

Changes in Test Certificate Definitions

In the September 2007 BOARDtalk we provided woolclassers with preliminary notice about changes to IWTO Test Certificate definitions that would be introduced to reflect the wool preparation standard. From January 1, 2008 IWTO Test Certificates will have the following preparation standards, (as approved by FAWO).

CERTIFICATE TYPE#	PREPARATION STANDARD
P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wool is from a single source, Prepared on Farm, Classed by a Registered Woolclasser, and Meets or exceeds the standards defined in the Woolclassers Code of Practice.
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wool is from a single source, Prepared on Farm, Is not prepared by a Registered Woolclasser, or (If prepared by a Registered Woolclasser) is assessed as a Non Conforming Lot as it does not meet the minimum standard in the Woolclassers Code of Practice (Scale 3 Clip Preparation fault*). <p><i>From July 1, 2008 this Certificate Type will include sale lots where a broker has applied their stencil to wool not prepared by a Registered Woolclasser. This practice is known as Seller Inspected.</i></p>
Q	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains wool from multiple or unknown sources, (e.g. Interlots, Bulk Class), Prepared off Farm (in a warehouse or industrial environment), Classed by a Registered Classing House, and Meets or exceeds the standards defined in the Classing House Code of Practice.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains wool from multiple or unknown sources, (e.g. Interlots, Bulk Class), Prepared off Farm (in a warehouse or industrial environment), Not classed by a Registered Classing House, or (if prepared by a Registered Classing House) is assessed as a Non Conforming Lot by not meeting the minimum standard in the Classing House Code of Practice (Scale 3 Clip Preparation fault*).

Certificate Type can also be referred to as Wool Preparation category or Test Certificate suffix.

* Scale 3 Clip Preparation faults are those where the wool fails the basic uniformity standard.

There are implications for these changes:

- Wool prepared by a Registered Woolclasser to a standard below the Woolclassers Code of Practice will be assigned a 'D' certificate. A 'D' Certificate Type has a commercial limitation to buyers as it cannot be included in an Objectively Matched Interlot (OML) combination certificate. This may be reflected in sale price.
- The P and Q Certificates reflect preparation standards that deliver lower risk lines of wool. AWEX clip inspection statistics prove the wool not prepared by a registered classer is likely to record twice the number of problems than wool prepared by a qualified registered classer. We believe these changes will re-enforce the value of using a woolclasser.



AWEX WOOL SERVICES

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woolclasser@awex.com.au

"Masterclasser"

Professional Woolclasser Development Course: 21-23rd February 2008

AWEX wishes to advise that it has completed the first (pilot) Masterclasser professional development course for Woolclassers. This course was held in Sydney from 21st to 23rd February, 2008 at the Yennora Wool Centre and Richmond College of TAFE.

A total of 19 professional woolclassers (9 male, 10 female) from NSW (13) and QLD (6) attended the three day course. Collectively, these woolclassers prepared over 40,000 bales of wool for auction last season. Attendees were invited by AWEX either as a result of trade nomination, or selection from the woolclasser activity records. The selection ensured a mix of experienced and more recently qualified woolclassers.

AWEX was impressed by the commitment of these woolclassers to further their knowledge. All attendees paid their own travel and accommodation.

One third of the course was devoted to developing skills related to managing workplace relationships including teamwork, conflict resolution, communication and influencing techniques. This component was presented by a qualified professional specifically trained in these matters.

Highlights of the course, as nominated by the woolclassers, were:

- "Meet the Customer" presentations by buyer, warehouse, rehandle and processor representatives,
- Training and interaction at the point of sale (auction and showfloor),
- People management techniques, and
- Deeper understanding of the principles and technical requirements in the Code of Practice.

Outcomes of the pilot Course will be presented to AWEX's Industry Services Advisory Committee for review and development. It is recommended that similar courses be conducted in Southern and Western regions.

Woolclassers wishing to retain "Masterclasser" status will be required to attend periodic update courses

For more information contact Greg Sawyer at AWEX.



