

Why are dark and medullated fibres a concern to the wool industry?

Article supplied by Götz Giebel, Purchasing Manager, Südvolle GmbH & Co. KG

Südvolle GmbH & Co. KG (Südvolle) is a worsted wool spinner located in Nuremberg, Germany and provides a good example of a participant in the wool supply chain who is concerned with the presence of dark and medullated fibres and their impact on wool processing.

Südvolle offers a stock service with warehouses in Europe and Asia that holds a large range of the most common yarn types available on call for the weaving industry. 70% of the types are sold for light shade apparels.

Yarn types are categorised for light and dark shades, allowing the industry further downstream to manufacture from this "raw" material wool fabrics in pastel shades or in traditional grey/black

or blue colour. Wool yarn for light shades is predominantly used in the upper quality segment of womens' wear.

Such products require a very low number of dark fibres in the greasy wool top through to yarn.

Medullated fibres don't take up dyes, and stay white, and can easily cause yarn breaks which increase production costs and lower the quality of the fabric.

For many years sourcing wool from a large Australian clip made it easy to select the best wool for the various needs of the textile industry. Nowadays, production is driven by cost. Meat sheep -some of exotic breeds- have been introduced, crutching doesn't often take place at the right time prior to shearing or wool preparation (skirting) is modified to optimise returns at the expense of quality.

The industry can no longer safely predict the product outcome from greasy to tops/yarn. Moreover, it is very

difficult to identify the dimension of the problem with high accuracy at the early stages of production. Many factors influence the determination of foreign fibres and often lead to big differences amongst varied laboratories.

In the sample boxes at auction, dark fibres are difficult to be identified in fleece wool. Information on the breeding background is mostly not available to the buyer.

Without a compulsory vendor's declaration, price for quality cannot be properly differentiated. Unidentifiable specifications lead to wrong returns to growers and in the end limit the use of wool to a reduced variety of products.

Once dark/medullated fibres are detected in a woven fabric they need to be removed by "mending". This is an expensive and time consuming process, averaging AUD\$ 25 per hour. When calculating the cost back from fabric to yarn approximately AUD\$ 1.40 per kg is

reached, if the number of dark fibres exceeds the standard just twice. On top of that, penalties to the weaver might apply if delivery dates will not be met.

A relatively simple problem, at its early stages which is still easy to manage, turns out to become a costly problem for the industry further downstream. A reduction of quality plus an increasing impossibility to predict the outcome of the final product, is in contradiction to many efforts to promote wool as a quality fibre for a wide range of uses.

Südvolle was founded in the early 1970's and today produces a large variety of yarns in Germany, Poland and China. The capacity is around 22 million kg of yarn. Based on the Australian wool clip in the merino types, suitable for worsted spinning, the Company theoretically needs to purchase every 10th bale produced during a wool season.

For more information visit www.suedvolle.de

Global mills surveyed for Dark and Medullated Fibre contamination

Australian Wool Innovation

A priority issue for Australia's Merino wool industry is the global processing sector's perception that there has been a recent increase in Dark and Medullated Fibre (DMF) contamination within the Australian wool clip.

To discover the true extent of this problem, Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) is conducting a survey of the world's key processing mills.

The survey, which is part of a four-pronged DMF contamination plan involving the introduction of the Merino Dark and/or Medullated Fibre Risk (DMFR) rating vendor declaration scheme, the development of a low cost, automated pre-sale test for DMF and

random 12-month screening of the Australian clip.

The first stage of the survey saw AWI Project Manager, Tom Drummond interview 25 mills in Australia, Asia, India, Western and Central Europe and the United States of America during March and May to gauge their understanding of DMF issues.

"There have been anecdotal reports of increased DMF contamination in Australian Merino wool," Mr Drummond said.

"Australia's world renowned reputation for having a relatively contaminant-free Merino wool clip needs to be protected.

"Therefore, if there is a DMF problem,

we need to know where it is coming from, why it is occurring and if it is in fact Australian wool causing problems for processors."

Each mill visited would now supply top samples of every lot processed over a six-month period. A selection of the samples will be sent to the CSIRO for independent comparison testing on DMF and the results analysed.

Mr Drummond said the survey included understanding the current situation within all the mills on DMF and a subset of mills will supply historical data to determine if there has been a change in DMF levels over time.

"Wool types and country of origin will be part of this analysis. Each mill has been allocated a reference letter to protect their commercial interests by ensuring confidentiality and a free flow of information," he said.

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Filling out a DMFR Declaration

Article Supplied by Dr Kerry Hansford, Teckel Consulting Pty Ltd

To enable a Dark and/or Medullated Fibre Risk (DMFR) rating to be determined for the fleece and piece lines of a clip, it is essential that the DMFR Declaration is filled out correctly. The critical element is to cross-reference the **Mob Number** in the central section of the Classer's Specification with the **Mob Number** in the DMFR Declaration box (see shaded columns in Figure 1) if selected lines only are to have a Risk Rating. If the Mob Number is omitted from the DMFR Declaration Box, but all other information is declared, it will be assumed that a Risk Rating is required on all fleece and pieces lines.

