

# Network NEWS

Issue 47

Autumn/Winter 2022

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AWN client, Jack Gay's property in Crookwell. Image captured by Cassie Baile

*delivering the vision*



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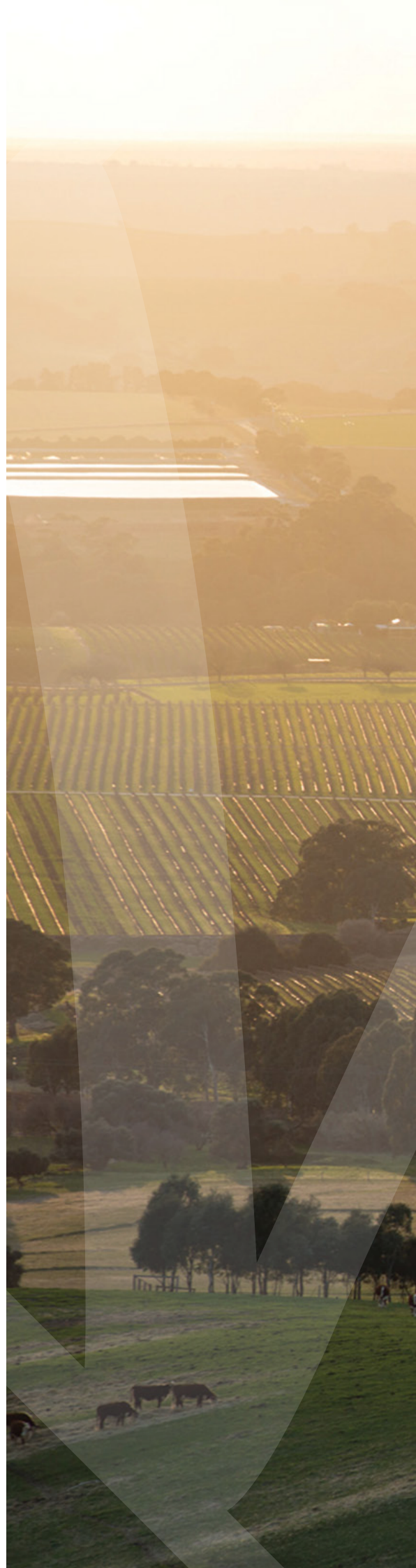
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## *A note from the* Managing Director

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AWN Managing Director, John Colley

The run to this year's Southern Hemisphere winter has been a mixed bag across Australia. The Southern states have been in quite a dry period, whereas the rain keeps coming in the North. I am sure everyone is watching the long term weather forecasts to see the effects of the weakening La Niña pattern and what that means in the run to Spring this year. The markets have been somewhat like the weather, constantly changing. The wool market has hit a few speed bumps, with the interruption to shipping significantly affecting exporters' ability to move wool. It is commonly felt that the market would be higher if shipping wasn't impacted, and it was in its typical pattern. Demand, especially in China, is quite strong. Even in Europe, there is a more significant increase in orders than expected in what is looming as a post COVID trading environment. To date, the uncertainty in Europe caused by the war has not led to any negative sentiment, although we watch this space very carefully as the war escalates.

Our livestock division continues to grow with new people joining us in WA, Tasmania and Victoria. The sheep market has dipped recently with increased numbers coming through and the inability of abattoirs to fill their lines due to COVID and work restrictions. With the easing of restrictions in some states, it's hoped workplaces will return to normality in the coming months. Farmers watching the weather patterns have become more conservative in their outlook, and sheep prices have dipped but remain at historically high levels. Cattle prices continue to astonish everyone, and speaking with one of Australia's largest beef exporters this week, information seems to point towards this market remaining very strong through to Christmas 22.

It is still an excellent time to be in agriculture, and the short/medium term still looks very exciting. I wish everyone a safe and mild winter, and I look forward to reporting more on the ever-growing operations of AWN.

**John Colley**

AWN Managing Director

# S&C Livestock joins growing Australian agency, AWN



AWN WA Cattle Manager, Phil Petricevich

*“Phil is an excellent operator with extensive experience in the agency game. As an Australian-Owned and independent agency, AWN is able to offer continuity of the level of service that Phil provides his clients, with all the additional benefits that come from working with a growing national agency.”*

- Peter Weaver, AWN General Manager – Livestock & Property

In February, AWN announced its latest livestock expansion with the acquisition of S&C Livestock in Western Australia.

AWN General Manager – Livestock & Property, Peter Weaver, said that the business, which will now trade under the AWN banner, will provide current S&C clients with the benefit of access to a national network of livestock agents.

“We are extremely pleased to be welcoming Phil and Susan Petricevich through S&C Livestock into the AWN family.”