AWEX is a national organisation of brokers, growers, exporters, processors and private treaty merchants which, in the best interests of the wool industry, provides: Industry standards (wool packs, wool preparation), Clip inspection services, Woolclasser registration, Independent market reports, Wool description and Appraisal, Wool sale rostering and Wool administration.

1PP Recognition

In the superfine merino industry the awarding of a 1PP certificate is highly sought as it combines excellence in both breeding and in woolclassing. The 1PP is awarded by a panel of judges – all buyers. The judges are meticulous to ensure that the bales awarded the 1PP meet the high standards aspired to by so many.

The definition used for awarding a 1PP certificate is:

“Wool of Australian Superfine (AS) breed criteria, fleece style 1 (choice) (ASF1), 16.9 and finer 90/100s count visually, and containing 1.0% vegetable matter or less, at least 70 mm in length unless wool is significantly finer (eg. 15.0 micron), where a slightly shorter length will

be accepted. These wools must exhibit superlative quality, style and soundness and be prepared in the best possible manner.”

AWEX awards certificates to the woolgrower, wool buyer and woolclasser. Congratulations go to the following woolclassers for their outstanding achievement of excellence this season:

NAME	REGION	STATE	1PP'S
Lucy Byers	WOODSDALE	TAS	1
Gary Westwood	MOWBRAY	TAS	1
Alister Strickland	LAUNCESTON	TAS	2
Ian Walter	HORSHAM	VIC	1
Margaret Smith	AMIENS	QLD	12
Philip Fittler	ARMIDALE	NSW	2
Fiona Kliendeinst	URALLA	NSW	1
Paul Pittman	WALCHA	NSW	1
Darren Smith	KENTUCKY	NSW	1
Robert Ward	KENTUCKY	NSW	1
Peter Munzie	URALLA	NSW	6
Terry Carlton	URALLA	NSW	1
Murray Picker	BIGGA	NSW	3

Training Workshop for Chinese Processors

Following on from the successful workshop conducted in September 2007, representatives of the Australian wool industry will again be conducting a training workshop for Chinese processors. The aim of the two day workshop is to create a greater understanding of the potential of Australian wool and to provide wool processors with the knowledge to make better purchasing choices when sourcing wool.

The workshop includes presentations and demonstrations from AWEX, AWI and AWTA. From an AWEX and woolclasser perspective,

it is important that Chinese processors are aware of the role and value of a registered woolclasser, to give increased confidence in choosing Australian wool.

Greasy wool demonstrations will include skirting of fleece wool and viewing a range of samples and sale catalogues that show the diversity of wool grown in Australia.

The workshop will be held in the well known wool processing city of Zhangjiagang, China on 10th and 11th April 2008.

OFFM-QA Program Update

Proficiency Trials

One of the primary methods to ensure that accredited On-Farm Fibre Measurement operators produce accurate and precise test results is the conduct of Proficiency Trials.

For accreditation in the OFFM-QA program, each operator must pass an annual Proficiency Trial.

The method used to conduct an OFFM-QA Proficiency Trial is to source samples of five different diameter categories of Merino wool, viz. 16, 18, 20, 22 and 24 µm. Samples are prepared for each category with each operator allocated duplicate samples on a random basis. The type of sample depends on the test equipment, for example, staples for OFDA2000 and snippets for Sirolan-Fleecescan™. The samples are tested by the operator and the results returned to AWEX for analysis.

Spring 2007 saw the completion of the 3rd Proficiency Trial for OFFM-QA operators. Twenty eight out of 30 operators passed the Trial at their first attempt, while two had to repeat the Trial (and subsequently passed). These results are excellent, with the necessity for two retests validating the use of the Trials to monitor the performance of the operators.

In April 2008, the 4th OFFM-QA Proficiency Trial will be undertaken, with samples sent to operators for testing. All current accredited operators will automatically be asked to participate to maintain their accreditation for the 2008/2009 period. Non-accredited operators are invited to contact AWEX to arrange participation in the OFFM-QA program (and the Proficiency Trials).