As outlined in the Code of Practice, the woolclasser must complete the central section of the Classer's Specification, including the **Mob Number**.

It is then the responsibility of the Owner/Manager to complete the DMFR Declaration. Firstly, the **Mob Numbers** must be listed in the DMFR Declaration box. Next, five questions related to DMFR must be answered for each mob. They are:

- **Contact with Exotic Breeds (Y/N).** Contact with Exotics, whether accidental or deliberate, for short or long periods, in yards or paddocks, must be declared as Yes (Y). Otherwise, No (N).
- **Sex (Code).** The Sex Codes (on the left of the DMFR Declaration box

are used to define the Sex of the mob ie. E = Ewes, W = Wethers, R = Rams, M = Mixed (Ewes, Wethers and/or Rams)).

• **Age (Years).** The Age Codes (on the left of the DMFR Declaration box) are used to define the Age of the mob. The Age may be a single year (eg. 3, 4 or 6) or combined Age Groups (eg. 1-2, 4-6 years).

• **Crutched (Y/N).** If the mob was Crutched in the year prior to shearing then Yes (Y), otherwise No (N).

• **If Crutched, was it within 3 months of shearing (Y/N).** If a mob was Crutched, was it within 3 months (ie.

12 weeks or less) of shearing, if so, then Yes (Y), otherwise No (N).

Mob Breaks and No. of Sheep in Mob are optional and will not affect the calculation of the risk factor.

If a DMFR Rating is required on ALL fleece and piece lines, then declare Yes (Y); if this is left blank, but all other information is entered, then it will be assumed that a DMFR rating is still required.

However, if a DMFR rating is only required on SOME lines, then declare Some (S). If Some, a Yes (Y) or No (N) answer is required for fleece and piece lines in the DMFR (Y/N) column of the central section of the Classer's

Specification.

A DMFR rating will not be determined or published unless the DMFR declaration has been signed by the Owner/Manager.

For further information contact:

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Figure 1 Example of DMFR Declaration as part of a Classer's Specification

OFFICE USE	No. of Bales	L/S	Description	Individual Bale Numbers												Mob No.	DMFR (Y/N)	Classer's Comments
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
	11	Y	AAAM	1	2	3	4	5	9	10	11	12	13	14	1	Y		
	6	Y	AAM	15	16	17	18	19	20						1	Y		
	4	Y	PCS	6	7	8	21							1	N			
	3	N	BLS	22	23	24								1				
	7	Y	AAAMY	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					2	Y		

Sex Codes
E - Ewes
W - Wethers
R - Rams
M - Mixed EWR
Age in Years
1 = 12 months or less
2 = 13 - 24 months
3 = 25 - 36 months
4 = 37 - 48 months
5 = 49 - 60 months
6 = 61 - 72 months
7 = 73 - 84 months
8 = 85 - 96 months
9 = 97 months (37 months) or more
Mixed years eg. 1-2, 3-5, 4-6

Mob Number	Contact ¹ with Exotic Breeds ² (Y/N)	Sex (Code)	Age (Years)	Crutched (Y/N)	If Crutched, was it within three months of Shearing (Y/N)
1	N	W	5-6	Y	N
2	Y	E	3	Y	N

Do you want a DMFR rating on all fleece and piece lines of Merino wool (Yes/Some)?
If Some, complete DMFR (Y/N) column in central section for fleece and piece lines.

OWNER/MANAGER Signature
Teresa Blom

1. Contact is defined as mixed to, run in the same paddock as or mixed with exotic sheep/tanks or their crosses.
2. Exotic breeds (those that shed dark and/or medullated fibres) have an AWEX Breed Risk Rating of 5 (ie. Assisi, Cormon, Cooper & Karakul).

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Auction Analysis for the 2003/2004 Season

Lionel Plunkett,
Market Analyst, AWEX

In reviewing the previous wool selling season two particular market signals, passed in lots and re-offered lots, have been analysed to compare their relationship to the major market price index (the AWEX Eastern Market Indicator). The accompanying graphs and tables present these relationships between various wool market indicators.

