation of group members continues to show significant benefits to participants through improving net reproduction rate.

Pooginook property manager John Sutherland from Jerilderie, NSW said all his staff had significantly benefitted from the LTEM course.

“It’s been a great extention of practical knowledge using everyday hands-on skills. The methodology works very well and has helped us make good strategic directions in both tough and very good seasons. We have all thoroughly enjoyed the course and the results and profitability that flow from it speak for themselves.”

MORE INFORMATION
www.wool.com/LTEM
LTEM is delivered through Rural Industries Skill Training (RIST) via facilitators across all major sheep producing regions of Australia.

To set up an LTEM group in your local area or to join a group in your area, call RIST on (03) 5573 0943 or visit www.rist.com.au
INNOVATIVE WOOL PACK HOLDER

- Forbes Spillman of ‘Wynarling’ near Geraldton in WA has developed an innovative wool pack holder for his shearing shed.

- Handles and wheels on the wool pack holder enable a full wool pack to be easily transported around the shed.

- A full “bulging” wool pack can be easily removed from the wool pack holder because the rear of the wool pack holder opens out as well as the two sides.

AWI is always on the look-out for new products or processes that can help woolgrowers improve their productivity and profitability or simply make their jobs easier. One such product that we recently spotted was an innovative wool pack holder that has been developed by Forbes Spillman of ‘Wynarling’ near Geraldton in WA.

Whilst a small number of Forbes’ pack holders were produced commercially by a Geraldton engineering works, they are no longer available.

Forbes assured AWI staff member Ian Evans that he is happy for people to copy his pack holder. Dimensions can be worked out from a (new) wool pack.

1. Features on his wool pack holder include handles (that fold down when not in use) and wheels on one side that enable the wool pack to be moved easily through the shed by one person with little effort or strain, even when the pack is full.

2. Removable ‘flap clips’ at the top of each side of the frame keep the wool pack and pack flaps firmly in place while the bale is being filled. The flap clips are easily removed when required, and are each connected to the pack holder with a chain so they won’t get misplaced when not in use. At the top of each of the two sides of the pack holder, one end of each of the two ‘side bars’ fits snugly into the rolled hollow section (RHS) of the upright during use. The other end of each side bar is hinged.

3. The side bar (being held by Forbes Spillman on the right of this photo) is on a hinge and is easily lifted out of the RHS at the other end when required. This enables the rear side of the pack holder (ie the side with the handles), which is also on a hinge, to be opened right down to enable the full wool pack to be easily removed from either side of the pack holder.

4. The wool pack holder opened completely out with the wool pack removed.

HOME-GROWN INNOVATIONS

Have you developed an innovative product or process on your property that you want to share with your fellow woolgrowers via Beyond The Bale?

If so, contact the editor Richard Smith at richard.smith@wool.com
The Australian wool clip, which is primarily Merino wool, is recognised worldwide for its high quality. However, to maintain this good reputation, it is important that Australian woolgrowers continue to be committed to quality assurance processes on their properties, for example through careful breeding, flock management and clip preparation.

The downgrading of a woolgrower’s clip due to poor clip preparation could cost the woolgrower about 50c/kg, so it pays to be attentive about preventing contamination.

Careful management of their own clip will not only reduce the possibility of a discount on the price they themselves receive, but will also help ensure that more general discounts are not incurred across the whole auction system.

NON-WOOL CONTAMINANTS

Hard contaminants can cause major machinery breakdowns. The most common hard contaminants found in pressed bales of wool are combs and cutters, screwdrivers, bale fasteners, bale hooks, small tools and drink cans. Hard contamination is the easiest type to detect and care must be taken to ensure they do not end up in the bale.

The major soft non-wool contaminants include dog hair, clothing, towels, grease rags and vegetable matter. Any polypropylene products – baling twine, old wool packs and fertiliser bags – are a particular problem.

When wool is processed, any non-wool fibres will break up into many single fibres that spread throughout the processing batch. These fibres can only be removed by hand picking in the fabric stage at great cost to the manufacturer. The entire wool batch being processed – up to 10,000 kg – can be affected by one small piece of baling twine.

WOOL CONTAMINANTS

Wool contaminants include urine/dung and other stains. Stain is discolouration that has combined with the structure of the wool fibre. It is permanent and cannot be removed by scouring.

The intensity of the stain determines the dye colour needed to over-dye the stain and so reduces the value of the greasy wool. The risk of contamination from urine stain can be greatly reduced by crutching sheep, ideally within three months of shearing.

Dark and medullated fibres in wool also affect processing performance and the quality of the final product. Only small amounts of dark and medullated fibres are needed to contaminate wool. Just one staple of dark wool in one bale of white wool is sufficient to prevent that wool being used for light-coloured cloth or yarn. Medullated fibres are hollow and do not take up dye, are very coarse and appear as white fibres in dyed garments.

If woolgrowers have dark breeds or shedding breeds such as Damara and Dorper on their property, they must be kept completely separate from Merinos and be shorn after all the Merinos are shorn.

TIPS TO ELIMINATE CONTAMINATION IN THE SHED

- Store tools, clothing, towels, shearing gear and bale branding supplies away from wool handling areas.
- Remove all poly products found.
- Never use fertiliser bags as bulk class bale dividers.
- Don’t use old (non-nylon) wool packs.
- Keep the wool press area, wool room, shearing board and sheep pens clean.
- Don’t let dogs camp in the wool areas.
- Don’t eat in the wool handling areas.
- Use rubbish bins.

Contamination can be a major issue for wool processors and can cost woolgrowers discounts if it is identified prior to the clip’s sale. Woolgrowers can help preserve Australia’s reputation for producing a quality clip by being vigilant about preventing contamination.
LOCAL COMPETITIONS ATTRACT THE NEXT GENERATION

AWI supports many local shearing and wool handling competitions to help promote excellence within the industry and to encourage young people to join the industry’s ranks.

AWI Shearing Industry Training Development Coordinator Jim Murray says AWI is keen to raise the profile and status of the shearing industry by enabling participation in well conducted shearing and woolhandling competitions.

“Competitions help encourage better techniques in shearing and woolhandling, which is for the benefit of the wool-growing industry. AWI’s support aims to encourage a quality workforce, an interest in wool, and an appreciation of the art and skill of shearers and woolhandlers.

“Most local competitions have a novice or learner section, as well as intermediate and senior sections, which helps foster the enthusiasm of budding young shearers in the district.

“We aim to promote shearing by identifying and recognising the best shearers and woolhandlers and then promote them as role models. We also want to ensure that future champions are identified early and supported in their development.

“AWI’s support for competitions makes a significant impact on the viability of many competitions. Some of the larger and more widely recognised competitions could receive a higher level of support.”

AWI also provides support to competitions at a state and national level. AWI also supports competition judges by providing resources for them to judge at national and international events.

Support is being provided by AWI to local and regional competitions that are affiliated with, or offer a clear pathway to, the state and national competitions conducted by Sports Shear Australia Association – the internationally recognised body representing shearing industry competitions in Australia.

About 40-50 competitions take place across Australia each year, with over 90 per cent affiliated (directly or indirectly) with Sports Shear.

Here is a selection of images from some of the competitions supported this past year by AWI across the country.

BOMBALA, NSW 25 JANUARY 2014
Bombala holds its annual Wood and Wool Festival as part of its Australia Day celebrations, incorporating the NSW Strong Wool Championships. The shearing competition is fierce with competitors traditionally coming from as far as Deniliquin in NSW and Omeo in Victoria.