OFFM-QA on Woolsearch

To further assist the industry in sourcing preferred service providers, AWEX will add On-Farm Fibre Measurement (OFFM) operators who have achieved Quality Assurance (QA) status through the AWI/AWEX program to its Woolsearch website.

The list will include contact details and equipment used by all OFFM-QA operators, with the facility allowing a State by State search. Australia-wide, 30 operators currently have QA accreditation.

This listing adds to the OFFM resources that can be found at www.awex.com.au or www.woloffm.com.au.

The use of OFFM QA operators by woolgrowers gives assurance that they:

- have undertaken the pre-requisite training and annual proficiency trial testing (see separate article) and abide by the Code of Practice and Rules for accreditation,
- ensure accuracy and precision of fibre measurements for sheep selection to ensure accelerated genetic gains.

The OFFM QA program applies to the measurement of mean fibre diameter, standard deviation of diameter, co-efficient of variation of diameter and in the case of laboratory testing, yield using:

- on-farm sampling and on-farm measurement using OFDA2000 or Sirolan-Fleecescan™ and
- on-farm sampling and off-farm measurement using Sirolan-Laserscan™ or OFDA100.

For further information contact: Kerry Hansford, AWEX Quality and Training Program Manager, ph. 03 9318 0277 or khansford@awex.com.au.

Australia Day Awards: I K McIvor AM



On behalf of AWEX and all woolclassers we would like to extend our congratulations to Mr Ian McIvor, 'Gleneagles', Millthorpe, NSW who has been awarded a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia, which was announced in the Australia Day Awards on 26th

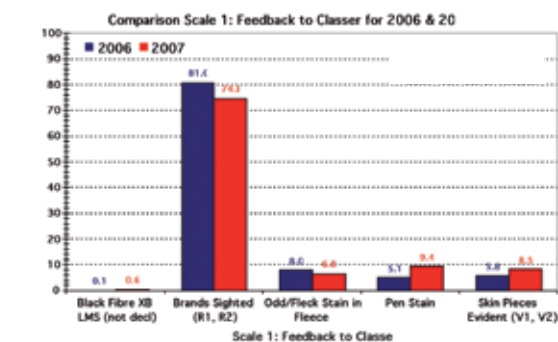
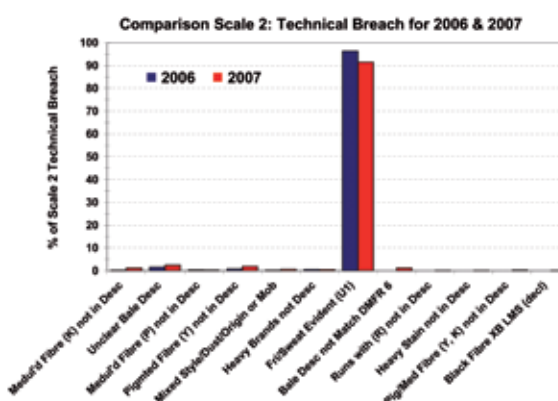
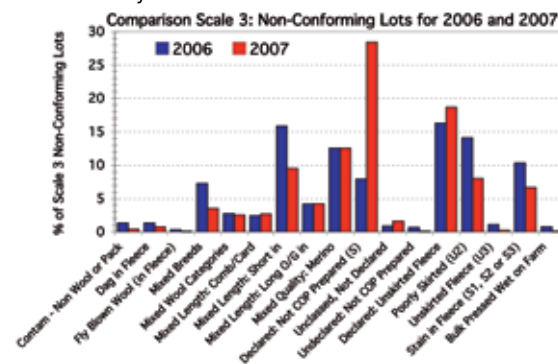
January 2008. Ian has served some 50 years in agriculture, predominantly the wool and livestock industries, including extensive work in all sections of the wool trade as a wool grower, broker, processor and exporter of wool. Ian remains a registered AW

woolclasser, after first registering in 1951.

Ian is a well known identity in Australian agriculture and amongst his many accomplishments was Director on the Board of AWEX from 1997 to 2006.