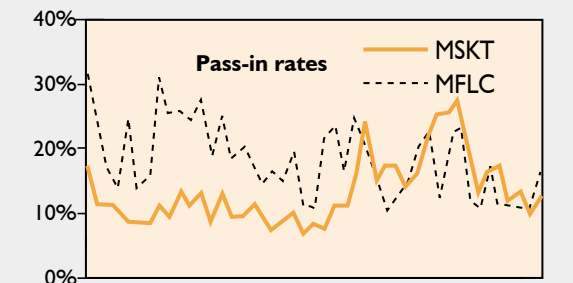
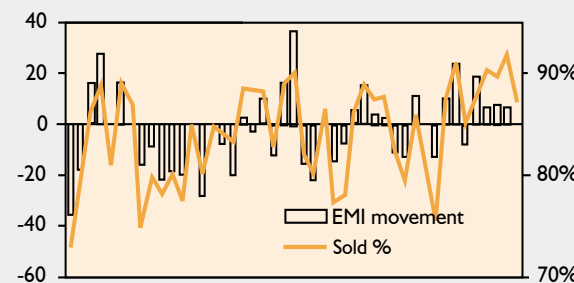
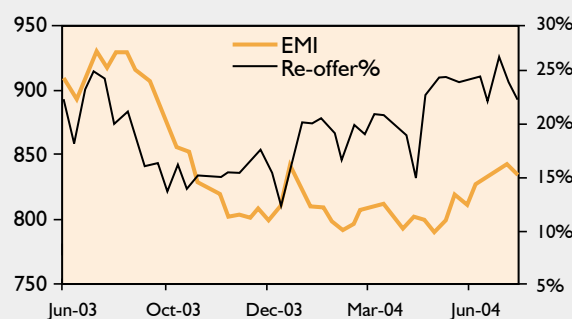
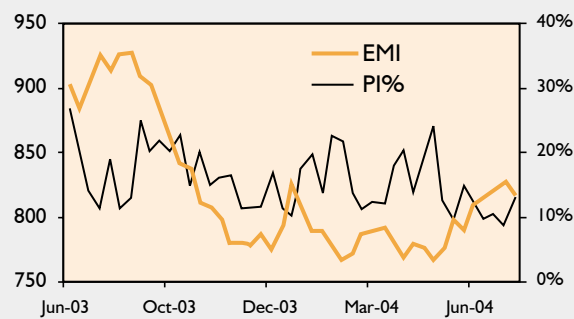
Passed-In lots

Observations

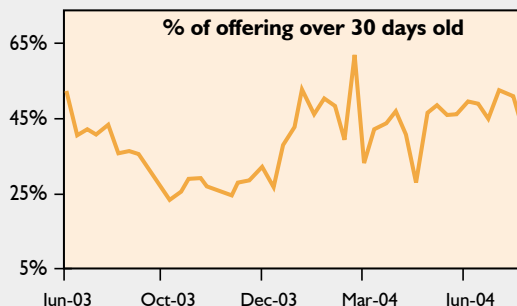
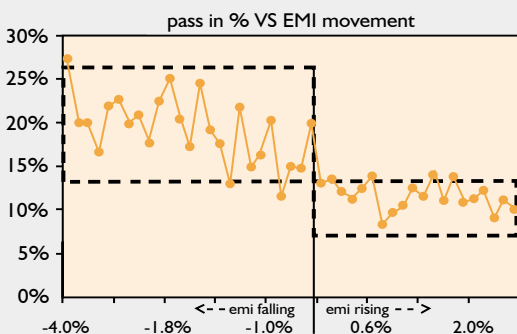
Analysis of National pass-in rates for the 2003/04 season show that weekly pass-in rates ranged from 10% to 25%. At one stage the Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) had fallen by around 150 cents from its peak early in the season, however, it would appear that the actual market level has not been a factor in the clearance rates. The first chart compares the Pass-in % (PI%) against the EMI, and it clearly shows that pass-in rates did not rise as the EMI drifted lower during the early part of the season (in fact, pass-in rates initially fell). Once the market bottomed-out the pass-in percentages settled back into the 10% to 25% range.

The second chart compares weekly clearance rates against the EMI movements. It reveals that clearance rates are mainly affected by market movements (as measured by the EMI), and are not dependant on the actual level of the EMI. This is confirmed in the final chart which shows there is a high correlation between clearance levels and the movement in the EMI. In a rising market, pass-in rates for the week are generally between 10% and 15%. In a falling market the pass-in rates rise to between 15% and 25% suggesting reserves are set by sellers without an allowance for a falling market.

The three Regions have all shown



Pass-in % increased during early Autumn, particularly for skirtings ...



...and can be seen in the number of older lots being offered...

Season Averages

Region	Total
NORTH	13.7%
SOUTH	15.7%
WEST	20.6%
Total	16.2%

age (days)	first hand	re-offered	Total
0-19	68.0%	2.3%	56.5%
20-39	14.0%	19.5%	15.5%
40-59	4.3%	12.3%	5.7%
60-79	2.5%	7.6%	3.4%
80-99	1.8%	6.4%	2.5%
100+	9.5%	52.0%	16.2%

similar patterns over the season, however the Western Region generally had a Pass-In Level around 5% higher than the Eastern markets.