“Phil is an excellent operator with extensive experience in the agency game. As an Australian-Owned and independent

agency, AWN is able to offer continuity of the level of service that Phil provides his clients, with all the additional benefits that come from working with a growing national agency.” Peter said.

Phil Petricevich started S&C Livestock in 2016 after an extensive career in the agriculture industry across cropping and livestock. Primarily selling out of the Muchea Livestock Centre and direct consignments to processors and live exports, Mr Petricevich said he will continue to service his clients with the added support of a national network of agents.

“When I first met with Peter Weaver and AWN’s Managing Director, John Colley,

I was instantly impressed with their vision for the business and their passion for delivering the best results for their clients,” Phil said.

“I have been overwhelmed with the response from my clients so far to the news that I am joining AWN. I have strong relationships with all my clients, and it really just confirms that you have made the right decision when they are backing you.”

**Phil Petricevich**  
WA Cattle Manager  
0407 800 730

# AWN are making payments simpler and faster, with BPAY

BPAY is now available as a payment option on AWN invoices





Chatsworth House Pastoral team, alongside the bale chosen to donate the proceeds to Sober In The Country SITC

## Chatsworth House charity bale spreads #OK2SAYNO message

With wellbeing the core philosophy of the Whinney's business, it was only natural they would throw support behind the charity Sober In The Country (SITC).

Tom and Sarah Whinney are the owners of the historic property Chatsworth House which sits on the Hopkins River in south-western Victoria. The 2400-hectare property, with its rolling hills, is ideal for prime lamb and cattle production.

But there's much more to business than producing lambs and cattle at Chatsworth House, and donating a bale of wool to raise awareness is just one way Tom hopes to help create a culture of wellbeing in the bush.

SITC is a grassroots rural charity leading social impact and change across rural Australia through peer support, education, advocacy, and the #OK2SAYNO campaign and message. This message, which is being spread around the bush, attracted Tom's attention when he was following SITC on social media.

"SITC had a campaign whereby you wrote the #OK2SAYNO slogan on a banner, so I decided I would stencil it onto a wool bale and post it on our social media," he said.

"When we were trucking our wool out, I thought that bale looks odd, so I decided to market it separately and give it more promotion and donate the proceeds to SITC."

AWN wool technical manager and senior auctioneer Jeff Denny said buyers came

out in force to compete for the bale and support the very worthwhile charity.

"I designed some inserts and flyers displaying the lot catalogued separately, and these went out with our catalogue transmission the Friday before the auction," he said.

The eventual sale price was 340c greasy, which was outstanding given the valuation of 160c greasy.

The successful purchaser was Jim Michell from Sentdale, and while Jeff said it was not a type Jim would typically buy, he wanted to support the cause.

*"SITC had a campaign whereby you wrote the #OK2SAYNO slogan on a banner, so I decided I would stencil it onto a wool bale and post it on our social media."*