Logan Brownlie of Bombala competing in the Learners event.

ANGASTON, SA 22 FEBRUARY 2014
The Angaston Vintage Shears included participants with a range of experience, from novices through to top shearers like John Dalla and Justin Dolphin. It was pleasing to see the younger shearers seeking information and tips from the instructors and judges.

Brie Tapscott of Tanunda who won the Fleece Throwing competition as well as the Novice Shearer competition.

More information
Jim Murray AWI E jim.murray@wool.com
www.wool.com/shearingcompetitions

FAST FACTS
- AWI provides support for shearing and wool handling competitions to help promote excellence and participation in the industry.
- Many competitions include a novice/learner section which encourages young people in a local district to participate.
- Competitions help promote shearing and wool handling as an attractive profession, for the benefit of the wool-growing industry.

• AWI provides support for shearing and wool handling competitions to help promote excellence and participation in the industry.

• Many competitions include a novice/learner section which encourages young people in a local district to participate.

• Competitions help promote shearing and wool handling as an attractive profession, for the benefit of the wool-growing industry.

Here is a selection of images from some of the competitions supported this past year by AWI across the country.
FINGAL, TAS 1 MARCH 2014
The Fingal Valley Festival, incorporating the Strong Wool Shearing and Wool Handling Championship, was held on a glorious hot sunny day this year. The events attracted 30 competitors across six events, with two competitors from Victoria.

Frenece Banovich of Mangalore competing in the Novice Woolhandling event with David Johnston of Meander in the Intermediate Shearing event.

BALMORAL, VIC 15 MARCH 2014
The AWN Balmoral Sports Shear Shearing and Woolhandling competition attracted 36 participants, who had the opportunity to compete alongside Australian representatives Sarah Moran in the woolhandling and Ken French in the blades shearing.

Jake Brazendale of Horsham came first in the Learners Shearing section.

YANCO AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL, NSW 15 MARCH 2014
The second annual shearing competition held at Yanco Agricultural High School was hailed a complete success with 28 participants competing, the vast majority from the High School itself. There were 19 competitors in the Learners section. An inaugural Novice Woolhandler section was introduced this year. A team shearing event proved to be popular with seven teams of three competing, including an all-female team.

The all-female team of Nicki Guttler, her mother Helen Guttler and Deanna Johnston who competed in the team shearing event.

WILLIAMS, WA 12 APRIL 2014
The 2014 Farm Weekly Williams Expo Shears continues to increase its numbers each year and this year 32 shearees participated in the various sections. There were 11 shearees participating in the Novice Shearing event.

Williams Gateway Expo Farm Weekly Shears organiser Gavin Fowler (left) congratulates the winners of the Novice Shearing event Mathew Lane, Wongan Hills (first place), Rivers Hyde, Ongerup (second), Curtis Mackin, Tammin (third) and Braydan Curtin, Ongerup (fourth).
In the 2013/14 financial year, AWI investment in both promotion and recruitment of shearers and wool handlers, as well as training, resulted in a **30 per cent increase** in numbers trained compared to last year.

2269 training visits were made by shearers and 1320 training visits made by wool handlers directly through the AWI shearer and wool handler training program.

An additional 781 participants attended crutching and other introductory workshops, and 739 high school students received an introduction to wool harvesting.

Adequate numbers of highly skilled professional staff to harvest and handle a high quality Australian wool clip in a timely manner are key to the profitability of the Australian wool industry.

In 2013/14 AWI funded training for shearers and wool handlers across a range of skill development activities. These included from learner to professional shearers and from novice to professional wool handlers. Provided by registered training organisations (RTOs), the training focused on shearers and wool handlers in the shed, particularly on increasing their productivity and skill development. Training was also offered as short term, intensive ‘schools’ across a range of skill levels.

In 2013/14, AWI investment in both promotion and recruitment of shearers and wool handlers resulted in significant increases in numbers trained at all levels.

2269 training visits were made by shearers (a 44 per cent increase from 2012/13) and 1320 training visits were made by wool handlers (a 34 per cent increase from 2012/13) directly through AWI-funded programs across Australia in 2013/14, with an additional 781 training visits by participants in crutching and other shearing and woolhandling workshops.

These workshops serve an important role in providing a range of training services to the wool industry – from an introduction to wool harvesting and basic skills for new shearers and wool handlers, through improver to advanced and professional workshops for continued development of wool harvesting professionals.

In addition to these training numbers, 739 high school students received an introduction to wool harvesting as a career option through in-school and in-shed demonstrations by AWI-funded trainers.

An Independent Coaching Program was also introduced to complement the RTO trainers. This new program provides AWI with a direct involvement in the employment of trainers, and is a cost effective way of the providing training. This program is renowned for its pioneering use of iPads in shearing training.

**Shearer and Wool Handler Training Activities**

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<th>NSW</th>
<th>WA</th>
<th>VIC</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>QLD</th>
<th>TAS</th>
<th>ICC**</th>
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<td>179</td>
<td>4370</td>
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* Plus 739 school students in WA were provided with an introduction to the wool harvesting industry by AWI-funded coaches through in-shed or at school demonstrations of shearing and woolhandling

**ICP – Independent Coaching Program

Consistency workshops for more than 100 trainers from across the country were conducted by AWI in 2013/14 at Wagga Wagga (NSW) and Katanning (WA). These workshops for the trainers of shearers and wool handlers help provide consistency in the way training takes place and to promote best practice across the wool industry.

**MORE INFORMATION

To find out how to access wool training in your state, phone **1800 SHEARS**.

www.wool.com/shearertraining
The future of the Australian wool industry is in safe and enthusiastic hands if the success of a recent stockhandling school is any indication.

The inaugural Next-Gen Low Stress Stockhandling (LSS) school, hosted by Simon and Penny Foster of ‘Merton Vale’ at Campbell Town in Tasmania, was the brainchild of 14-year-old Scotch Oakburn College student Henry Napier.

For Henry, the school achieved two goals: it provided a platform for his Inspire Y8 school project and allowed him to share with his peers an enriching experience with renowned trainer and friend Grahame Rees.

“Last year I attended one of Grahame’s schools with a group of adults and I knew lots of other kids who would enjoy it as much as I did,” Henry said.

“One of the most important things Grahame teaches is ‘attitude is everything’ (it is the motto of the school). This is not only true when handling stock but is a valuable rule for life in general.”

Participants in the school included 27 young men and women aged from 11 to 18 years of age, from both farming and urban backgrounds. The goal for many of the young participants was to get an insight into the minds of the livestock they work with and discover how they could handle safely and calmly – and control themselves as well.

Grahame Rees says the principles of low stress stockhandling are timeless.

“We discussed the concept of ‘flight’ zones, the importance of body language when working with stock, and the need to be aware of when to apply pressure and, more importantly, when to release it,” Grahame said. “I explained to the kids that these principles are as relevant for working with people as they are with livestock.”

Grahame found the young participants were fast learners.

“What takes two days to teach adults can be absorbed in one day by these enthusiastic young people,” Grahame said. “They are quick to learn and haven’t been indoctrinated with a certain way of doing things.”

A highlight of the school was listening to two guest speakers who have recently embarked on careers in agriculture.

After 12 months working on ‘Nerstane Merino Stud’ in the northern tablelands of NSW, Will Fergusson is currently working on his family’s mixed farming business, Grindstone Bay Pastoral on Tasmania’s east coast, before continuing his studies.