Re-offers

Observations

Analysis of 2003/04 season data shows a variation in the rate of re-offers at auction sales from 10% to 25%. However, there was a clear trend over the season with a distinct drop in re-offers (to around 15%) in the few months prior to Christmas. A falling market and increased quantities of fresh Spring wool would have both had some influence.

Higher re-offers during the first and latter part of the season may have been caused by different elements. During the first quarter the higher market would have been a key factor, while in recent months the soft skirtings market appears to have played a part (note the pass-in levels in Chart 2). Some sellers would also have been looking to sell old stock prior to the financial year cut-off.

Regions

After a spike early in the season, Western Region re-offer rates drifted lower to be more in line with the other two markets. Seasonally, the Eastern markets averaged around 16% of re-offers each week, while the West averaged 22%.

Age

Generally the percentage of wool greater than 30 days old increases in proportion with the rate of re-offers, however, age is also influenced by recesses in the woolselling program (e.g. the three-week break at Christmas). The table at the left shows a third of re-offered wool in 2003/04 was usually turned around fairly quickly and offered for sale again within 2 months of the core date. Meanwhile, over two-thirds of fresh wool was auctioned within 20 days of coring.

A Season of New Beginnings

Mark Grave,
Chief Executive Officer, AWEX

There has been plenty to talk about with the re-commencement of the 2004/05 wool selling season. This season will see the introduction of several new systems and the entry of an international Wool Broker to the Australian wool industry. The old adage of "no two seasons are ever the same" is true, but this season the interest is not only in the level of production and the flow of wool onto the market, but also the introduction of these new systems and what it means to the wool industry.

2004/05 has seen the introduction of the new Dark and Medullated Fibre Risk Rating, AWH Trading Services and Wool Broker New Zealand Merino all of which have generated interest from all sectors.

The DMFR rating which has been promoted by AWEX through Boardtalk, for the awareness and general interest of woolclassers, is now underway. Data is starting to come through and has been well received.

With respect to auction selling; AWH Trading Services commenced in August. This new service is providing auction services such as salerooms, electronic

network and data capture services in parallel to AWEX. The auction was previously serviced solely by AWEX as the independent central body for Buyers and Sellers. AWEX's aim is to ensure that any disruption to Buyers and Sellers is minimised.

In practical terms what does this mean?

AWEX will continue to supply its full range of services to all Members and the wool industry. All wool offered for sale at auction will continue to be appraised by AWEX staff for clip preparation and for market information purposes. AWEX will continue to access the information of all wool traded at auction to fulfil its obligation of ensuring the integrity in the preparation of the wool traded and the market information supplied to all of industry. These functions are fundamental to the wool industry and cannot and will not be compromised.

AWEX will also continue to use this information to conduct its weekly audits on bale descriptions, brands and woolclasser stencil numbers. The audits form the base of the contact letters distributed to woolclassers each week. The letters sent directly to woolclassers have been an integral part of the

improvement in communication between AWEX and the woolclasser. These letters provide woolclassers with the latest information with respect to any issues which have been identified and they encourage the woolclasser to contact AWEX to discuss and receive further information.

This year also marks the initiative of the first auction catalogue offering of New Zealand Merino (NZM), a new Wool Broker to Australia. NZM is an established Wool Broker in New Zealand specialising in Merino wool and is the largest Merino Wool Broker in New Zealand. NZM has commenced offering its Merino combing wool (Merino fleece and skirtings) in Melbourne in August. NZM have indicated that it will

be offering all of its auction catalogued wool in Melbourne this year.

For the record: all wool remains stored in New Zealand (Christchurch) and bidding is in Australian dollars. NZM has worked cooperatively with Australian Quarantine Inspection Service and met their requirements with respect to the wool samples flown to Melbourne and displayed for Buyer inspection. NZM have indicated from the beginning their willingness to be a part of the Australian auction selling system and meet any requirements where possible. It is expected that NZM will offer approximately 25,000 bales of wool this season at auction.

This said and in terms of rostering and the coordination of sale information,

AWEX will still maintain this very important role. The wool industry is always eager to source the latest information regarding sale volumes and it has come to rely on the pre-sale roster estimates AWEX collates from all wool brokers.

With the 2004/05 season only just beginning there are already many things happening. Critics will be watching the flow of wool onto the market remembering that the last season was a tale of two halves. Very few can remember when more wool was offered for sale in the second half of a season than the first and the start to 2003/04 was well down on industry expectations. 2004/05 has started on a more familiar path and there is still 10 months to go.

Exclusive Offer

AWEXreports Market Information

Offer valid from 1 August 2004

AWEX is offering all Woolclassers an annual subscription to the AWEXreports website for \$88 (including GST). To qualify for this special* Woolclasser rate all you need to do is email AWEX at subscriptions@awex.com.au and provide your Woolclasser ID/Stencil Number.