- Tom Whinney, Owner of Chatsworth House

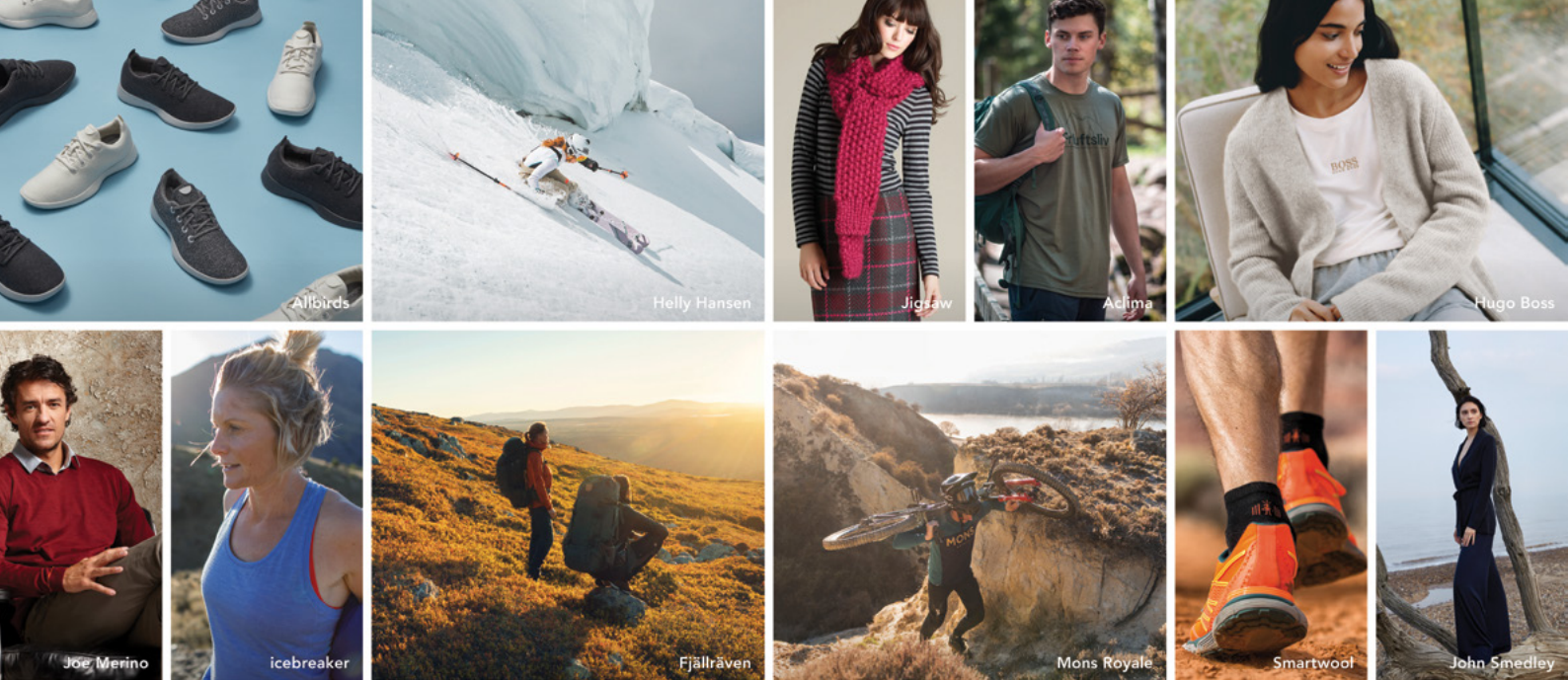
"The wool type was a composite lamb around 28 micron, and with Chatsworth House being Responsible Wool Standard accredited, this helped their cause due to the premiums available for this accreditation on wool lots.

"Although this micron is not currently overly popular with the trade, it was more about awareness than money however, buyer interest was great, and we had all the buyers who would normally buy that type of wool participating in the bidding plus a few more."

Tom said he was also motivated to create a culture within his team at Chatsworth House whereby people could feel comfortable saying no to a beer.

"We still enjoy a social beer together to finish off the week, so we're not anti-alcohol, but if someone is trying to cut back or doesn't feel like drinking, we want to make it #OK2SAYNO."

[soberinthecountry.org](http://soberinthecountry.org)  
[chatsworthhouse.com.au](http://chatsworthhouse.com.au)



NZM Brand Partners

# Woolgrowers enjoying benefits of unique marketing opportunities

AWN clients are taking advantage of a partnership between AWN and The New Zealand Merino Company (NZM) which offers the ZQ and ZQRX programs, providing certification and marketing opportunities not found elsewhere.

ZQRX is a sophisticated regenerative fibre programme helping farmers work with nature to continuously improve human, animal and environmental outcomes. ZQ is the world's leading ethical wool standard - setting the highest standards for fibre quality and animal welfare as well as environmental and social responsibility since 2006.

When growers come on board with ZQRX, they are audited simultaneously for ZQ and Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) through a combined audit checklist, giving a whole clip approach. Through ZQ, growers gain forward contract opportunities, and with the RWS certification included, all other wool can be sold at auction or via offer basis. This gives growers every marketing opportunity available to them with the world's two most sought-after wool standards.

NZM's General Manager of Global Supply, Matt Hand, said ZQ is consistently working with brands to identify the evolving demands of global consumers.

"There are some really innovative product developments going on and, com-

bined with robust marketing strategies, our objective is to create, sustain and maximise demand for ZQ and ZQRX certified wool," he said.

"Over a long period of time, direct brand partner contracts have consistently outperformed the commodity market, historically used in Australia. It's an excellent long-term benefit to our growers, and it delivers comfort around supply for our brand partners."

With more than 120 brands sourcing their wool requirements for ZQ, 20 brands have now committed to the ZQRX platform, beginning with the foundational partners Allbirds, icebreaker and Smartwool and now including names such as Maggie Marilyn, Helly Hansen and John Smedley. Several world-class supply chain partners have committed to the platform, including the Italian-based luxury and sustainability-focused Reda, a long-term partner

*“ZQRX has enormous potential for growth within Australia, not only for existing non-mulesed woolgrowers, but it also provides a tangible incentive for other growers to cease mulesing and join our growing community enjoying the benefits of ZQRX.”*

- Matt Hand, NZM's General Manager of Global Supply

of NZM that provides access to ZQRX fibres at the yarn or fabric level.

Matt said a growing number of Australian suppliers who had joined the program under the initial ZQ accreditation had transitioned to ZQRX.