“I love that every day you can be doing a different job,” Will said. “My time in NSW gave me the opportunity to see so many different ways of doing things, not only on Nerstane but through meeting neighbours and learning more about the things they are doing.”

Growing up in Lauderdale, on the outskirts of Hobart, Will’s partner Sophie Murffit-Cowan is a relatively new entrant to agriculture.

“I am regularly amazed at how incredibly clever farmers are,” Sophie said. “Farmers are extremely knowledgeable individuals with a broad range of skills.”

All the participants of the school came away full of enthusiasm to put into practice the principles they had learnt. For Henry Napier the experience was a rewarding one.

“The best thing about the school for me was seeing the smiles on the faces of all 27 participants and seeing so many young people keen to give up time in their school holidays to learn skills that will benefit them throughout life,” Henry said.

Now that’s an attitude to be proud of.
FAST FACTS

- Research findings show an integrated approach to preventing breech strike remains the most effective strategy.

- Breeding, breech modification, dag control, crutching and chemical prevention are all complementary tools; the mix and importance of each will vary between growers, sheep type and regions.

- Breeding sheep resistant to breech strike remains a key tool for producers, by culling affected animals and using breech trait scores to reduce susceptible animals.

- Chemicals remain a critical tool but must be used carefully to avoid resistance developing.

- Research and development is continuing into breech modification alternatives such SkinTraction® and liquid nitrogen.

- Where mulesing is still required, ongoing R&D into pre- and post-operative pain relief products will, when commercialised, increase competition, uses and length of effect.

Woolgrowers, researchers, consultants, vets and welfare experts discussed the latest developments and trial results from AWI’s flystrike prevention program at the National R&D Technical Update on Breech Flystrike Prevention held last month in Sydney.

Protecting the national flock from flystrike remains a top research priority at AWI. Over the past decade, woolgrowers through their research development and marketing body have invested $47 million in animal health and welfare research, development and extension (RD&E), including more than $27 million on flystrike prevention.

AWI has held a National R&D Technical Update on Breech Flystrike Prevention every two years since 2008. This year’s event was attended by stakeholders from across Australia, including woolgrowers, researchers, commercial providers, brokers and exporters, and animal welfare advocates.

THE PRESENTATIONS AND SPEAKERS AT THE EVENT

OVERVIEW AWI BREECH FLYSTRIKE PREVENTION ROAD MAP
Dr Paul Swan, General Manager Research, AWI

BREEDING FOR BREECH FLYSTRIKE RESISTANCE RESULTS UPDATE 2005 –13
Dr Tony Schlink, Department of Agriculture & Food (WA)
Dr Jen Smith, CSIRO

GENOMICS OF THE HOST, PEST AND ATTRACTANTS
Dr Jen Smith, CSIRO
Dr Philip Batterham, University of Melbourne

SKINTRACTION® UPDATE
Chris Russell, Cobbett Technologies
Peter St Vincent Welch, Cobbett Technologies

LIQUID NITROGEN EARLY RESULTS
Dr John Steinfort, Steinfort Agvet Warragul Vic

LASER TECHNOLOGY PROOF OF CONCEPT
Geoff Lindon, Program Manager, Productivity and Animal Welfare, AWI

EFFICACY OF MELOXICAM FOR TAIL DOCKING AND CASTRATION
Ian Saunders, CEO, Troy Laboratories Sydney NSW

WELFARE ASSESSMENTS OF SKINTRACTION®, LIQUID NITROGEN, LASER TECHNOLOGY, TAIL DOCKING AND CASTRATION
Dr Alison Small / Dr Ian Colditz, CSIRO Armidale

FLY RESISTANCE TO PREVENTATIVE CHEMICALS
Dr Gary Levot, NSW DPI Camden NSW

PARABOSS AND IPMS SURVEY
Dr Lewis Kahn, University of New England NSW

WOOL MARKET PREMIUMS AND DISCOUNTS MULESING STATUS
Alan Wang, Senior Analyst, Business Intelligence, AWI
for Dr Elizabeth Nolan, University of Sydney

KEY MESSAGES 2014 AND FUTURE R&D PRIORITIES
Geoff Lindon, Program Manager, Productivity and Animal Welfare, AWI

AWI supports all woolgrowers in their choice of best practice animal health and hygiene in flystrike control.
The genetics and genomics of both sheep and the blowfly continue to be explored to seek new opportunities. The sheep blowfly genome has now been mapped and has been found to contain almost 3000 unique genes that provide targeted opportunities for control.

Breeding for breech strike resistance shows that breech strike resistance is highly heritable and evidence was presented that showed ram breeders were responding to the challenge of producing low wrinkle, high fleece weight, high fertility Merinos (see page 42). Odour and bacteria appear to be important factors in the incidence of breech flystrike, but it will be some time before this is validated and can be used by industry.

An update on field trials from SkinTraction® technology was given (the technology is waiting for APVMA approval), as well as a summary of the use of liquid nitrogen to reduce wrinkle which has gained a proof of concept in an early scoping study (see page 43). The use of laser technology to permanently remove wool follicles has not achieved a proof of concept but new laser technology is being reviewed.

Survey results show that 60 to 70 per cent of mulesed lambs are currently treated with the Tri-Solfen pain relief product. It has recently been reclassified from an S4 to S5 category chemical which allows over the counter sales. The use of Meloxicam as an animal analgesic for tail docking, castration and potentially mulesing was discussed (see page 44), together with a summary of welfare assessments across various novel breech flystrike prevention technologies.

The National Mulesing Accreditation Program (NMAP) is being updated by Animal Health Australia and WoolProducers Australia. It has been newly endorsed under the Australian Qualifications Framework system giving it access to government and industry training funds. NMAP will also be able to be used as part of Certificate 3 and 4 in Agriculture. Delivery of NMAP training is expected to be again available in 2015.

Information on the current levels of larvae resistance to flystrike preventative chemicals was presented and showed that they were still measuring up to their label protection periods. The development of ParaBoss (www.paraboss.com.au) assists woolgrowers to best manage blowfly threats.

A number of growers, brokers and exporters emphasised the ongoing importance of growers completing the Mulesing Status section in the National Wool Declaration to meet market requirements. With increased volumes of declared wool on the market on any one day, the wool market can better send market signals back to Australian growers.

AWI Program Manager, Productivity and Animal Welfare Geoff Lindon summed up the update by stating how “AWI on behalf of woolgrowers continues to leave no stone unturned in the search for practical solutions for woolgrowers to manage flystrike.”

The atmosphere at the event was very positive amongst the audience and presenters alike. The animal welfare groups in attendance said they gratefully appreciated being present at the event and made a point of acknowledging the effort of industry to protect sheep from flystrike.

There will continue to be ongoing consultation with all stakeholders on AWI’s Breech Strike Prevention program. The Australian Veterinary Association and Genetic Review panel regularly assess the progress of the program, and their reports are on the AWI website. AWI also holds six-monthly meetings with the main animal welfare lobby groups in Australia. AWI undertakes consultation with state welfare and federal agencies, and supply chain customers in the processing, manufacturing and retail sectors. Breeder feedback on breech strike RD&E strategy is also used to update the RD&E program each year.
BREEDING FOR BREECH STRIKE RESISTANCE

- Outcomes from the Breeding for Breech Strike Resistance Trial show that breeding can be an increasingly important option in the basket of tools for woolgrowers to reduce the risk of breech strike, particularly in low dag environments.