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*This special offer is not available to AWEX Members or their staff or for commercial use. Upon payment your access will be granted and you will receive an email informing you of your USER I.D. and password.



AWTA Slashes Dark Fibre Testing Costs

Article Supplied by
Peter Sommerville, Corporate Development Manager, AWTA Ltd

Australian wool is renowned worldwide for its whiteness and cleanliness and consequently, commands premiums compared to wools from other countries. Such a reputation is hard earned but can be easily lost.

Recently, Australia has seen an increase in the use of so-called "Exotic Breeds". These breeds have a legitimate place in meat production but bring with them a new and potentially damaging threat to the reputation of Australian wool. These exotic breeds include the Damara, Dorper and Awassi, all of which share the characteristic of shedding their fibre. It is the shedding of their fibre that is causing the major concern as the fibre can be transferred to Merino sheep if they come into contact with Exotic animals. Research has shown that such contact can lead to excessive levels of dark & medullated fibre in Merino wool, a totally unacceptable position for our customers. Clearly, a solution to this

problem was needed.

In 2001, research was undertaken by AWTA Ltd and the South Australian Research & Development Institute (SARDI) on contamination of Merino wool caused by contact with exotic sheep breeds. A key outcome of this research was that contamination from this source is detectable in the core-samples routinely used for Yield & Micron testing – thus allowing a test to be developed for woolgrowers.

Initially this test, implemented by AWTA Ltd in March 2003, was expensive (\$155 GST incl.) but research by the CSIRO and funded by Australian Wool Innovation (AWI), has resulted in significant improvements in the preparation and presentation of samples for measurement via this test. AWI funding is aimed at developing low cost automated systems and is continuing. But, recognising the benefits that could be obtained from the early outcomes of this research, AWTA Ltd sought and obtained agreement by AWI to proceed to immediately implement these outcomes. Consequently, the fee for the

Dark & Medullated Fibre (DMF) Test has been dramatically reduced to AUD\$43.70 GST incl. This lower cost service was introduced on 1st July 2004.

DMF Test Results are reported in three levels for both dark and medullated fibres. They relate to the number of fibres counted as shown in the table. As this test is new, no published standard exists. Consequently, the test is issued as a Guidance Report rather than as a Test Certificate.

Why should Growers DMF Test their Wool?

1. If they know that their merino sheep have been in contact with exotics the test will indicate the degree of contamination present – while contact with exotics may have occurred, it may be at relatively low levels.
2. To support the Dark & Medullated Fibre Risk Scheme Declarations. Providing DMF test results along with a DMF Risk declaration provides the market with confidence in your wool.

3. For lots that cannot be included in the DMF Risk Scheme. The DMF Risk Scheme only covers Merino Fleece & Pieces wool from farm lots. All other wool types are not included and hence a risk rating cannot be provided to the market. In such cases testing provides an alternative method for indicating low risk.

4. As part of specific QA or Marketing Schemes, Growers wishing to differentiate themselves in the marketplace can do so by providing this information.

5. On-farm Management Growers can obtain information about the 'background level' of dark & medullated fibre levels in their Merino wool. The DMF test and the DMF Risk Scheme together deliver a comprehensive response to the dark & medullated fibre threat to the white wool industry. While the focus of the DMF test is contact with exotic breeds, the DMF Risk Scheme encompasses Merino management practices that minimise the risk of contamination.



Research has shown that contact between exotic sheep and merinos can lead to excessive levels of dark & medullated fibre in merino wool. Photographs provided by SARDI.

Test Result	Fibre Count
LOW	0 - 10 fibres (per 10 grams)
MEDIUM	11 - 20 fibres (per 10 grams)
HIGH	>20 fibres (per 10 grams)

Workshop dates booked for On-Farm Fibre Measurement (OFFM)

Article supplied by
Australian Wool Innovation

Dates and locations of the first series of woolgrower workshops on On-Farm Fibre Measurement (OFFM) have been announced by Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI).

OFFM 'grower' workshops are scheduled in 21 towns across NSW, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania from October 14 to improve woolgrowers' understanding of how OFFM can increase the profitability of their flocks.

OFFM Project Manager, Gary Macfarlane, said the OFFM grower workshops were designed to arm woolgrowers with information and advice to make better informed decisions on all aspects of flock management, including sheep selection, breeding and preparing wool clip for sale.

"OFFM is a proven Merino sheep breeding and selection tool that can deliver increased long-term productivity and profitability to woolgrowers," Mr Macfarlane said.

"We encourage woolgrowers, particularly those with self-replacing fine wool and medium wool flocks, to come along to these workshops to find out about successfully implementing OFFM in their wool enterprise."