“The response has been fantastic, and like-minded woolgrowers are very receptive to everything ZQRX offers. Arguably this is the first opportunity Australian woolgrowers have had to join a program such as this with true brand partner connections,” he said.

Based in Geelong in Victoria, Matt’s appointment in January this year came as a direct result of growing demand from NZM’s brand partners for greater volumes of wool.

“My role is to assist in the expansion of the program and, along the way, support the AWN team and assist Australian growers to achieve a great value outcome,” he said.



Grant Barbara, Glenbourne ZQRX Actionist. Image provided by NZM

“ZQRX has enormous potential for growth within Australia, not only for existing non-mulesed woolgrowers, but it also provides a tangible incentive for other growers to cease mulesing and join our

growing community enjoying the benefits of ZQRX.”

**If you’d like to learn more information about ZQ or ZQRX contact your local AWN wool specialist.**

## AWN supports charity helping families in need



Cassie Baile (Wool Technical Officer/Auctioneer Southern NSW) & Peter Brice (MMWIF Director)

In May, AWN threw its support behind a charity that provides immediate support for rural families and children in crisis.

Wool buyers turned out in force to support the Michael Manion Wool Industry Foundation (MMWIF), which was established in 2015 in honour of a mate whose legacy lives on through its work.

AWN donated and auctioned a bale of 15.4-micron fleece wool to raise funds for MMWIF, with many bidders having a personal connection to Michael, or ‘Legg’ as he was known. The bale was knocked down for 2450c/greasy by AWN Wool

Technical Officer/Auctioneer Southern NSW, Cassie Baile.

Cassie said there was very good competition from the opening bid, with buyers very supportive of the foundation and showing spirited bidding.

“The successful purchaser was Stuart Bailey from Techwool Trading, with all buyers very active in the room. The market has been very good for this type of wool for the past four to five months, so the quality of the wool and the personal connection the buyers have to the foundation ensured such a successful result,” she said.

AWN State Manager NSW/Queensland, Mark Hedley, said the company was very pleased to support the foundation that can ‘cut through the red tape’.

“When people are in need, there is often a lot of paperwork before any help arrives, but with this foundation, they are able to offer help straight away whether it’s by paying rent or providing immediate cash for groceries,” he said.

“This is a big part of why we are very happy to be involved as they are making a real difference to families in need.”

Michael Manion was one of the wool industry’s great personalities. His lifetime passion was the wool industry and everyone involved in it, and sadly, after 43 years as a wool buyer, he passed away at the age of 61 after a short battle with cancer. However, his colleagues and mates ensure his spirit lives on through the foundation.

Techwool Trading’s Stuart Bailey said he was very pleased to be able to support such a worthwhile foundation.

“Legg was a great bloke, and all the buyers are keen to support his legacy and the valuable work being done to help families in need,” he said.

MMWIF director Peter Brice was very appreciative of AWN’s actions to assist the charity.

“My sincere thanks to AWN for the very generous donation of this bale and, of course, to Cassie for a superb job in firing the buyers up to have a decent crack at the lot,” he said.

If you’d like to support MMWIF head to [mmwif.com.au](http://mmwif.com.au)

# The career pathway for Cassie Baile



AWN Wool & Sheep Specialist, Cassie Baile

Growing up on a sheep property in the New England area of Northern NSW, Cassie Baile always knew that she wanted to work with sheep.

Starting out working as a rouseabout and wool classer, Cassie then gained a place on a traineeship program before being offered a role as a wool technical officer, based at the Sydney wool selling centre. In 2015, Cassie was offered a position with AWN as a sheep and wool specialist and relocated to Goulburn NSW.

Cassie says that the skills she has gained from experience and learnt from industry mentors has played a key role in developing her career path within the agriculture industry.

"The role incorporates a number of important skills, learnt over time and also

through the guidance of fellow employees," Cassie says.

"I truly enjoy playing a role in each clients' sheep production and overall business and the connection which we make with every client who trusts us to care for them and their business."

Since joining the industry ten years ago, Cassie says that she has seen many changes in what is often seen as a "traditional industry".

"Technological and genetic advances throughout all stages of sheep production and the use of wool, have resulted in a high quality of data and information to be made available to breeders and producers alike.

"This has created many more opportunities for sheep and wool producers to

further their genetic and monetary gain throughout their enterprises. Over the past few years, the importance of ASBV's (Australian Sheep Breeding Values) have also continued to play a major role in advancing production and breeding traits to the whole sheep industry."

Cassie's excited to see more and more women looking to pursue a career in agriculture.