Current Clip Inspection Statistics

These charts present the most common clip inspections detected by AWEX auditors in season 2006 and 2007



What is Happening with Electronic Bale Identification (E-Bale)?

AWEX and its partners are continuing their investigations into the application of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags to wool packs. In mid-January, trials were initiated at a pack manufacturing plant in Asia to further consider two major issues: the tag design (dimensions) and the location and method of attachment of the tags to the pack.

A previous trial, using RFID tags similar to a credit card, found the most critical pressure points to be firstly, at the pack manufacturer where packs are compressed into bundles of 50 for shipping to Australia and secondly, at the dump where bales are compressed into a tri-pack. Of course, these pressure points also have a cumulative effect that may result in tag failure anywhere along the pipeline.

In visiting the factory, approximately 950 wool packs were tagged using a combination of four different tag types and three different attachments. These packs will be shipped to Australia, arriving late March. The performance of the tags will be further assessed after filling with wool and baling with a farm press, moving through a wool store and core/grab line, and dumping.

The aims in completing this E-Bale trial are to:

- Determine the survival rate of the RFID tags as they progress through the pipeline, taking into account:
 - tag type,
 - tag placement, and
 - the number of times the tags have been subjected to pressure.
- Identify the most suitable location and robust tag type for use in identifying bales as they move through the wool pipeline.

For further information contact: Kerry Hansford, AWEX Quality and Training Program Manager, ph. 03 9318 0277 or khansford@awex.com.au.

Owner Classers – Do you fill in the DMFR Declaration for your Merinos?

YOU SHOULD!! The manufacturers of Australia's wool have made it clear that they require the risk ratings (1 to 6) calculated by the Dark and Medullated Fibre Risk (DMFR) Scheme. The Scheme is free and declaration is simple to complete; so go on, advertise the status of your wool and give your customers the information they need. Listen to the words of some of YOUR international customers:



Mr Charles Ing, President, Reward (Ningbo) Wool Industry Co Ltd., China (Topmaker)

"China has now become the largest and most important market for wool imports from Australia, with resulting market share of 62.8% in 2006. In such a market, no one can afford to be negligent; hence, wool quality in general is of utmost importance and is vital for the continued success for suppliers and users like us. We strongly support the current implementation of the Dark and Medullated Fibre Scheme launched, and hope more woolgrowers in Australia will have their wools listed under the Scheme."



Mr S.K. Patodia, Sr Vice President, Jaya Shree Textiles, India (Topmaker and Spinner)

"Jaya Shree relies on Australian woolgrowers to provide a quality product, fit for purpose and free from contamination such as dark and medullated fibre. In recent years we have noticed marked increase in the number of deliveries that are contaminated with dark and/or medullated fibre. This has harmed the reputation of Australian wool and had resulted in our buyers sourcing alternative product from different countries. Jaya Shree would like to encourage all Australian woolgrowers to use the DMFR Risk Scheme. Woolgrowers who are producing the right product should advertise the fact to mills to ensure they get the best possible price for their wool."



Mr Rajesh Banka, Vice President – Marketing, Indorama Group, Thailand (Topmaker and Spinner)

"We strongly urge all Australian woolgrowers to pay close attention to clip preparation standards and ensure their product is free of dark and medullated fibre. Although the Dark and Medullated Fibre Risk is declared on some Australian auction lots, there is insufficient quantity to be able to confidently source wool free of contamination. We encourage the Australian industry to use the DMFR Scheme to assist processors in obtaining the raw material we require."



Mdm Zhu Jie, General Manager, Youngor Group, China (Garment Maker)

"In China wool represents quality and refinement. Australian wool or "Ao Mao" as it is called represents the highest quality and is desirable to all Chinese consumers. This reputation has been built over many years and is the envy of many other textile fibres. Australian woolgrowers must protect their wools' reputation. Dark and medullated fibres in Australian wool diminishes its high quality reputation. We understand that a new scheme called the Dark and Medullated Fibre Risk Scheme is available to use and will assist in minimising the risk of these fibres in deliveries. For the sake of the "Ao Mao" reputation, please use the scheme

AWEX / WOOLCLASSER POLO SHIRTS



Polo Shirts are now available for all registered Woolclassers.