- In high dag environments, crutching and the use of prevention chemicals will continue to play important roles, as dags can swamp both mulesing and low wrinkle/low breech cover genetics.

- Selecting the best animals for your breeding flock requires the selection of both superior rams and ewes using traits that are easily and accurately measured, and that are heritable.

- Sheep type, climatic variation between regions and between years strongly influences the risk of flystrike.

AWI supports genetic research to identify sheep with high natural resistance to breech strike. Breeding naturally resistant sheep is a long term, sustainable solution to reducing the risk of breech strike in Australian sheep.

Two self-replacing breeding flocks at Mt Barker in WA (medium wool, Mediterranean environment) and Armidale in NSW (fine/ superfine wool, high summer rainfall) indicate that different factors, in different environments have differing effects on the level of breech strike resistance in sheep. Tony Schlink of DAFWA and Jen Smith of CSIRO presented the latest research findings from these two sites at last month’s National R&D Technical Update on Breech Flystrike Prevention.

The key conclusion from research at both sites is that large differences exist between sire progeny groups, and some sires’ progeny are naturally very resistant to breech strike. Breech strike is heritable; therefore cull struck sheep.

At Armidale, where breech wrinkle and cover are high, those traits are the major cause of breech strike. Few animals in that environment become daggy, but those that are more wrinkly and have greater breech cover are more prone to dag and urine stain. Any animals that do become daggy or highly urine stained during the fly season are at very high risk of flystrike.

At Mt Barker, the sheep are low in wrinkle and breech cover, but because they are in a high dag environment during winter and spring, overwhelmingly dags and urine stain are the major causes of breech strike.

Results at both sites show that when breech wrinkle is score 2 and less, dags score 2 and less and breech cover score 3 and less, the risk of breech strike is minimised. If sheep are at this target, either through breeding, some form of breech modification, or both, then the risk of breech strike in normal challenge conditions is low.

The rate of progress in improving breech strike resistance through breeding varies with sheep type, environment and production system. Relatively quick progress in breeding terms can be made to reduce wrinkle – perhaps 10 years to reduce the flock average wrinkle by one score. It takes longer to breed lower breech cover, depending upon the type of sheep. Reducing dags is more difficult in high dag country where the environmental causes of dags can slow genetic progress where selection for dag reduction is also required.

Another research finding was that low wrinkle and low breech cover sheep demonstrate better reproduction qualities.

A key message for commercial woolgrowers is that the ram breeding industry is now breeding new lines of low wrinkle, low breech cover as well as low worm egg count sheep with relatively high fleece weight.

Researchers at Mt Barker found that some plain-bodied sheep or low dag sheep can be more susceptible to breech strike than “normal” Merinos. Therefore, breeding plain-bodied sheep or low dag sheep will not necessarily solve all breech strike problems. The five known indicator traits (dags, stain, wrinkle, cover and colour) and the interactions between them explain 55 per cent of breech strike. Ongoing research is trying to find the cause of the yet unexplained 45 per cent. Wax, suint, dust and moisture have little impact.

Skin with wool sample comparisons between the resistant and susceptible bred lines are showing that the resistant sheep have a much wider variety and much higher populations of bacteria. This is being validated on more Mt Barker sheep, after which the Armidale sheep will be sampled.

It appears that odour emitted from sheep plays an important role in attracting or repelling blowflies. Work with detector dogs trained by Hanrob International Dog Academy in Sydney, has clearly shown that dogs can differentiate between non-fly struck wool from resistant and susceptible animals.

AWI is currently funding an in-depth investigation into the bacteria species and populations found on resistant and susceptible bred lines of sheep. The bacteria/odour project is only in its initial stage but encouraging results have been found which support the outcomes found in the sniffer dog scoping trial and may take some pressure off the need for low dag, urine stain, wrinkle and cover.

MORE INFORMATION
www.wool.com/flystrikeRnDupdate
AWI has been working on several potential breech flystrike alternatives in recent years, including the SkinTraction® intradermal, a liquid nitrogen process, and laser treatment.

Cobbett Technologies are negotiating with the APVMA on label details which are expected to satisfy the APVMA’s requirements for registration.

Early results for the liquid nitrogen process have shown a proof of concept, however the laser technique has not yet demonstrated proof of concept.

AWI has been working on several potential breech flystrike alternatives in recent years.

The most prominent is the SkinTraction® intradermal, owned by Cobbett Technologies Pty Ltd, of which AWI has been funding and reporting trials since 2008. Cobbett Technologies is holding further negotiations with the APVMA regarding SkinTraction® which is expected to satisfy the APVMA requirements for registration.

Another promising alternative is the use of liquid nitrogen to remove breech and tail wrinkle. The early scoping results for liquid nitrogen have shown a proof of concept and further research is under way to refine the equipment and conduct formal trials. The process is being developed by Steinfort Agvet Pty Ltd with support from AWI.

The use of laser treatments with Zeta LLC of Colorado USA, to potentially permanently remove wool around the eye, pizzle, breech and tail, has not demonstrated proof of concept. However AWI will continue to review new technology in the area for possible further proof of concept studies.

The latest R&D results for these three potential alternatives were presented at last month’s National R&D Technical Update on Breech Flystrike Prevention and are available on the AWI website at www.wool.com/flystrikeRnDupdate

SkinTraction® is sodium lauryl sulphate (SLS), an anionic surfactant commonly used in toothpaste, shampoos, cosmetics and food. A needleless applicator delivers a measured dose of the SLS intradermal in the skin not through the skin. This results in breech modification without an open wound. The damaged skin forms a hard eschar (scab) after about six days. After about 14 days, the eschar starts to dislodge, and after about seven weeks the eschar is fully dislodged. Breech wrinkle and breech cover reductions continue until after first lambing as the animal grows to maturity, as occurs with other alternatives.

After registration, there will be commercial issues to resolve, such as finalising the commercial model including price, training contractors and implementing a QA system. Cobbett Technologies aims for the cost of SkinTraction® to woolgrowers to be similar to the cost of traditional mulesing with pain relief and crutching.

LIQUID NITROGEN PROCESS

Further development has taken place of a process using liquid nitrogen to reduce tail and breech wrinkles and breech wool cover. The concept is encouraging but requires further development for the process to be fully validated and commercially viable.

Liquid nitrogen is used in human medicine for the removal of warts and some skin tumours, and in veterinary medicine such as for the removal of carcinomas in cattle and sarcoids in horses.

The cryogenic effect of liquid nitrogen freezes skin cells when applied topically. The cells freeze to temperatures of minus 50°C. Ice crystals form within the cells and, upon thawing, the intra-cellular structures and cells are damaged. Healing takes place over a six to eight week period, and an eschar forms which falls off in time.

The liquid nitrogen process as an alternative to mulesing is intended to be a procedure conducted in conjunction with lamb marking. Loose skin is raised using four skin clamps that have liquid nitrogen dispensing rods engineered so as to apply the liquid nitrogen to all four skin areas simultaneously. The liquid nitrogen is applied to positions that mimic surgical mulesing – the areas either side of the breech and either side of the tail.

A lineal scar forms where the two skin edges have reformed. Resultant skin reduction occurs decreasing excess skin and associated wrinkles. No open wound is created at any stage in the process.

The liquid nitrogen process was developed by Steinfort Agvet with support from AWI. The initial aim is to create a commercial process that has a throughput of 500 lambs at marking with a resultant reduction of average wrinkle scores to wrinkle score 2 or less. The long-term aim is to design a system that can process more than a thousand lambs per day.

