

Q1 / 2025–2026

Welcome to the AWEX Update

In the short time that I have been with AWEX, I have received fantastic support across the industry. While industry sentiment has been in a challenging space, there is a clear mood for change and a willingness to engage and cooperate within industry that I am advised has not been like this for some time. I am determined to leverage this mood for collaboration and the improving market environment for wool that we all hope will be sustained.

The Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme has been an immediate focus for me and working out how we successfully navigate the project. I feel very encouraged by some of the momentum that is starting to build around the scheme and the emergence of more all of industry support. Also pleasing to see in the last three months is the milestone of the Millionth Bale processed through WoolClip which is also outlined in this newsletter.

Being new to the wool industry, I have been conscious to take the time to listen and learn to various perspectives and have been careful not to pre-judge and take positions on issues and organisations. I have been making a significant effort to engage with members and reinforce that the door for direct engagement with me is open and that I have an open mind to doing things differently.

It has been great to connect with many members at “Meet the AWEX CEO and Chair” functions at the Auction sites as well as individual meetings with key members, but I know that there are still many people I need to meet. Please feel free to reach out at any time if you would like to connect or have perspectives that you feel are important for me to hear.

Charlie McElhone, CEO





The millionth bale team with AWEX's John Cox. From left to right Rob Ward, Tiffany Clifford, John Cox, Mark Hedley and Charles Cay.

Celebrating WoolClip's millionth bale

WoolClip has hit a major milestone, with the one millionth eBale captured and set to be auctioned in October.

The bale was pressed in mid-September in the shed at "Jibolaro", near Cooma in New South Wales, and classed by local Classer, Tiffany Clifford. Sale of the wool is being handled by AWN's Mark Hedley.

The General Manager of Warrembool Pastoral Company, Charles Cay, who is one of the owners of the property, was also on hand to celebrate, accepting an award to mark the event.

"It's really exciting for the business and the team to be a part of this step into the 21st century. We've got all the new technologies at hand, and it's nice to see the wool industry embracing it and implementing it so that our product can take its rightful place at the top of the natural fibres."

The combination of eBales with electronic capture of bales in the shed through WoolClip are the enabling technologies of a new era in traceability and supply chain transparency for wool, enabling seamless tracking from farm to export.

AWEX's CEO, Charlie McElhone says processing the 1 millionth bale in WoolClip is a testament to the industry's commitment to innovation.

"This achievement represents how far WoolClip has come since its launch and the growing confidence of the industry in digital tools that make wool handling smarter, faster and more transparent."

"It has become an integral part of how our industry works and enhances the assurances that Australian wool can provide in the marketplace."

Since its launch in 2018, WoolClip has transformed the way wool is handled in Australia, streamlining data collection, supporting biosecurity and enhancing provenance for the domestic and global export market.



Celebrating WoolClip's millionth bale (continued)

"As a wool grower, WoolClip has enabled us to take the wool from the shed to the sale with less room for error and it streamlines the process," said Charles Cay.

By digitalising wool specifications and integrating with logistics platforms, eBale and WoolClip reduce paperwork, improve accuracy and support faster decision-making across the supply chain.

AWEX's WoolClip program leader John Cox says it shows that the future of wool is smart, connected, and that its transparency meets the increasing demands from the domestic and international wool market.

"It offers full traceability for everybody in the team and enables full traceability from farm to mill for our customers overseas. Now more than ever, our customers are wanting to have that traceability and WoolClip via each eBale has a unique digital identifier right from when it's scanned in the shed right through the pipeline to the mills overseas.

It's transformed the way we handle wool, how we document wool. There's a big team behind it to make sure that it runs smoothly, and continues to meet the needs of industry".

Wool broker, Mark Hedley, says WoolClip is invaluable for the industry and the entire supply chain.

"WoolClip gives us the ability to trace reliably and consistently with the RFID tags we are scanning on wool packs."

A lot of wool growers don't really understand that it's not uncommon for us to have a bale delivered into China or delivered into Europe that is an incorrect bale, whether it has come from a farm incorrectly labelled or whether it actually just happened in the wool store.

Currently I have a bale sitting in China that shouldn't be there. It should be in Goulburn and the incorrect bale is sitting in Goulburn. They are costs our industry has to wear, so if we can eliminate the mis-shipped bales throughout our industry, it saves growers money as well, and WoolClip gives us the ability to reliably and consistently trace that with the RFID tags that we are scanning using eBales."

WoolClip's digital platform via the smartphone app or the web, replaces the traditional paper-based documentation with a cloud-based system, managing bale data in real time, working online and offline.