"To any woman considering or wishing to pursue a career in the agricultural industry, I say go for it! No matter where your passion lies, there is an incredible amount of opportunity and a number of paths encompassed within agriculture. There are so many people involved within the industry who want to assist and support others to further their skills, knowledge and shared passion. If you are able to connect with someone who can assist and mentor you towards your desired path, that is a very important first step."

**Cassie Baile**  
**AWN Wool & Sheep Specialist**  
0438 757 560

*"To any woman considering or wishing to pursue a career in the agricultural industry, I say go for it!"*

- Cassie Baile, AWN Wool & Sheep Specialist

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# Good times with bullish cattle market



*Cattle sold in May, Central West NSW*

Strong livestock prices have been underpinned by a buoyant cattle market that continues from strength to strength.

AWN NSW livestock specialist Peter Hargreaves said the cattle job seemed to get stronger weekly while sheep and lambs had experienced some volatility since late March.

“Sheep and lambs are up and down depending on the quality and condition, and not all processors have been operating as they have been hit by staffing issues caused by COVID,” he said.

“The store market has been very strong up until late March, and it has been the same with wether lambs for restocking. Some buyers are wanting them shorn and we all know shearing has been a major issue

across the board. It is getting so hard to get sheep shorn people are saying you need to breed your own workforce but one fellow in his 70s told me he’s a bit old for that.”

Forward contracts for lambs are still looking good and according to Peter it will be business as usual through winter.

“People have joined their ewes now so the restocker market will shut down as the joining window for ewes has closed and farmers are now welcoming rain across much of the State which is excellent as they prepare for winter sowing,” he said.

“The tablelands have been looking for rain as they have missed out on the stormy weather the west and north-east of NSW have been benefitting from as a result of storms out of Queensland.

“Up until a couple of weeks ago Brewarrina was looking great but it has now dried off, and the grass has gone to seed. Nyngan and areas north are looking good, and farmers are spraying and looking to sow with a better moisture profile as a result of rains in early April.”

“Some areas may still be in need of rain to start sowing winter crops, however, these rains have certainly been very welcome in the areas where they have fallen.”

**Peter Hargreaves**

AWN Livestock Specialist Nyngan NSW  
0409 321 001

*Strong livestock prices have been underpinned by a buoyant cattle market that continues from strength to strength.*

## Expanding the livestock network in Tasmania



*Smithton Saleyards*

The AWN livestock network continues to expand with the latest expansion in Tasmania, gaining access to the Tasmanian Livestock Exchanges (TLX) in Powranna and Oatlands.

The first sale was conducted at Powranna in early January and saw AWN represent

over 60 per cent of the market at its first sale at TLX, with 47 cattle and 2,027 sheep.

General Manager – Livestock & Property, Peter Weaver, said that access to the two TLX yards would provide greater opportunities for sellers and buyers.

“We are pleased to now have access to the Powranna and Oatlands livestock



*Livestock Manager - TAS, Cade Ebdon*



*Mixed sex yearlings offered at Smithton sale*

exchanges, offering more of our Tasmanian clients a full-service experience. The two TXL yards are in addition to the Smithton yards, which we gained access to in October last year,” Peter said.

The AWN network now has access to thirteen different livestock exchanges across the country and continues to grow.

# A massive thank-you from CWA of NSW



In June 2021, the Country Women's Association (CWA) of NSW received an offer from AWN to donate some wool-possum blend yarn to CWA's Hospital Support Committee. This committee is responsible for distributing items to various causes, including knitted clothes for premature babies, beanies for cancer patients, Mother & Baby Bags for needy new mums, toiletries for women's refuges, etc.

The offered wool-possum blend yarn was much more than expected – pallets of yarn and boxes of beautiful jump-



ers – more than we could accommodate at our State Office, where COVID-19 had prevented our volunteers from clearing a year's worth of previously donated items. State President, Stephanie Stanhope, couldn't bear to turn down such an offer, so she arranged to take the delivery into her farm shed, newly built after the bushfires destroyed her Bega property.



Since then, after waiting for the COVID restrictions to ease, Stephanie has taken a carload of wool wherever she's gone, visiting various branches around the state. She's also picked up the knitting needles herself and made a beautiful cap, winning second prize at the Candelo Show!

The wool is very soft and fine, and some of our members are knitting with four balls at a time. We hope to see evidence of their creative work in the future.



At their exhibit at the upcoming four-day State Conference, the Hospital Visiting Committee hopes to sell many of the commercially made jumpers to raise valuable funds.

This is just the beginning of the story, but the CWA of NSW would like to express their immense gratitude for the incredibly generous donation.