Initial trials using the liquid nitrogen process to freeze breech and tail skin wrinkles has shown a proof of concept with evidence of both wrinkle reduction and an increase in bare area in the breech and tail, with only minor welfare impacts on the animal. Larger trials will be undertaken to confirm the process’s efficacy and commercial viability.

If the process passes these trials, issues still to be resolved would include a new cradle design that has a more natural position with better access to loose skin, training of contractors and leasing of equipment, and pricing.

It is anticipated that APVMA registration is not required as nitrogen is a ubiquitous element (“naturally everywhere”) that comprises 78 per cent of our atmosphere – however adequate ventilation during use is imperative, such as outdoors or in shearing sheds.

LASER TREATMENT

Early scoping trials into the use of laser treatment have not been successful to date, but the potential of this alternative warrants further assessment.

The laser equipment used is similar in concept to that used for human hair removal with the application settings adapted to address wool growth patterns unique to Merino sheep. As sheep are in a constant wool growth cycle, in theory, if the process can be made successful, retreatment should not be needed.

The idea behind the process is that if wool could be permanently removed from the breech and side of the tail then the risk of breech and tail strike could be comparable to the very low risk immediately post crutching.

MORE INFORMATION
www.wool.com/flystrikeRnDupdate
A new product that provides pain relief during animal husbandry procedures – such as castration, tail docking and potentially mulesing – could be on the market within two years at around 50 cents per dose.

The product contains meloxicam, and will be manufactured by Troy Laboratories in Australia. It is a viscous liquid administered between the inside of the cheek and molar teeth of sheep from where it is absorbed into the blood stream within eight minutes.

Field results indicate that meloxicam is effective, and is safe for both the operator and animal.

A drug used for managing pain and controlling inflammation in animals including cats, dogs and horses has been found to also work successfully in cattle and sheep. The product for use in cattle will be on the market in November this year, with the product for use in sheep potentially available within one to two years.

Troy Laboratories CEO Ian Saunders told the audience at last month’s National R&D Technical Update on Breech Flystrike Prevention that recent research has confirmed that meloxicam can be used as a pain and inflammation management treatment for lambs and sheep.

“At this stage the product has been confirmed for use as an effective analgesic for castration and tail docking but it is expected that it will also be deemed suitable for use for surgical mulesing,” he said.

“Meloxicam is administered to sheep by the buccal method, which means it is placed in the sheep’s mouth on the gums between the teeth and inner cheek lining, where the drug is quickly absorbed. High serum levels of meloxicam are reached within eight minutes of being administered.

“Research has shown that meloxicam administered at the maximum proposed dose rate of 1 mg meloxicam per kg body weight has no detectable residues of the drug in any tissue 10 days after treatment.”

“Meloxicam delivers effective pain management – it has been proven to work by third party scientists at CSIRO. It is easy to use and is safe for both the operator and animal. Plus it is affordable – we aim to get it in the sheep market for around 50 cents per dose.”

The buccal formulation is sticky so after application (using a modified drench gun) it adheres to the mucous membrane of the mouth. It is also stained to ensure that double dosing does not occur. No needles or syringes are involved, reducing potential OH&S issues for operators, and eliminating any potential skin and muscle damage to the sheep. The drug does not have to be administered by a vet but will need to be purchased via a vet.

The product contains 10 mg/ml meloxicam, and can have xylazine added to it to shorten the time to achieve pain management. The solution is systemic, in that it is absorbed into the blood stream, and so behaves like an intramuscularly delivered drug.

Given that the effect of buccally administered meloxicam is not immediate, woolgrowers would have to consider carefully whether to administer the drug in the cradle or potentially in a race.

At the R&D Update, Mr Saunders provided an example of a study to show that meloxicam is safe in young lambs when used as recommended under field conditions in Australia, saying that the formulation was well accepted by the lambs and no adverse reactions were noted.

The study involved 60 male lambs (7–10 weeks old) on their mothers. The lambs were placed in two groups, with one group treated with a placebo and the other group treated with meloxicam. The behaviour of the lambs was then observed.

“In the eight hours following marking, meloxicam caused a seven-fold reduction in (combined) abnormal behaviours of hunched standing, standing with a stretched posture, and walking stiffly,” he said.

“Compared to the placebo group, the meloxicam group spent less time in standing postures and more time in normal lying postures. The meloxicam group also tended to spend more time grazing and more time suckling.”

Troy Laboratories is a privately owned Australian veterinary pharmaceutical manufacturer, established in 1959 and based at Glendenning in western Sydney.

MORE INFORMATION
www.wool.com/flystrikeRnDupdate
Glanvac®’s bright orange box has been a symbol of trust and performance for nearly 30 years. Producers know they can rely on Glanvac every time – not only to prevent the five major Clostridial diseases in their sheep but also to control Cheesy Gland. The Glanvac range also offers great flexibility, with options to supplement with vitamin B₁₂ and/or selenium as needed, all combined in a low volume 1 mL dose.

When looking for grand champion performance, sheep producers don’t vaccinate their sheep, they Glanvac them.

For more information talk to your Zoetis Sheep Product Specialist on 1800 963 847.
Timing of animal husbandry practices and treatments have a major impact on the flystrike risk, but weighing up the impact from each and the best time to do them can be a daunting task. However, FlyBoss tools make the job fast and easy.

FlyBoss is a website developed by the Sheep CRC and its partners to provide producers with information and tools to improve flystrike management. With its sister sites, WormBoss and LiceBoss, it is now funded by AWI and Meat and Livestock Australia.

The two FlyBoss tools that allow you to optimise your management and treatment strategies use your local long-term average weather data to calculate the risk of flystrike across the year. Results are displayed in a simple graph, and when each management practice (shearing, crutching and chemical treatment) is applied, the tool calculates any reduced flystrike risk and changes the graph accordingly.

The tools are simple to use; they operate directly from the FlyBoss website, so there is nothing to download. After choosing your

### EXAMPLE 1 COMPARE MANAGEMENT TOOL

**LOCATION**
Armidale, northern NSW
[mulesed sheep]

**CURRENT MANAGEMENT**
Left column of table; red line in graph
Shear first week of August, crutch mid-January, apply Dicyclanil 4 weeks later in mid-February.

**ADJUSTED MANAGEMENT**
Right column of table; blue line in graph
Shear first week of August, no crutching, apply Dicyclanil in mid-November.

The current management (red line) shows a high risk of flystrike, even with the sheep crutched.

Whereas, the adjusted management scenario (blue line) shows the risk from flystrike is almost completely removed by changing the time of chemical treatment, even with the sheep not crutched (dag is not an issue in this area).
Looking for Australia’s No#1 Selling Triple Active Drench?

Protect your sheep with the Triple Drench Power of TRIGUARD. Providing a potent triple active combination, with the power of Abamectin, for reliable broad-spectrum parasite control. TRIGUARD has a proven and stable formulation, and provides a full dose of 3 short-acting ingredients to every sheep, with every dose, every time – to help delay resistance.
NATIONAL SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

WORM CONTROL PRACTICES

An AWI and MLA supported national survey has reported the practices used by Australian sheep producers to control worms, flies and lice.

The recently-released results of a 2011 national survey of practices used by Australian sheep producers to control worms, flies and lice, highlight that many producers have not fully embraced an effective and sustainable approach to worm control.