Qualified rural skills trainers will take workshop participants through a step-by-step process to define their breeding and flock management objectives, choose a fibre sampling and measuring system that suits their own needs, and integrate OFFM seamlessly into their shearing and/or classing and breeding programs.

A feature of the workshops is the easy-to-understand OFFM Manual, which is available to participants who enrol in OFFM grower workshops.

Mr Macfarlane said the major benefits of using OFFM were achieved when woolgrowers used fibre measurement as part of their sheep selection (ewes and wethers) and breeding strategy. These genetic gains were repeated each year, leading to accelerated improvement of the sheep flock.

OFFM grower workshops have been developed by AWI, in conjunction with the Sheep CRC and the International Fibre Centre (IFC), as part of a three-year OFFM program to empower woolgrowers with skills and knowledge to improve the profitability of their wool production, preparation and marketing systems.

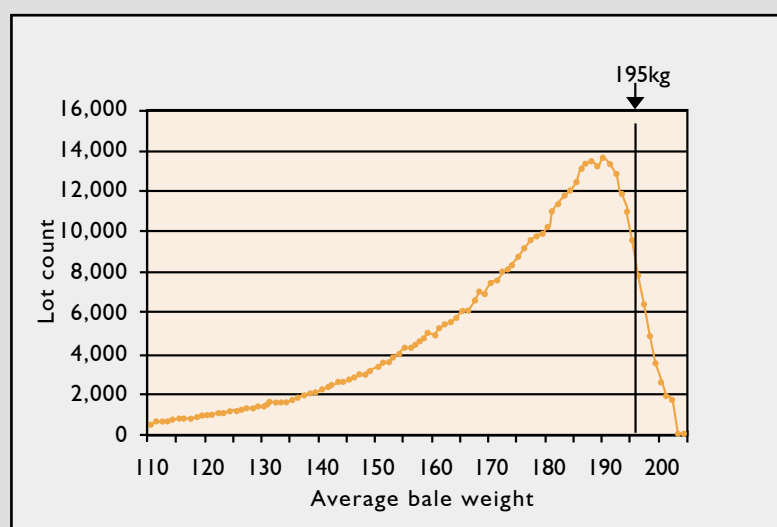
To register for your nearest OFFM Grower Workshop contact OFFM Workshop Hotline on 1800 045 633, or visit www.woloffm.com.au for workshop dates and further information about OFFM.

Bale Weights

Lionel Plunkett,
Market Analyst, AWEX

In order to achieve savings on wool packs, labour, transport and testing, shed staff are often tempted to press bales close to the maximum limit. However, inaccurate shed scales and moisture absorption after pressing can easily push individual bale weights over 204kg, which may incur penalties for bale adjustments at brokers' stores. The Code of Practice recommends bales be pressed to 190-195kg, which allows for a margin of error.

Analysis of auction catalogues shows that a significant amount of wool was pressed over the recommended limit of 195kg during the 2003/04 season. Almost 29,000 lots with an average bale weight of 196kg or more were catalogued during the twelve months. This represents around 6% of all lots (or 7.5% on a weight basis).



Summary of Clip Inspections & Sale Audits for 2003/2004 Season

Total Number of Clip Inspection/Sale Audit notices issued for 2003/2004 Season: 3,495

	2002/2003	2003/2004*
Contamination Reports	3%	2%
Clip Inspections	11%	12%
Sale Audits	31%	50%
Catalogue Audits	55%	36%
Total	100%	100%

Detailed information for each Inspection type appears below.

	2002/2003	2003/2004*
Contamination Reports		
AWTA Reports	49%	90%
Mill Reports	32%	-
AWEX Inspectors	19%	10%
Total	100%	100%

	2002/2003	2003/2004*
Clip Inspections		
Mixed Length	34%	27%
Mixed Breeds	22%	23%
Incompatible Types	17%	18%
Mixed Fibre Diameter	14%	17%
Stain in Fleece	11%	15%
Pigmented Wool	2%	-
Total	100%	100%

	2002/2003	2003/2004*
Sale Audits		
Sheep Brands in Fleece	69%	82%
Invalid Owner Classer Brand	22%	6%
Invalid Woolclasser ID	4%	2%
Sheep Brands in Non-Fleece	2%	4%
Lines of Brands - not identified	2%	2%
Pigmented Wool in White	1%	4%
Total	100%	100%

	2002/2003	2003/2004*
Catalogue Audits		
Invalid Woolclasser ID - EDI	68%	63%
Invalid Catalogue Symbols	32%	37%
Total	100%	100%

*2003/2004 Season - July 2003 / June 2004

Around the Regions

Northern Region

Auction Offering Volumes

Auction offering volumes for end of season 2003/2004 show a 7% reduction in bales when compared to season 2002/2003. This is dramatically reduced from the 23% bales reduction as at end of February.