*Article provided by CWA.*

For more information visit [cwaofnsw.org.au](http://cwaofnsw.org.au)



## Developing a career in wool when the industry so desperately needs young talent



*Bonnie Adams undertaking her Certificate in Wool Classing in South Australia*

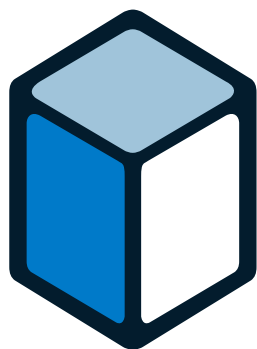
Bonnie Adams has spent her early years in the shearing industry on a hand piece crutching and shearing, roustabouting,

penning up, and pressing. Keen to understand the varying roles in a shearing team, and now aspires to be a wool classer. A discussion with SA Wool Manager Rod Miller while skirting on the wool table resulted in an AWN scholarship for the Certificate in wool classing. This Certificate Level 4 qualification is delivered through the Shearing Contractors Association of Australia and is supported by her employing shearing contractor Richard Rees of SE Shearing based in Mt Gambier.

Bonnie was exposed to AWEX IDs and connected to wool preparation in the shearing shed and the AWEX Code of Practice in the second week of lectures

and practical instruction periods. Bonnie will have access to further exposure to the wool supply/demand pipeline through a wool store visit and AWTA sampling for testing.

The COVID-19 effects on the shearing and wool industry have been significant, with acute skill shortages (availability) at the shearing shed level. AWI Shearer training schools attract young people of both city and bush backgrounds. To her credit, Bonnie sees her achieving a Wool Classing stencil as a step in a career in Wool and not simply a job. Her passion for wool is a vital element of a successful career in the industry.

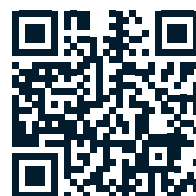


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*- Tom McGuinness - McGuinness Farms, NSW*

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# Demand drives property prices to record levels



*An excellent result for the vendors and Purchasers on the sale of their property "The Gums" at Charam, Victoria*

Property prices continue to astound right across the country on the back of good commodity prices, increased demand, and low-interest rates.

NSW wool, livestock, stud stock, and real estate specialist John Croake says several blue-ribbon properties have been sold in NSW, and, with the huge demand for properties across the country, he is always on the hunt for more listings.

"Land prices have just gone out of sight across NSW, and any sizeable acreages, in my opinion, are 30 to 40 per cent dearer than they were a couple of years ago. I am hearing some prime properties are making \$10,000/acre," he said.

"There is definitely a large influx of city people coming to the country and low-interest rates are making properties really attractive. Potential buyers are being realistic and know rates can't stay at these levels, but they are factoring this into their calculations."

"We recently sold 'Whyworry Park' at Uralla for an extremely good price and the vendor was very pleased with the result.

Victoria is also experiencing a buoyant market with prices hitting \$14,700 an acre in one instance.

Livestock and property specialist Steve Kelly said there had also been a sale that topped at \$12,500 an acre.

"In the past couple of weeks, we have sold a 623-acre property at Charam, 30km east of Edenhope, for \$5,070/acre. A fourth-generation farm, it was in need of a bit of loving, and was purchased by a neighbour, with the vendor very happy with the result," he said.

"In the Douglas region, 463 acres sold for \$5,100/acre while a river block of 320 acres sold for \$4,000/acre. This was very arable country suitable to cropping and grazing with no improvements and typical of the current market."

WA rural property manager Rob McMillan says while record prices are being seen in the west, much pent-up demand has been put on the back burner.

"People are digesting the high input costs of cropping and coming to grips with the eastern European situation, which is casting some doubts in people's minds," he said.

"When it all settles down, and we come to terms with the Ukraine situation, there will be a boot in the market. With the price of canola above \$1,000/tonne and land over here so cheap, people will be keen to get into it, but there is currently some caution however it will happen in the next 12 months."

"Prospective purchasers are showing interest prior to properties being listed as they know land prices are good and commodity prices high."

"We recently achieved a record price at the time of \$1,030 per arable acre for a 16,416 acre property in the King Lake region, 80km east of Newdegate. With a cropping area of 11,826 acres and carrying 8000-10,000 top quality sheep, this was the best price in the eastern wheat belt for a very long time."

This is excellent value for money. If you were looking at the same type of land in Victoria, you could add at least \$6,000 an acre to this price.

Rob said AWN's property arm in WA continued to grow.

"We are doing a lot in the south-east wheat belt and Esperance areas. The vendor of the Lake King property was very impressed with our service. We know we are doing a good job when we sell a place and are then given another property in the same area because people are talking about us.