Colour: **Navy Blue**

The cost of these shirts are \$28.95 each (inc GST and postage).

Size*	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL	4XL
Chest	53.5	56	58.5	61	63.5	66	68.5
CB Length	69	71.5	74	76.5	79	81.5	84

Size*	8	10	12	14	16	18	20
Bust	47	49	51	53	55	57	59
CB Length	60	62	64	66	68	70	72

*Sizing is half chest measurement in centimetres, i.e. front of shirt from seam to seam.

Cost: \$28.95 each (including GST and postage)

Payment: Please make Cheque/Money order payable to the Australian Wool Exchange Ltd **OR** complete your credit card details below and forward this form to AWEX:

Name: _____

Address: _____ **State:** _____ **Postcode:** _____

Male/Female	Number	Size	Amount Total

Cardholder Name: _____ **Amount:** _____

Credit Card: Visa Mastercard (place an X in one of the boxes)

Expiry Date: ____/____/____

Signed: _____

Complete form and forward cheque/money order to:

Australian Wool Exchange Ltd
Attn: Bernadette Rava
 PO Box 649
 LANE COVE NSW 1595
 Fax: 02 9420 9633

BOARDtalk briefs

Women in Wool

The increase in the number of women training and being registered as woolclassers continues to grow. In a once male dominated industry, women now make up to 40% of new woolclasser registrations. It is also no coincidence that of the two Graduate Woolclasser of the Year competitions held in 2007, both were won by women.

Vale: Dr. D J Asimus AO

The wool industry was saddened to hear of the passing of Dr. David Asimus AO on Australia Day 26 January 2008, at the age of 75. Dr Asimus was born in Tumut, NSW and was a member of the Australian Wool Corporation in 1973, became Deputy Director in 1975 and Chief Executive Officer in 1979. He was also elected in 1979 as the Chairman of the International Wool Secretariat.

Dr Asimus became the foundation Chancellor of Charles Sturt University in 1989 and served until 2002. Dr Asimus also held numerous Directorships including that of BHP Pty Ltd and Rural Press Ltd.

Breed Compendium

Over the last 12 months AWEX has been researching and preparing the first edition of the AWEX Breed Compendium. The Breed Compendium will be a reference guide of commercial sheep breeds currently used or found in Australia. The Breed Compendium will comprise photographs and descriptions of each breed as well as additional information that will be of use to woolclassers and woolgrowers.

The Breed Compendium will be released to all registered woolclassers with the next edition of Boardtalk in June 2008.

AWEX Events

AWEX will be present at the following industry events:

- Wagin Woolorama 2008, WA (Friday 7th March),
- Sydney Royal Easter Show, NSW/QLD (Saturday 29th March, 2008), and
- Bendigo Sheep and Wool Show, VIC/SA/TAS (Saturday 19th July 2008),
- AWEX/AWI China Training Course (10th & 11th April 2008).

NEWSFLASH – Mulesing Declaration Gains Momentum

The declaration of mulesing status has become more urgent with some exporters requesting its formalisation to enable identification and purchase at auction. AWEX's Industry Service Advisory Committee (ISAC) will discuss the formalisation requirements ranging from the format of the declaration, its inclusion in sale catalogues and methodologies for its introduction at its meeting on Friday 7th March 2008. More details in the June Edition of BOARDtalk.



BOARDtalk

Australian Woolclassing Journal | March 2008

From the Registrar

Greg Sawyer
 Phone: 02 9428 6144
 Email: gsawyer@awex.com.au



2007 – 2009 Code of Practice Updates

Woolclassers are reminded of the following:

- R bale description suffix – is used when the wool has at any time during the wool growth period been in contact with Shedding Breed Sheep (if dark or medullated fibres are not visible),
- That all shanks are to be kept separate from the locks,
- That water stained wool is to be removed and branded COL (Breed Code),
- All heavy jowls are required to be called (Breed Code) JWJL,
- Stain in any line is to have STN in the bale description, and
- the Woolclasser's Specification must clearly state the reason for making AAAM lines and all lines with the same branding i.e main, broad, short line of AAAM .