The survey, completed by over 1000 sheep producers across Australia, was conducted by Professor Steve Walkden-Brown and Dr Ian Reeve from the University of New England. AWI and MLA have supported the study, which provides a good national perspective and comparison to an initial survey of nearly 2300 producers in 2003.

The number of worm treatments given to adult ewes across the nation averaged 2.1 in 2003 and 2.7 in 2011 with most treatments given in the New England region of NSW (see Figure 1). This is a region endemic for barber’s pole worm and it received 1000mm in 2011, which was 200mm more than the annual average.

Pleasingly, the number of combination treatments used in 2011 was 43%, which is an important means of controlling drench resistance. A combination contains two or more active ingredients (eg albendazole + levamisole) that each target the same worms. The chance of a worm being resistant to all active ingredients in the combination is much lower than for each individual active on its own.

Of concern was that the remaining 57% were single active treatments, with moxidectin and ivermectin most likely to have been given alone. Monepantel (Zolvix) was also mostly given alone, but it is not available as a combination treatment. The best time to use combination treatments is before drench resistance emerges.

The factors most commonly nominated as very important for deciding if worm treatment was required were worm egg counts, time of year, and, in barber’s pole regions, exercise intolerance. Worm egg counts were used by only 21% of producers in 2011, despite being seen as very important, which was lower than the 44% of producers who used worm egg counts in 2003. This was disappointing as worm egg counts can give an early warning of production loss before signs are obvious.

Drench resistance testing has been conducted in the last five years (2007–2011) by 29% of sheep producers, unchanged from 2003. Drench resistance is said to be present when a drench causes the egg count to be reduced by less than 98%. Only 55% of producers thought they had resistance to benzimidazole and levamisole drenches, 12% thought they had resistance to ivermectin, 28% to abamectin and 21% to moxidectin. On average, 48% of sheep producers said they didn’t know the drench resistance status of drench groups on their farms.

When compared to actual resistance test results, this suggests that many sheep producers either underestimate or don’t know the extent of drench resistance on their farms. A recent compilation of the results of 390 resistance tests on Australian farms was carried out by Playford et al (accepted for publication in Australian Veterinary Journal). This reports that resistance against benzimidazole and levamisole was present on 96% of farms, and against ivermectin, abamectin and moxidectin on 87%, 77% and 54% of farms respectively. These conflicting estimates of drench resistance highlight the need to test for drench resistance and to schedule these tests every 2–3 years.

Drenching remains the main technique to control worms, used by 87% of sheep producers, but paddock spelling, cropping and cattle/sheep alternations are all well used with importance varying among regions (see Figure 2). Integration of a range of worm control techniques is an important component of a good worm control program.

There was a low use by sheep producers of worm-resistant rams, selected using Australian Sheep Breeding Values (ASBV) for low worm egg count (see Figure 2). On average, 13% of producers used rams selected for resistance to worms but only 62% of these rams were selected on the basis of ASBV for worm egg count, which is the gold standard.

Introductions of sheep occurred on 57% of properties and some form of quarantine worm treatment was given by 67% of producers. Ideally a quarantine treatment should include a combination of no less than four unrelated drench actives, with one of these being monepantel (Zolvix). In contrast, most producers used a single active drench for sheep introductions, which leaves the risk of importing drench resistant worms onto the farm.

 Moreno Information For help with drenching decisions and regional worm control programs, woolgrowers can refer to WormBoss at www.wormboss.com.au

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**Figure 1**
Number of treatments given to adult ewes in 2003 and 2011 within each region.

**Figure 2**
Percentage of producers using various worm control techniques within each region. Note that rams with ASBV relates to selecting rams that have ASBVs for low worm egg count.
The release of a new and easily digestible saltbush variety has the potential to change the profitability of otherwise unproductive agricultural land, particularly in a mixed cropping and livestock business.

After ten years of trial work, the newly launched Anameka variety is ticking all the boxes, winning the race against 12 other tested varieties, all voted on by a mob of hungry sheep.

CSIRO Principal Research Scientist Hayley Norman, said out of an initial 60,000 saltbush plants, the sheep chose 12 elite varieties for their biomass production, digestibility and palatability.

“We then planted out these 12 varieties in 12 different environments across Australia and the Anameka genotype maintained these two key characteristics, plus produced more biomass,” Dr Norman said. “But when it came to the sheep’s choice, the Anameka genotype was certainly a winner.”

The new variety, named after the business of Tony and Simon York who farm in Western Australia’s central wheatbelt, is considered the most palatable saltbush plant now available in Australia.

Western Australia is renowned for its extensive areas of salt land, and according to Tony York, almost 20 per cent of his property is what he considers unproductive, or salt affected land. But while many farms around him are forced to hand feed sheep in the dry autumn months, the York’s property is a sea of green saltbushes.

Mr York said because of the dominance of salt on his property, sheep are critical to the profitability and long-term sustainability of his business and his land.

“Through the use of saltbush, particularly these newer varieties, our otherwise unproductive land is now part of a profitable farming system,” Mr York said.

Dr Norman said other CSIRO studies had shown that the availability of saltbush as a feed supplement during the autumn months could reduce the break in the wool.

“Saltbush has also been shown to increase wool growth by 10 per cent, due to the protein and salt content.

“This Anameka saltbush has one of the highest digestibility rates, and appears to be the genotype that is most suited and broadly adapted to farming environments across Australia.”

Chatfields Nursery, also based in the central wheatbelt of Western Australia, has won the contract to propagate and supply the new Anameka variety to farmers across the country.

Mr McCreey said the saltbush could be grazed just eight months after planting.

“We are very excited about this national contract and believe this new elite saltbush variety could be grazed just eight months after planting.

“We are very excited about this national contract and believe this new elite saltbush variety will become part of the risk management strategy of many farming businesses, drought proofing their properties and providing valuable feed options in the drier years,” Mr McCreey said.

Dr Norman said further research projects would look at the development of a seed line from the elite cohort to reduce the cost of establishment and allow for direct seeding into the paddock.

“In the long term, we believe this will make a huge difference to whether or not the plant is integrated into the farming system at a large enough scale to optimise sheep productivity and environmental benefits,” she said.

Development of the new variety was run by scientists from CSIRO, SARDI and the NSW Department of Primary Industries working through the Future Farm Industries CRC, of which AWI is a partner. The variability in nutritional value of saltbush, and the ability to select better varieties, was first noted during CSIRO research as part of the AWI’s Land, Water and Wool project.

Woolgrowers can pre-order the Anameka Old Man Saltbush from Chatfields Nursery Tammin via info@chatfields.com.au or www.chatfields.com.au
A new self-powered, high pressure water pump – **The Hydrobine** – which is suitable for low flow, low head water courses will soon be available in Australia.

**The Hydrobine** can help woolgrowers keep their livestock watered due to its ability to pump water at a constant pressure for more than a kilometer and for more than 200m vertically.

No fuel or electricity is required to run the unit, making it suitable for isolated and unpowered locations.

A new self-powered water turbine, soon to be available in Australia, could help woolgrowers and other farmers pump water more than a kilometre for livestock watering, local water storage or trickle irrigation.

The Hydrobine, manufactured by EB Engineering Solutions, is basically a tube made out of fiberglass or steel, with five internal turbines in it. When it is placed in a flow of water, the water turns a crank which drives a piston pump. It has been specifically designed to work in low flow and low pressure water courses such as streams or ditches, and is suitable for flat terrain.