Wool Classer Tiffany Clifford says it's more efficient and timesaving for all involved.

"The benefit of using WoolClip is you scan the bales as you go and you can check the bales to make sure none of the brands are wrong and everything is correct. You can do the Spec once you get home and the wool brokers and people in the wool store receive the spec's before getting the bales."



Charles Cay, Warrembool Pastoral Company General Manager (left) & Mark Hedley, AWN Northern Wool Manager & Wool Trading Manager.



Tiffany Clifford, Wool Classer



Celebrating WoolClip's millionth bale (continued)



Rob Ward, Shearing Contractor

Rob Ward is a shearing contractor and has been in the industry for almost 4 decades. He worked at the "Jibolaro" shed. He says WoolClip has made his job more efficient communicating with all parties along the supply chain.

"I think this new technology is where we are going to be going with the industry. There are lot less mistakes that are coming through especially scanning bales because the classer is eyeballing all the bales."

If the mistakes are picked up in the shearing, it's easier to fix them from here. I've made it a point for all my teams to be up to date with the system. It brings everyone up to speed and everyone's at the same level. I was very excited when I heard that we were lucky enough to get this millionth bale."

David Cother was one of the founders of WoolClip and is now the Wool Operations General Manager at the Australian Wool Exchange.

He says digital traceability is the backbone of all modern supply chains, and WoolClip provides the Australian wool industry with the means to protect itself in the "biosecurity management toolbox", allowing the sector to quickly trace where wool bales are produced. Crucial traceability information including Property Identification Codes (PICs) and eBale IDs captured in WoolClip will seamlessly integrate with the Australian Wool Traceability Hub (AWTH), enabling wool traceability back to farm and supporting industry's Emergency Animal Disease response plan.

"The risk of an Emergency Animal Disease outbreak is real to the livestock industry."

Collectively this is an industry effort with support from wool growers, wool classers, wool handling staff, wool brokers, private treaty merchants and shearing contractors. The next 1 million bales are not far away, and we hope the industry celebrates their achievement".

The one millionth bale processed through WoolClip is expected to be shipped in October/November.



Join us for the Next Million

The millionth bale processed through WoolClip is a milestone worth celebrating – but it's just the beginning.

With more selling agents, Classers and growers using WoolClip every day, we're building a smarter, more connected and efficient future for the Australian wool industry.

Now is the time to join us for the next million bales. By adopting WoolClip, you'll be part of a system that delivers seamless traceability, reduces paperwork, and helps strengthen Australia's reputation for integrity and quality on the global stage.

Talk to selling agent, get in touch or visit the WoolClip website to get started – and be part of the next chapter in this success story.



WoolClip Training and Events

AWEX remains dedicated to offering industry participants the opportunity to attend workshops across regional Australia. These workshops provide valuable insights into how transitioning to WoolClip can streamline wool clip documentation and improve efficiency.

WoolClip in Action at Collinsville Station, 23rd October

Join us for an informative and interactive WoolClip Open Day at Collinsville Station. Exciting opportunity to meet: **AWEX Board Chair, Andreas Clark and AWI Board Member, George Millington.**

The upcoming November WoolClip workshops are in partnership with AWI and Shearer Woolhandler Training Inc.

Jamestown, SA	1 st
Burra, SA.....	2 nd
Murray Bridge, SA	6 th
Naracoorte, SA.....	8 th
Keith, SA	9 th

WoolClip Support and Resources

To access the current "How To" resources for Wool Classers and for Growers, as well as broker posters and media and how to guides, please go to: **www.awex.com.au/woolclip/support-and-resources**

If you, your staff or your clients would like to receive training in WoolClip, contact **John Cox** WoolClip Program Lead to arrange a suitable time/date.

WoolClip support is available 7 days a week.

Are you interested in becoming a certified WoolClip specialist for your business? Please contact WoolClip on (02) 9428 6170 or email woolclip@awex.com.au for more information on training options available.

Spotlight on the Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme

With certification rapidly becoming a market expectation, the Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme (AWSS) is positioning Australian wool as the leading, credible and efficient certification option for growers, supply chain partners and global customers.

In this issue, we highlight new support from Wool Industries Australia, the launch of the AWSS Partner Program, the AWSS Step-up Bonus for growers, and an exciting new collaboration with AWI and The Woolmark Company to strengthen brand engagement globally.

Wool Industries Australia backs AWSS

Wool Industries Australia (WIA) has formally endorsed AWSS as the preferred certification framework for Australian greasy wool – from farm through to scouring.