**For property listings visit:**

[awn.net/property](http://awn.net/property)

## SOLD Properties



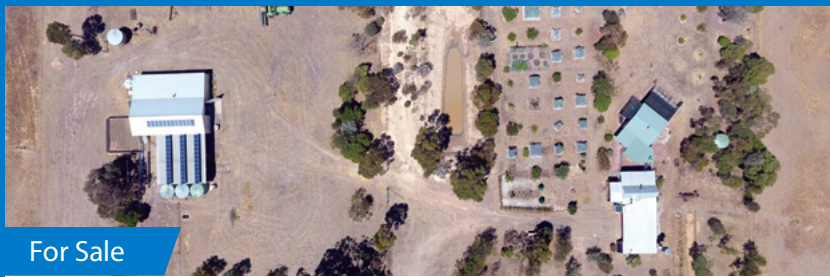
*"Whyworry", Uralla, NSW*



*"Charlie's" Harrow, VIC*



*"Wongabirrie" Harrow, VIC*



455 acres

For Sale

**View** By Appointment  
**For Sale** \$2,200,000  
**Website** [awn.net/property](http://awn.net/property)  
**Contact** Stephen Kelly  
 0457 481 594  
 skelly@awn.net

**View Listing**



**VIC Lifestyle Change with income! - NURRABIEL**

Situated in Nurrabiel, approximately 45kms from Horsham, this property provides a completely self-sufficient lifestyle with an option of added income. A 2 bedroom (both with BIR) bungalow with wood fire heating and split system cooling provides year-round comfort. Bathroom with shower bath and separate toilet, open plan country kitchen and lounge room opening onto the wooden deck to watch over the 30 tree orchard. A 2 bay garage area with a three-bay built-in dog kennel ensures space for all. Additionally, an extra one bedroom with BIR cottage semi joined by a fantastic undercover entertainment area to entertain guests with the wood fire pizza oven a feature.

The three-in-one shed provides the ultimate hobby farm dream, comprising of an open machinery skillion, two stand raised board shearing shed and an enclosed workshop—sheep yards with stock troughs powered by a windmill reticulating from 1 dam.

Say goodbye to electricity bills with a 12.5kw solar system, 30kwhr storage and wood fire heated hot water in winter. In addition to 3 dams on the property, there is over 100,000ltr water storage cementing this property's unique independence. 455 acres of acreage currently leased until 30th June 2023 provides an option for extra income if farming wasn't your cup of tea.




2700 acres

For Sale

**View** By Appointment  
**For Sale** \$1,000,000  
**Website** [awn.net/property](http://awn.net/property)  
**Contact** Rowan Spittle  
 0427 720 666  
 rspittle@awn.net

**View Listing**



**"McLarty's"**

**Untapped Potential**

"McLarty's", the northern section of "Rainmore", is 110 km northeast of Geraldton and 35km north of Yuna. With approximately 300mm of average annual rainfall and a good mix of heavier red York gum soil and yellow sandplain over gravel soil, it can catch up to the no-till revolution that has taken hold in the district. With approximately 2700 acres of croppable land (owners estimate), this is an ideal add-on or starter block for someone in the district.

Original native vegetation is diverse, including York gum, Mallee, Tea-tree, native Pines, Sandalwood and Quandongs. This provides the added opportunity of tree planting for carbon farming. The farm has been run as a low input grazing enterprise since the owner ceased broadacre cropping in approximately 2012. The landscape is gently undulating with easy working soils and long easy runs for sowing crops.



1244 acres

For Sale

**View** Call to book your inspection today.  
**For Sale** Asking price \$6.5M  
**Website** [awn.net/property](http://awn.net/property)  
**Contact** John Croake  
 0428 977 589  
 jcroake@awn.net

**View Listing**



**Walk-in-Walk-Out Grazing & Cropping Opportunity, "The Granges", Tamworth Region, NSW**

On offer is this prestigious property "The Granges".

Consisting of 1244 acres of majority flat to slightly undulating basalt country with some heavier trap country, with some box and myall timber scattered over the property. The property is approximately 95% arable and is made up of 7 paddocks with 3 dams and 2 working bores. Fencing ranges from new to average across the farm but is all stock-proof. The property normally has a carrying capacity of 3700 DSE, with around 900 acres consistently farmed on majority black soils. There is an equipped 2 stand shearing shed, sheep yards, machinery shed and grain silos. The Granges is being offered on a WIWO basis with numerous items included in the sale from trucks, tractors and farming implements. A full list can be obtained on application. Properties of this calibre in a WIWO basis are very rare to come by.





East Loddon Merino ewes

## Hookes' hard work reels in sheep farmer of the year award



The Weekly Times Coles Farmer of the Year Awards held at the MCG. The Hooke Family embracing the award. Pictured Bill, Dianne, Tom and Marcus Hooke

Forward-thinking and adopting best practices which suit their environment are just two aspects of the business savvy being shown by the Hooke family in taking out the 2021 Weekly Times Coles Sheep Farmer of the Year Award.