The self-contained unit needs only a small fall in height to operate (from 25cm to 1.5m), creating its own pressure to power the internal turbines and pump. No fuel or electricity is required to run it, so it is especially suited for remote areas.

Wayne Perkins, the product development manager at EB Engineering Solutions which also manufactures the Perkinz CrutchMaster systems, says the unit can generate a high-pressure supply over long distances.

“It is able to pump more than 200m vertically and more than 1000m direct, and can transport up to 2000 litres of water per hour at a constant and consistent flow at more than 100psi,” he said. “The beauty of this self-powered system is that the farmer is letting the water do all the work.”

The choice of site can have a major effect on performance. Fall and quantity of water passing through the turbine directly govern the power available. The pump performance, both output volume and delivery head depends totally on this power.

Mr Perkins says the Hydrobine was designed with simplicity and minimal maintenance as major considerations.

“The unit is self-contained and manufactured from durable, high-quality materials, resulting in minimal ongoing maintenance costs. It’s easy to transport, fast to install, and requires no specialist knowledge or tools.

“Woolgrowers will find it useful if they don’t want their stock drinking directly out of the rivers, due to erosion of the riverbank or concerns about the sheep affecting the quality of the river water. It can also be useful to conveniently pump water to a holding tank, which can then be gravity fed to troughs.”

An alternative use of the Hydrobine, instead of pumping water, is in generating power. The Hydrobine can generate up to 750 watts of electricity. Mr Perkins said this is a good option for generating power in flat terrain as only a minimum fall of 0.75m is required.

Mr Perkins will be demonstrating the Hydrobine at the Australian National Field Days in Orange next month.

**MORE INFORMATION**

Wayne Perkins P 1800 750 584  
www.perkinz.com.au

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**PUMP IT UP!**

The Hydrobine self-powered water turbine working off the end of a culvert.
A new rural training program in the Hay district of NSW has been launched to help young people gain agricultural skills, education and experience.

Young people are being given the opportunity to learn the practical agricultural skills needed for them to get jobs on rural properties, thanks to a new hands-on educational course being run in the western Riverina district of NSW.

Newly established Hay Incorporated has launched the Hay Rural Education Program in response to concerns about the decline in the traditional jackaroo system and the associated lack of stock and other essential rural skills being handed down to the younger generation.

Hay Incorporated committee member Chris Bowman said the program aims to provide young people in the region with the skills that will make them more employable.

“The demise of the jackaroo system since 1990 when a lot of properties were sold, in conjunction with the increased use of contract labour, has resulted in a lack of young people with the proper training to get a job,” Mr Bowman said.

“The new program, with the help of properties around Hay, aims to help reverse this trend. We have had wonderful support from farmers in the district offering in-kind support like yards, stock and quarters; plus generous financial contributions from several individuals and organisations including AWI.”

AWI is a major supporter of the establishment phase of the Hay Rural Education Program, with $24,500 provided to Hay Incorporated to help develop and deliver the program. The funding was announced in June by AWI CEO Stuart McCullough at the Hay Merino Sheep Show where the new initiative was launched by Hay Incorporated.

The program will focus on wool and livestock production with the key aspects of production delivered in a practical setting in partnership with woolgrowers throughout the Hay district. It will be delivered by trainers who have many years of experience on extensive rural properties.

Mr Bowman said a range of course modules, all based around the production calendar for sheep and wool production, are included in the program.

“It will cover sheep handling and yard work, lamb marking, vaccinating and drenching, wet and drying ewes, Merino classing and pregnancy scanning, as well as wool harvesting and handling. Fence construction and maintenance, small engine and motorbike maintenance, sheep dog training, cattle handling, and rural workplace health and safety will also be included.

“We are planning the program to be an 11 day course, with blocks of training, spread over approximately a 12 month period.”

The program will be piloted with 12 participants aged 17 and older from the local area. Participants will receive accreditation and certificates for the various modules.

MORE INFORMATION
People interested in applying to join the program should contact Sandra Ireson Program Coordinator E hayincorporated@gmail.com P 0439 938 119
Like many young people brought up on the land, Amy Carpenter from Gazette in western Victoria developed her passion for agriculture early in life. And this passion has not only persisted but thrived.

Amy is now studying for a Bachelor of Agriculture at the University of New England (UNE) and, to help her develop into one of the next generation of agricultural leaders, she received a Horizon Scholarship sponsored by AWI. “I grew up on a small sheep property and always loved being around the animals on the farm,” Amy said. “I have completed a Certificate II and III in Agriculture and received the Westvic Staffing Solutions VET excellence award.

While studying at school I worked as a roustabout on several properties gaining an interest in wool which led me attend a Shearing and Woolhandling school in which I learnt to crutch and shear sheep and improved my wool handling technique. I then went on to complete a Certificate III in Woolclip Preparation.”

After taking a gap year as a jillaroo on a cattle station and working as a roustabout for Southern Shearing Contractors, Amy started her studies at UNE with the help of the Horizon Scholarship.

Now in its fifth year, the Horizon Scholarship is designed to promote the varied career pathways that agriculture offers students entering tertiary education, while also helping to address the chronic shortage of trained professionals entering primary industries.

The Horizon Scholarship is an initiative of the Rural Industries R&D Corporation and aims to support the next generation of agricultural leaders.

Under the Scholarship, which is an initiative of the Rural Industries R&D Corporation, AWI is supporting Amy throughout the course of her undergraduate studies by providing her with a financial bursary and professional support in the form of mentoring, professional development workshops and industry placement.

Amy is using the Horizon Scholarship to gain as much knowledge as possible and build a network of contacts within the agricultural industry. “I have always tried to grab every chance I’ve had to learn more about agriculture and the workshops provided by this scholarship are the perfect opportunity to extend on what I learn during university, helping to set me up for a successful career in the agricultural industry.”

“I love to join with other people my age with similar interests to discuss what we all see for the future of agriculture and how we as the leaders of tomorrow can make those things a reality.”

SCHOLARSHIP EXPANDS NEXT GEN’S HORIZON

Amy Carpenter from Gazette in western Victoria is the 2014 recipient of an Horizon Scholarship sponsored by AWI. Amy is studying Agriculture at the University of New England and has a strong interest in animal nutrition and genetics.
The Discover Agriculture program, supported by AWI, is helping students from Tasmania and Victoria learn about the diverse range of career opportunities available in agriculture.

Inspiring young people to imagine a future for themselves in agriculture is the driving force behind the Discover Agriculture programs, supported partly by AWI.

The programs have been held in Tasmania since 2008 and in Victoria during the past two years. Run by Rural Skills Australia’s Tasmanian Education and Training Adviser, Roger Tyshing, the programs are aimed at students in Years 9–12.

Three, week-long programs have been held so far this year. One in April, in the north-east region of Tasmania, the second in the Gippsland region of Victoria in May, and the third last month based in the north and north-west of Tasmania.

“The aim is to provide students with a greater understanding of the diverse career and training opportunities in agriculture,” Roger said. “The residential programs provide participants with a great experience for themselves, but they also return to their schools and become ‘champions for agriculture’ and inform other students of the wide variety of careers available.”

The April program was attended by 20 students from all around Tasmania. One of the highlights was a visit to the Roberts Wool Store at Western Junction where students had a chance to handle some of the best quality fleeces produced in Tasmania, learn about the attributes of wool and later back at camp have a go at matching different styles of wool with their end product.