WIA Chair David Michell said AWSS is central to ensuring Australian wool maintains access to premium global markets.

“Certification is no longer a niche demand – it’s rapidly becoming a market expectation,” Mr Michell said.

“By backing AWSS, we are ensuring growers are recognised for their sustainability practices, while strengthening demand and keeping Australian wool at the forefront of customer expectations.”

WIA noted AWSS has been specifically designed for Australian conditions and reduces duplication by leveraging the nation’s world-class integrity systems, including WoolClip, eBale and the Australian Wool Traceability Hub.

With members representing every stage of the wool supply chain, WIA has committed to encouraging adoption of AWSS across industry and to supporting its role as a credible input into global sustainability programs.



Collaborating with AWI and The Woolmark Company

AWEX, through AWSS, is partnering with Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) and The Woolmark Company to strengthen global engagement with leading brands and retailers.

This collaboration will ensure AWSS is positioned as the credible, efficient, and digitally enabled certification option for Australian wool, fully aligned to the Australian Wool Traceability Hub (AWTH).

By working together, AWEX, AWI and The Woolmark Company will provide international customers with clear, consistent messaging on the role of AWSS in verifying on-farm practices, validating sustainability data, and ensuring seamless traceability from farm through to scouring.



This industry alignment underscores the importance of presenting a united front to global markets and supporting brands in sourcing Australian wool with confidence.

Spotlight on the Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme (continued)

AWSS Step-up Bonus for Growers

The AWSS Step-up Bonus is now live, rewarding growers who certify their wool through the Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme. Growers will receive \$5 per AWSS-certified bale sold at auction, capped at 60 bales (up to \$300) per certified PIC. Payments will be made monthly via your Selling Agent.

Round One covers all eligible bales sold from 1 July 2025 until funds are exhausted, with \$80,000 in first-round funding available.

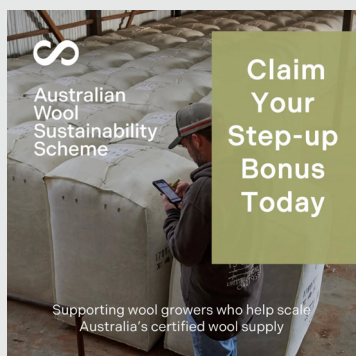
To be eligible, bales must:

- Meet AWSS certification requirements.
- Be sold through an AWSS Partner.
- Be sold at auction during the campaign period.

The Step-up Bonus provides growers with an immediate and guaranteed return for their certification, while also building momentum for Australia's certified wool market.

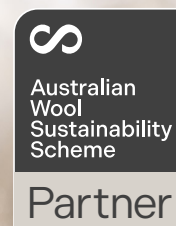
Buyers are demanding more certified Australian wool, and the Step-up Bonus ensures growers are rewarded today while helping scale certified supply for tomorrow.

Speak to your AWSS Partner Selling Agent to access the Step-up Bonus.



AWSS Partner Program

For industry stakeholders of certified Australian wool



AWSS Partner Program – Invitation to Join

The AWSS Partner Program is now open to organisations across the wool supply chain who wish to demonstrate their support for sustainable, traceable Australian wool.

Through the program, selling agents, exporters, processors, brands and service providers can align with the scheme and contribute to its continued success in positioning Australian wool as a world leader in sustainability assurance.

Partners will benefit from:

- **Recognition** as an industry supporter of AWSS.
- **Opportunities** to collaborate on grower engagement and market communications.
- **Access** to updates and insights on certification, sustainability trends and customer expectations.
- Partner Selling Agents will in turn give their wool grower clients **access to the AWSS Step-Up Bonus**.

By joining, organisations signal to customers and stakeholders that they are part of a united effort to reduce complexity, strengthen market access, and deliver certified Australian wool efficiently and credibly.

Apply to become an AWSS Partner today.



Australian Wool Sustainability Scheme

Certification, Australian Made

[Learn More](#)

Questions? We're here to help

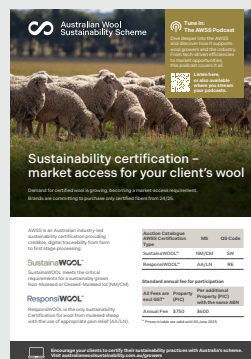
For more information about AWSS, contact the AWEX team at awss@awex.com.au or visit the AWSS website at australianwoolsustainability.com.au, where you can listen to our podcast and find other resources on AWSS Certification.



Learn More – AWSS Podcast

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For AWSS enquiries, please contact AWEX on (02) 9428 6180 or email awss@awex.com.au



Delegates at the 36th Nanjing Wool Market Conference.