Since the beginning of March, bale offerings have been consistently above those recorded in season 02/03.

Auction offering comparisons for NR for end of season 2003/2004 compared to season 2002/2003 are:

Lots	197,272 or 3.1% less than 02/03
Bales	855,716 or 7.1% less than 02/03
Avg. lot size	4.34 bales per lot or 4.1% less than 02/03

Newcastle Selling Facility

Following extensive negotiations and in keeping with AWEX's commitment to minimise disruption to industry, it is pleasing to report that all AWEX Newcastle sellers will be using saleroom space at the new AWH sale facility. Construction of the new sale centre is well underway with installation about to commence.

The new sale rooms will be called the Newcastle Wool Centre, and the original roster as agreed by all Newcastle brokers, will remain unchanged. AWEX and AWH are working to ensure that sale operations

will be conducted in a way that will allow minimal disruption to buyers and sellers.

Shanks

If you must put the shanks into a bale of wool, make sure you never put them into a PCS or BLS line. It is noticeable that some PCS lines include varying amounts of shanks. Not only is this practice in breach of the Code of Practice for woolclassing, it will seriously affect your chances of achieving a reasonable price for your skirtings.

Put the shanks and wigs into a CRT line and preserve the value of your skirtings. Well prepared PCS lines can and do bring very good prices. With fewer buyers now in the sale room you only need one of them to be unable to compete on your skirtings to make a major dent in your price prospects. Why take the risk when your well prepared skirting lines can be the icing on the cake for a much better bottom line result?

Colour

Now that some areas have had some rain we are beginning to see varying amounts of unscourable colour in some lines. Do your best to keep this out of at least the main lines. Even in very dusty and lower style wool, the careful elimination of any unscourable colour will keep more buyers interested in trying to buy your wool.

Christopher Miley,
Northern Regional Manager

Southern Region

New Sellers offering in Victoria

There are three new sellers offering in the Southern Region this season. Australian Wool Network and AES Scott, who are both established in the Northern Region already, will be offering through the Victorian Wool Centre.

The third seller is New Zealand Merino. The samples will be offered in Melbourne and the bales stored in New Zealand.

IPP Certification

During June this year the brand CURRAWONG/TYO attained a Southern Region seasonal highest price of 70,000c/kg greasy. The bale tested 12.5 microns and was awarded a 1PP certification for excellence.

Clip Preparation

There has been a rise in complaints from local processors about an increase in the incidence of skin pieces. Their presence requires that processors allocate staff to pick over scoured lines to remove the skin before baling, adding to the processing costs. From the processors point of view, any evidence of skin pieces will cause their buyers to ignore or discount affected lots. The Code of Practice requires that skin pieces be kept separate.

Season Statistics for 2003/2004 (Southern Region only)

The average bale weight for the season was 178.2kg and the average lot size was 6.3bales.

The Clip inspection faults listed below were notified to the responsible Woolclassers:

Incompatible types:	192 lots
Mixed Breeds:	106 lots
Mixed Length:	147 lots
Mixed Quality:	98 lots
Stain in fleece:	51 lots

David Williams,
Technical Controller

Western Region

Showfloor and Sampling Site Audits

As part of the registration requirements for every AWEX Registered Sampling Site and Showfloor, annual audits are conducted by regional staff using the Code of Practice and checklist developed for the registration of registered sites. Each operation presents its operation for audit against the established checklist that each site is issued with at the time of re-registration.

The operation of the registration scheme for AWEX registered sites provides integrity to the sampling and display operations of the sale of

Australian wool and protects wool samples and preparation to allow for transparent competition at time of sale. All showfloor and sampling site operations in Western Region are audited as part of this annual process.

Auction Service managed by AWEX

With the commencement of the new selling season there is a change to the management of wool sales at the Western Wool Centre. The new AWEX & AWH combined auction selling management arrangements that commenced on 2nd August where the provision of auction services are shared between the two organisations for different AWEX broker members. Wool Growers should also be aware that there is a continuous wool selling program for the Western Region between August and the December sale recess, enabling wool to be offered for sale any week in the period.

OFFM Workshops

As noted in another article in this issue of BOARDtalk, a series of OFFM workshops are being held around Australia. As part of the training OFFM workshops are scheduled for Western Australia. Interested groups are advised to contact South West TAFE using the details provided to register your interest.

David Aslett
AWEX Technical Controller

From the Registrar

Sale Audit Enhancements

To ensure that the rules of the Woolclasser/Classing House Registration Scheme are adhered to, regular audits are carried out on lots offered for sale through AWEX. Recently, AWEX has further enhanced the sale audit process by performing new audits in four areas - 'Medullated Fibres not Identified', 'Invalid Classer Type Details', 'Invalid Bale Weights' and 'Unregistered Classing House Brands'.