The May program was attended by eleven students and included a visit to a Merino stud and a mixed sheep and cropping enterprise with a chance to get hands-on with some quality fleeces and earmarking of lambs.

To explore the next steps available to those wanting to get into the wool industry an extra one-day tour was organised in July for students from the Northern Midlands region of Tasmania. Twelve students, from three schools, travelled to the Malahide shearing shed in the Fingal Valley, where an AWI supported shearing school was being held.

“Getting some hands-on experience is critical to decide if you like the type of work in any industry,” Roger said. “At Malahide, students were shown how to skirt fleeces by a wool classing trainer and an expert competition woolhandler.

“In a very short amount of time the students were able to experience the very best aspects of handling wool, a beautiful fine white fleece and lanolin on the hands, and arguably the worst of wool handling, the sudden jab of a thistle in the end of a finger! They were also treated to a demonstration of blade shearing and modern shearing technique by the Tasmanian and Victorian shearing trainers.

“All four trainers explained the wonderful opportunities a career in the wool industry can provide and the different pathways a young person can pursue. Several students expressed an interest in joining the next shearing school in January 2015.”

Since 2008, more than 200 students have passed through the Discover Agriculture program. Sixty per cent are now either working in the agricultural industry, involved in training at a Certificate II or III level or studying agriculture at university.

At the Malahide shearing school the students caught up with a former Discover Agriculture student, Tom Squires, who attended the 2011 program. Since completing school, Tom has taken up a career in the wool industry, working as a woolhandler and learning to shear, as well as undertaking training as a wool classer.

“There are vast and rewarding opportunities for young people in agriculture, so it’s always a great thrill to see past participants like Tom working in the industry and enjoying what they are doing,” Roger added.

MORE INFORMATION
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www.ruralskills.com.au

Students at the Malahide shearing shed: getting some hands-on experience is critical to decide if you like the type of work.
The chart opposite shows percentile in Australian dollar terms using four-year AWEX monthly Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) and a comparison against the previous decade (August 2000-July 2010). From May-July 2014, the monthly EMI averaged at $10.29, tracking at the 26th percentile. The low percentile value (26th) indicates that over the past four years, the monthly EMI recorded a price lower than $10.29 for only 26 per cent of the time. It also means within that period, the monthly EMI recorded a price higher than $10.29 for 74 per cent of the time.

For the same period, 18 micron averaged at a monthly value of $11.92 (19th percentile), 21 micron averaged at $11.45 (35th percentile), and 28 micron averaged at $6.74 (79th percentile).

Although the EMI is tracking at the 26th percentile over the past four years, it is at the 94th percentile when compared to the first decade this century.

**LIFESTYLES OF HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY (LOHAS) CONSUMERS**

These consumers are no longer a fringe and marginalised group; the values are now entrenched in most consumers’ purchasing decisions. Wool is well placed to cater to the needs of these consumers.

LOHAS stands for Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability. This term describes a type of consumer that actively seeks a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle. These consumers’ lifestyle and purchasing decisions are informed by their values concerning personal, family and community health, and environmental sustainability and social justice. Their values and attitudes are driving the markets for products such as renewable energy, low emission cars, ethically produced food and apparel.

LOHAS consumers’ demand is changing the apparel and textile industry, pushing the industry towards a greener supply chain and greener garments.

Asia is the world’s textile and clothing hub, and is the heart of many of the industry’s sustainability initiatives. Brands simply cannot afford not to care. Their reputation can be seriously damaged if a supplier is responsible for a pollution spill or industrial accident.

Last year, several developments emerged that suggests the apparel and textile industry is continuing to move towards a more sustainable supply chain.

Bangladesh – it might be no surprise that multiple green initiatives are under way in Bangladesh’s garment and textile sector. In October, Plummy Fashions will open a new knitwear-manufacturing unit. It will be equipped with light-emitting diode (LED) reducing energy costs by 50 per cent. The factory will also reduce water consumption by 70 per cent by harvesting rainwater.

India – increased global demand for eco-friendly and ethical textiles is encouraging Indian manufacturers to seek global certifications such as the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS), Oeko-Tex, Fair Trade certification and others.

China – home-grown green production initiatives are also emerging. One of China’s leading printing and dyeing companies is using bio-enzyme-based products. This improves clothing quality, reduces water usage and reduces workers’ exposure to toxins.

The LOHAS market is growing, which is important for Merino wool as it is a source of new demand for our fibre. Recognising this growth, AWI commenced work in the LOHAS sector to position Merino wool as a high quality natural fibre that is functional, biodegradable, renewable, and gentle on the environment.

There are three AWI programs working on creating new demand for Merino wool in this sector: Nurture by Nature, Urban, and Sports & Outdoors. These programs are aligned with the growth in LOHAS consumers and their view on ecologically sustainable garments.

Historically, wool had little to no presence in these categories; it was mostly synthetics and cotton. Through working with leading designers, brands and consumer facing marketing activities, we now have numerous manufacturers, brand partners and retailers selling Merino garments.

In this sector, wool is still faced with strong competition from synthetics and cotton. However, globally consumers are insisting on greater integrity and authenticity in the products they buy with an expectation that they are environmentally friendly. As a natural, biodegradable and renewable fibre, wool is well placed to take advantage of this growing consumer base.
ON FARM

READERS’ PHOTOS!

Have you got any interesting photos that you’d like to share with other readers of Beyond the Bale?

We are always keen to see and hear what people working with Australian wool are up to. If you want to share any photos with us, please email the image and a brief description to the editor of Beyond the Bale Richard Smith at richard.smith@wool.com. The photos could portray any feature, be it humorous or poignant, informative or provoking, gritty or beautiful.

We can’t promise that we’ll print every photo, but we’d love to see them. Here are a few that we have recently received from readers.

SCIENCE AND INNOVATION AWARDS

Applications for the 2015 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture close on 3 October.

Each year the Department of Agriculture, with its Award partners, including AWI, presents this competitive grants program for innovative research projects that will benefit Australia’s agricultural industries.

The awards are coordinated by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences (ABARES) and are open to young people aged 18 to 35 who are working or studying in rural industries.

The Awards aim to encourage science, innovation and technology in rural industries and help to advance the careers of young scientists, researchers and innovators through national recognition of their research ideas.

MORE INFORMATION & APPLICATIONS

Visit www.wool.com/scienceawards

RUBBER MAT TO REDUCE EROSION IS A BELTER

Kevin, Robyn and Bryan Ingram of Aston Station, 33km north-west of Pooncarie in NSW have used a second-hand rubber conveyor belt from a local mine to successfully reduce erosion around one of the water troughs on their property at minimal cost.

EMU AUSTRALIA SHEEPSKIN BOOTS A HIT

Ben Swain of Gunnedah, NSW, sent in this photo of his 7-year old son Charlie with sheep dogs Jazz and Pixie about to head off mustering. Charlie is wearing his new EMU Australia boots that he got him through the 50% off promotion in the June edition of Beyond the Bale. Ben said, “Charlie loves them and wears them everywhere. Well at least everywhere his mother lets him!”

DROVING MISS DARCY

Clare Mansell sent in this photo of her four year old daughter Darcy droving with her pony Faith. They took 600 sheep 18kms, with only a little help from mum and dad. She is a fourth generation sheep farmer from the Monaro, already helping with the cooking and rousabouting at shearing.

Fifth generation Longreach farmer James Walker was the 2014 recipient of the AWI-supported Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture.
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