2009 – 2011 Code of Practice

This is a preliminary note to all woolclassers that in preparation for the next review of the Code of Practice, AWEX will commence its preliminary consultation this year, 2008.

Registration Review Committee

A total of eleven Woolclassers were referred to the Committee in early December 2007. Of those referred, ten were placed on probation with another being reprimanded.

All Woolclassers are advised that this Committee can recommend to the AWEX Board that a Woolclasser be deregistered. The Registration Review Committee will next meet on Thursday 10th April 2008 where 24 Woolclassers will be reviewed.

Woolclasser Resources Available – Free

Woolclassers are advised that AWEX has available the following resources free of charge:

- AWEX In-Shed Bale Description Chart,
- Woolgrower's Responsibilities Booklet,
- Frequently Asked Questions on the 2007 – 2009 Code of Practice*,
- Bulk Class Bale inserts*,
- Woolclasser Specification (generic)*,
- Previous editions of BOARDtalk*,
- Dark and Medullated Fibre Questions and Answers.*

*These documents are also available on the AWEX website www.awex.com.au.

Please note, a current registered Woolclasser can obtain an additional copy of the Code of Practice for \$11.

An Important Reminder

Using the bale description system relies on good in-shed management and strong communication between the Woolclasser and all parties involved with wool harvesting. All bins/butts/bags are to be clearly identified. The current bale description system does not change the principals of classing. All wool is to be skirted to remove all sweaty edges and other inferior wool. The Woolclasser is also required to make a main fleece line and subsequent lines according to the standard woolclassing principals.

AWEX to Set-Up a National Woolclasser Consultative Group

AWEX is establishing a Woolclassing Consultative group, which would meet 2-3 times per year by teleconference. The purpose of this group is to provide reference information as well as the broader views of current issues so that the woolclassing community may be better serviced by AWEX.

A group of 10 woolclassers is envisaged (two each from NSW, VIC, SA and WA; and one each from TAS and QLD).

AWEX seeks formal Expressions of Interest from woolclassers interested in these positions. Please submit a written application, including a brief resume and woolclassing experience.

Note: All applicants must be active woolclassers.

Please send your applications to:

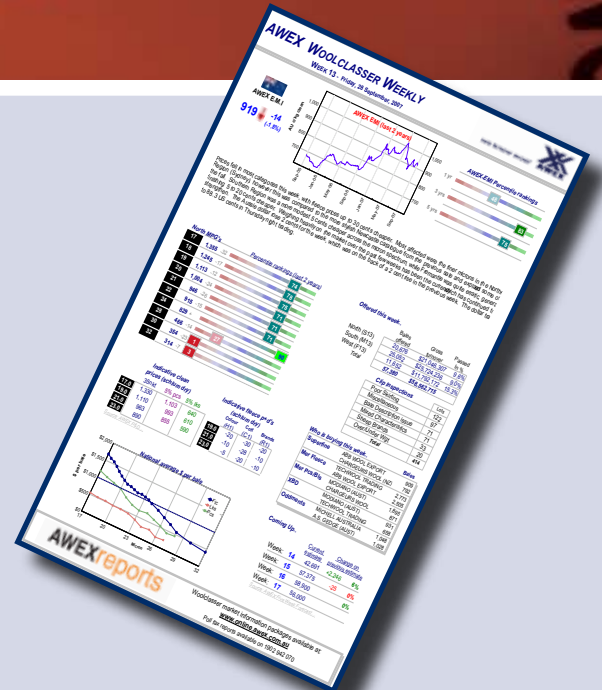
Mr Greg Sawyer
 Woolclasser Registrar
 Australian Wool Exchange Limited
 PO Box 649
 LANE COVE NSW 1595
 Email: gsawyer@awex.com.au

Woolclasser Weekly

The Woolclasser Weekly is a wool market report designed exclusively for Woolclassers. The snapshot is a one-page summary published at the end of the week reviewing the key items for that sale week. At a quick glance the reader can see:

- Micron Price Guide (MPG) movements,
- MPG percentile rankings for the last two years,
- Market performance over the last two years,
- Major buyers for the week,
- Market commentary giving a more in-depth review,
- Major clip inspection for the coming weeks,
- An estimate of gross dollars per bale for each micron.