Medullated Fibres not Identified

The Code of Practice (COP) requires the Woolclasser to clearly identify wool that is contaminated, or is at a high risk of contamination from medullated fibres. Woolclassers must include a "P" suffix in the wool description when marking such wool.

Any wool that contains medullated fibre without the "P" suffix in the description will be identified through the audit process. AWEX will then notify the classer of the

problem and classers are required to provide a response to AWEX.

Invalid Classer Type Details

The Rules for the Woolclasser Registration Scheme states that classers apply their stencil only to wool prepared by them on-farm to comply with the requirements in the COP. Any Australian Woolclasser (AW) or Owner Classer (OC) Identification number that was transmitted in conjunction with a "B" (Bulk Class) or "Q" (Quality Bulk Class) AWTA certificate, will be identified through the audit process. The brokers will be notified of the problem and required to provide an explanation.

Invalid Bale Weights

In accordance with the AWEX Selling Rules, the gross weight of individual bales (grab sample excluded) shall be between 110kg and 204 kg except for Fleece wool less than 18.6 micron, which may have a minimum gross weight of 90kg. Brokers will be required to


rectify the problem or obtain approval from AWEX before sale for any wool that does not meet the bale weight criteria.

Unregistered Classing House Brands

Classing Houses are required to register their house brands with AWEX as part of the Classing House Registration Scheme. The house brands will readily identify the Classing House and shall be used on bulk classed wool prepared by the Classing House. Any Unregistered Classing House Brands going through the auction system will be identified by this audit process. Classing Houses are then required to register the identified brands before the commencement of sale.

AWEX will commence auditing these new areas from September.

For further details, do not hesitate to contact Wool Services on 02 9428 6140.



AWEX
AUSTRALIAN WOOL EXCHANGE

ARN 35 061 495 565
PO Box 823
Lane Cove NSW 1595
Telephone (02) 9428 6140
Facsimile (02) 9420 9633
woolclasser@awex.com.au

Change of address details -
Please fill in below and post or fax this coupon to AWEX Head Office or email us

If you have changed your details, please fax (02) 9420 9633 or email woolclasser@awex.com.au with your stencil number and address details.

For Owner Classers
Registered Bale Brands

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Telephone: _____ Facsimile: _____
Mobile: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Email address: _____
Woolclasser ID Number: _____

Do you wish to be included on the WOOLSEARCH website? (AWs only)
Yes No

Northern Region Yennora Wool Centre
Southern Region Victoria Wool Centre
Western Region Western Wool Centre

Dennistoun Avenue, Guildford NSW 2161
691 Geelong Road, Brooklyn VIC 3012
Gate 3, Sh Store, Suddow Rd, Spearwood WA 6163

Phone: (02) 9632 6166 Fax: (02) 9632 6333
Phone: (03) 9318 0277 Fax: (03) 9314 5392
Phone: (08) 9434 6999 Fax: (08) 9434 6988

Email: northernregion@awex.com.au
Email: southernregion@awex.com.au
Email: westernregion@awex.com.au

Woolgrowers ... Is promotion the way to keep the industry alive?

New South Wales woolgrowers have the opportunity to influence the future of Australian wool promotion and marketing.

NSW Farmers' Association will hold a series of meetings around NSW in September and early October, looking at the wool promotion and marketing issue, giving woolgrowers the chance to discuss the future of grower-funded wool promotion and marketing.

At these meetings Woolgrowers will be presented with a number of options for increasing the consumer demand for wool and will be able to voice their views on the best way forward. Woolgrowers will also have the opportunity to vote for their preferred option. It is the outcome of this vote that will be presented at the national forum established by WoolProducers to consider future options for wool promotion and marketing.

The issue is whether growers wish to fund extra wool promotion and marketing and, if yes, how best to do it.

Your views will shape the future

ARMIDALE Monday, 27 September at Armidale Ex-Services Club - 10.30 am
BATHURST Tuesday, 28 September at Bathurst RSL Club - 10.30 am
YASS Wednesday, 29 September at Yass Soldiers Club - 9.30am
FORBES Thursday, 7 October at Forbes Services Club - 11.00 am

Hear From Experts in the Industry

• Dr Bob Richardson, Dean,
Institute of Land and Food Resources -
Melbourne University

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE WOOL INDUSTRY — HOW DID WE GET HERE?

• Mr David Connors,
Former Managing Director,
The Woolmark Company

SHORT-COMINGS OF AUSTRALIAN MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS TO DATE

For more information contact
NSW FARMERS' ASSOCIATION
Member Service Centre 1300 794 000
OR
your local Regional Service Manager
Darren Greentree -
NORTHERN - 0427 411 214
Graham Blatch -
WESTERN - 0427 411 220
Liz Young -
SOUTHERN - 0428 411 218

