

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 2007-09 CODE OF PRACTICE

BALE DESCRIPTIONS

Q Does AAA, AA need to be used on NON fleece wool?

No. AAA and AA are required on most fleece lines (Adult, Weaner and Lambs), but are optional on non fleece lines. Classers may find them useful on non fleece lines (e.g. Pieces, Bellies etc) where they have made multiple lines and want to identify them separately.

Q Do I need to identify the Sheep Breed Group on all lines?

Yes. The Breed Group must be identified on all lines, including cast lines.

Q I am worried about describing many of my lines as AAAM? How can I manage this in the shed?

There are a number of techniques suggested by experienced classers. All require careful attention and management of the wool book. Some classers use a number system (e.g. AAAM 1 = Broad wool) Others use an character such "B" (E.g. AAA M (B) in their wool book .

Ensure that all fleece bins are clearly marked so the woolhandlers and presser know what they are made for: e.g. AAAM (T) for Tender. The (T) is a reference code for in-shed management. Ensure your specification clearly identifies this AAAM line as "made for tender".

Q Why does FLC not appear in the Bale Description chart as a Category?

AAAM is a well established and known bale description. There was strong support for retaining this description without change in this version of the Code of Practice.

Previously FLC was used to indicate tender wool in a previous Woolclassers Code of Practice.

Q If I make a broad line in the shed (previously BBB), what is that line now called?

If the wool is broader than the main line it is called AAAM. The Wool Specification must advise that this is a broad line and is not to be lotted with your other fleece lines.

Q Why are you asking for Tender, Short and Broad Merino lines to now be called AAAM?

These characteristics are now measured objectively (staple strength, staple length and micron respectively) and are not required in the Bale Description.

Q I make a shorter line in the shed (previously AAM) what is that line now called?

If the line of wool is shorter than the main line, and provided the line is going to be tested for staple length describe it as AAAM. The wool specification must also clearly advise that this is a shorter line than the main line.

Q Why are the Cast lines in Column 1 and not Column 3 of the Bale Description system?

This is intentional. Column 3 represents the portion of the wool. Column 1 reports the sub categories within these portions.

By keeping STN (Stain) in column 1 for example, this encourages woolclassers to keep the various types of stain apart encouraging uniformity. Examples follow:

STN M PCS
STN M BLS
STN M CRS
STN M LKS

Q I make a BOARD LOCKS line and a TABLE LOCKS line. What are these lines now called?

Whilst the making of two locks lines is not a common practice in many sheds, table locks may be branded AAAM LKS and your board locks are branded either AAMLKS or MLKS.

Q The wethers are uncrutched with heavy pizzle stain in the BLS. What should I call the Bellies?

If the stain has not been removed this should be described as STN M BLS. (AWEX strongly recommends the stain be removed to maximise woolgrower returns.)

Q What do I brand the main line of White Suffolk lambs wool?

AAA DN LMS (add a K if Medullation is visible)

DARK AND MEDULLATED FIBRE – SHEDDING BREEDS

Q The DMFR chart on page has the words “Australian Merino” in the middle of it? Does this exclude Dohne and SAMM breeds from the DMFR scheme?

No, Dohne and SAMM breed are eligible for the Merino Dark and Medullated Fibre Risk Rating scheme.

Q Do I need to declare DMFR if the sheep have run with Shedding Breeds whilst on a truck?

If you know that the sheep have been in contact with Shedding Breed sheep (even on a truck) this is deemed to be run with at any time during the wool growth period. So yes, it needs to be declared.

Where possible all loose fibres should be removed/cleaned from the truck prior to loading sheep.

Q Are sheep at risk of contamination from Shedding Fibre in commercial sale yards?

If you know that the sheep have been in contact with Shedding Breeds (even in a sale yard situation) this is deemed to be run with at any time during the wool growth period. So yes, it needs to be declared.

If the sheep are in adjoining pens, this is deemed as not “runs with” as there is no contact.

Q What is the risk of contamination if I buy a property that has previously run Shedding Breeds?

There is likely to be breakdown over time, of any fibre exposed to the elements. The great variability of exposure in a paddock makes it extremely difficult to nominate a breakdown time or period. The individual must make an assessment as to the likely risk of contamination. Clearly if there is visible loose fibre in the yards and paddocks that is likely to attach to a white wool sheep then there is a risk.

AWEX is not aware of any previous or current research work establishing a time period for breakdown.

Q Does fibre from a Shedding Breed break down over time?

Please refer to answer on previous question.

Q What is the correct description to be placed on a bale for shedding breeds?

There are two methods for correctly describing Shedding Breed wool.

1. If the fibre from a Shedding Breed or their crosses (for example a Merino x White Dorper) is to be harvested and sold the bale must be described with an SB in the bale description i.e. AAASB, SBPCS, SBBLs, SBLKS. *The use of Y or K is also to be applied on all wool where pigmented or medullated fibre is visible.*

2. Some selling agents may require the specific Shedding Breed to be identified. In these cases branding the bale with the specific breed code is also acceptable. Examples include AAADO for Dorper, AAAWD: White Dorper, WD PCS: White Dorper pieces, AAA AW for Awassi. *The use of Y or K is also to be applied on all wool were pigmented or medullated fibre is visible.*

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q When I arrive at the shearing shed, the grower asks me to place my stencil on some previous shearing / crutching bales that have already been pressed. Should I apply my stencil to these bales?

NO. Do not apply your stencil to any wool that you have not classed yourself. Furthermore these bales must be detailed on a separate classer's specification sheet that does not bear your name and/or stencil number.

Q How should I document bales not classed by me on the Woolclassers specification?

Use a separate Woolclassers specification sheet for all wool not classed by you.

Q The farmer/ manager has added bales (not classed by me) on my specification report after I have finished the shed. How do I stop this from occurring?

To stop this from occurring you place a single line through each of the unused squares. Also ask the Woolgrower for a copy of the specification upon completion of the shearing.

Q What if the grower and/or the selling agent instruct the Woolclasser to prepare the wool contrary to the standards set out in the Code of Practice.

When the wool is sold the classer shall be deemed responsible for the preparation.

The Woolclasser should contact AWEX as soon as possible to discuss the options.

Q The woolgrower is not intending to sell through the auction system. Should I place my stencil on the bales?

Yes, provided the wool has been classed to the Code of Practice standard. The Code of Practice covers wool preparation for all sale methods and destinations. It also allows the AWEX Woolclasser Registrar to follow up any subsequent complaints by processors of poor preparation and/or contamination.

Q What section of the wool specification does the woolgrower complete?

There are sections for the woolgrower/manager to complete (e.g. trading name, payment details, chemical residue, and Dark and/or Medullated Fibre Risk declarations.) Ensure that the woolgrower/manager is aware of this section.

It may be necessary to ask the woolgrower/manager to complete this section BEFORE shearing has started or is complete.

Q Why remove branding fluid or marking substances from wool?

Feedback from processors and small scale trials reveal that not all brands are scourable and can affect the colour of the wool top limiting its potential end uses.

Q I have been asked to “*minimise*” or “*eliminate*” bulk class by “losing” or blending cast wool in my main lines. Is this acceptable?

NO. This practice can only damage the reputation of Australian wool and is a serious breach of the basic tenets of wool preparation. The woolclasser’s main responsibility is to prepare **uniform** lines of wool that buyers and processors can use with confidence. The woolclasser is not to blend wool. Bulk Class exists for a legitimate reason where insufficient wool exists to make a legitimate bale or line.

Wool is not “lost”. The practice of blending to “lose” wool that does not conveniently fit only transfers the problem to the customer. Australian Wool does not need this practice.

For more information:

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