The Woolclasser Weekly is available by email only and is delivered on Friday of every sale week. Price for the report is \$77 per annum (GST inc.) and can be ordered by emailing subscriptions@awex.com.au.



Auction Action

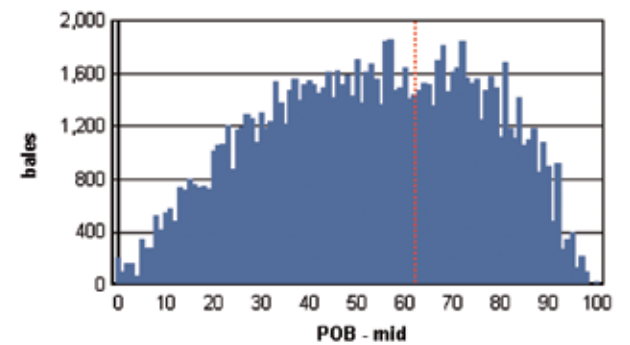
Market analysts often see "micro-trends" occurring during the course of a wool sale. These can sometimes be as simple as two buyers needing to complete an order for the same mill with the same specifications, or it can be extremely complex with many buyers averaging their purchases against their stock and the currency (usually US\$ for China).

Lately there has been a marked increase in the price difference between sound, evenly prepared wools with a mid-break below 62% compared to wools with a higher percentage of mid-breaks and/or lower staple strength. This trend has been ongoing and quite widespread across recent offerings. Over the last four weeks only one in four fleece lots met this criteria which has put upward pressure on prices. Knowledge of this price differential may help growers and classers to optimise the returns on a wool clip.

The majority of the Australian wool clip is purchased by Chinese mills, with most of them setting a range in specifications for their deliveries. These specifications (such as yield, vegetable matter, diameter, length, strength and position of break) must be met; otherwise the delivery will be rejected. One of the difficult specifications to average is "mid position" of mid-break, especially when attempting to exceed a minimum Hauteur (Ha). Hauteur is the French terminology for combed fibre length in the top, measured in mm.

Depending upon the micron of the delivery, the minimum average Hauteur must range between 62 and 78 mm. To produce this top length, the greasy wool generally averages less than 62% mid-break and usually has a staple strength above 32 Nkt. As we are all aware, the Australian season to date has not been conducive to the production of sound, evenly grown wool. Therefore, when buyers do find wools which meet these specifications, competition increases dramatically. Conversely, when an offering is mainly weaker wools or wools containing high mid-positions of break, competition will fall away. Buyers are able to cope with some lots outside of the specifications by averaging; however, it is not possible to build a delivery consisting entirely of these wools.

The chart below shows the profile of mid-breaks (for all fleece wool) over the past four weeks. The red line indicates the maximum limit for many types (62%).



The EMI has recently begun to track lower after rising steadily since early 2006. Part of the recent falls can be attributed to the movements in the Australian/US dollar cross-rate, which has the Aussie dollar in the low-to-mid 90US cent range. The attached chart clearly highlights the effect of the currency on the wool market. From late January to late February the AWEX-EMI fell 7 percent, however in US terms the EMI eased a more modest 1%, and continues to hover around the 900 US cent level.



wool cheque

www.woolcheque.com.au

- FREE Online pricing tool
- Relevant, up to date wool market information

- Simple charts and graphs
- Independently assess prices and trends
- It's quick and easy

Change of Details

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

Change of address details –

Please fill in details below and post or fax this coupon to AWEX Head Office or email us.

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

For Owner Classers

Registered Bale Brands

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



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