Insights from the Nanjing Wool Market

AWEX recently attended the Nanjing Wool Conference and then met with key industry participants in China.

The overarching mood from the conference was a positive one with a genuine feeling that both countries see the current production challenge as a shared responsibility that all sides needed to do something about.

A few key takeaways that were very relevant for AWEX:

eBale technology and traceability – The Chinese have a genuine interest in utilising eBale technology and traceability of their wool supplies more generally. They are encouraged by the developments over recent years by Australia to support these efforts but looking for guidance and advice on how to effectively use the eBale technology and understanding what information will be available to extract.

AWSS – Wool certification was a hot topic and AWEX has been asked to provide further information updating the Chinese industry about the AWSS program with a view to ensuring it can effectively meet China's needs.

Clip Contamination – There continues to be a strong interest in the role that AWEX plays through our Classer training and pre-auction audits to ensure we minimise incidents of contamination in wool supplies. Industry needs to continue to be vigilant on this issue and continue to reinforce our “Keep your Clip Clean” message.

Wool pack licensing – Like many businesses in the wool sector, pack manufacturers have been hit hard by reduced wool volumes. Over the coming period, AWEX will be putting a greater focus on the way we regulate and provide guidance to this critical yet often forgotten element for the Australian wool industry.



AWEX Key Dates

NASC Quarterly Meeting	November 13
Board Meeting & AGM	November 21
IWTO Round Table	November 25 & 26

Statistics

At the end of Quarter 1, the national declaration rate has risen to 78.6%, with strong participation continuing in Tasmania (86.6%), Queensland (85.1%) and New South Wales (84.2%). Declaration trends remain consistent with previous reporting, while analysis of premiums and discounts continues to show a penalty for Non-Declared wool.

Declaration rates (%) by Mulesing Status and State for Seasons 2024/25 to 2025/26 (as at 01.10.25)

SEASON	2022	2023	2024	2025	+/-
National Decl. Rate	73.6	75.6	76.8	78.6	1.8
By Mulesing Status (%)					
NM	19.8	21.5	22.7	22.1	-0.6
CM	3.2	3.0	2.6	2.8	0.2
LN	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0
AA	41.2	43.0	44.5	47.1	2.6
M	9.2	7.9	6.8	6.4	-0.4
ND	26.5	24.5	23.2	21.4	-1.8
By State (%)					
NSW	77.1	79.2	81.7	84.2	2.5
QLD	86.0	83.9	87.8	85.1	-2.7
SA	79.4	80.6	81.1	82.8	1.7
TAS	83.2	85.2	85.9	86.6	0.7
VIC	76.8	78.2	79.0	75.6	-3.4
WA	54.2	58.5	55.1	57.9	2.8

NWD Declaration rates (%) and Mulesing Status by State for Season 2025/26 (as at 01.10.25)

Mulesing Status	NSW	QLD	SA	TAS	VIC	WA	Total Bales
NM	26.1	35.9	13	48	21.6	6.9	59,809
CM	2.3	7.8	2.9	7.9	3.1	0.9	7,546
LN	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.0	439
AA	49.1	33.3	58.8	28.8	46.4	42.2	127,446
M	6.6	8.1	8.1	2	3.6	7.9	17,397
ND	15.8	14.9	17.2	13.4	24.4	42.1	58,029
Total Bales	127,107	13,798	32,204	11,123	42,228	44,206	270,666
% Declared	84.2	85.1	82.8	86.6	75.6	57.9	78.6

Premiums and Discounts for mulesing status as at EOM September 2025

		MERINO							NON-MERINO			
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	27	28	29	30
NON MULESED (NM)												
Season	2023	19	17	17	7	2			0	5	4	
	2024	25	20	9	8	5				5		
	2025	22	12	4						1		
CEASED MULESING (CM)												
Season	2023			9	5	2	1					
	2024		20	8	6	2				2		
	2025	13	6	2	4							
MULESED with ANALGESIC and/or ANAESTHETIC (AA)												
Season	2023			8	5	2	1		0	4	4	
	2024	8	7	7	6	2				2	2	
	2025			2	4	3						
NOT DECLARED (ND)												
Season	2023	-15	15	-7	-5	-5	-1		-7	0	-1	
	2024		-27	-20	-1					-6	-4	
	2025	-35	-27	-15	-2	-5						

Not Declaring (ND) continues to attract discounts

During the 2025/26 selling season we continue to see discounts for Non-Declared (ND) wool compared to wool declared as Mulesed (M).