The awards, now in their 10<sup>th</sup> year, were held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in March and embrace and reward those who are innovators in their field. Fifth-generation farmers Tom and Marcus Hooke, who run East Loddon Merinos with their parents Bill and Dianne, are a fine example.

Tom described the nomination and judging process as thorough and interesting.

"We had previously been asked to do an article with The Weekly Times, and then recently, we sat down with them and went through the ins and outs of our business for about half a day. They sent a photographer out to take photos, and we later received an email to say we were finalists," he said.

"We like to think we are forward-thinking and will have a crack at most things. There are experts out there telling us about best practices, and if we can use

or adapt these to our environment, then we will. It needs to be realistic, but there is generally something you can take from the research."

The Hookes' currently run 10,000 breeding ewes, along with ewe and ram lambs, on 65,000 acres of unimproved pastoral

7.3kg of 19-micron wool and are weaning 110 per cent lambs annually in what can be a tough, low rainfall environment."

"We also have Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) accreditation which extends beyond non-mulesed and sees our practices audited once a year."

***"Jim was a mentor to us with his SRS merinos. We grew up with him in the classing race and got into some pretty deep science. He set the bar for how we do things, and while he did gain criticism, we could see the results on the ground, and now we have a very productive non-mulesed commercial flock and a rapidly growing stud enterprise."***

- Tom Hooke, East Loddon Merinos

country between Hay and Deniliquin in NSW. They breed SRS merinos selecting for high-quality wool, high growth rate and fat on a wrinkle-free body.

Tom attributes his father getting Jim Watts involved in the business as one of the main turning points.

"Jim was a mentor to us with his SRS merinos. We grew up with him in the classing race and got into some pretty deep science. He set the bar for how we do things, and while he did gain criticism, we could see the results on the ground, and now we have a very productive non-mulesed commercial flock and a rapidly growing stud enterprise," Tom said.

"Our commercial flock ewes are cutting

The RWS accreditation opens lucrative markets with elite buyers seeking wool produced ethically and sustainably.

AWN's National Wool & Livestock Marketing Manager Mark Quartermain is very proud to call the Hookes' his clients and congratulates them on the tremendous result.

"They came to AWN about five years ago and are a great family organisation to do business," he said.

"They are great thinkers and always looking at the bigger picture. They are very client-focused, and when selling rams, they are always following up and looking at where and what they can do better."

[elmerinos.com.au](http://elmerinos.com.au)

# Field days offering great opportunities to network

I can't tell you how good it is to once again be out and about, meeting up with our staff and clients at field days. The South East Field Days at Lucindale in South Australia were fantastic and it was great to be able to catch up with everyone.

The Broken Hill Ag Fair and the Pooncarie Field Days were held in May with Bendigo Sheep and Wool Show and Hamilton Sheepvention to be held a bit further down the track. This gives us not only an opportunity to chat to clients but to also update them on what's been going on.

At these field days and shows we will be having a strong presence from New Zealand Merino to elaborate on the opportunities they have available for clients. There will also be representatives from AWEX to promote WoolClip, an online internet and mobile app that allows users to create wool specifications, consignments, and national wool declarations.

We will be holding WoolClip training workshops for our staff in

Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and NSW. This will allow our staff to be trained and understand the workings of WoolClip and, in turn, implement this through our client base.

There are so many benefits to this technology, including being able to ensure there are no duplicate bale numbers, no bales which are described incorrectly and that declarations are completed. This will save an immense amount of time right throughout the entire processing line.

I can't overemphasise the need for correct clip preparation. The market is still volatile with the war in Ukraine, which is having a massive impact on shipping, which affects financing for exporters.

It is good to see a substantial discount on tariffs out of India and we will see the benefits of that start to flow through in August – September. India mainly drives the market in the fine to medium fleece wools and we have shifted more wool to India in

the early part of this year than we have in the previous 18 months. There is still support out of China, as well as Europe, with increasing demand for woven cloth and next-to-skin garments as people return to work.

Crossbred breeders are able to take advantage of the opportunity to be Responsible Wool Standard (RWS) accredited and benefit from the premiums delivered by this accreditation.

I would like to thank all our staff who have been working hard to do the very best by their clients and I look forward to catching up with you at events throughout the year.

**Mark Quartermain**  
AWN National Wool & Livestock  
Marketing Manager  
0429 466 248

*“We will be holding WoolClip training workshops for our staff in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and NSW. There are so many benefits to this technology, including being able to ensure there are no duplicate bale numbers, no bales which are described incorrectly and that declarations are completed. This will save an immense amount of time right throughout the entire processing line.”*

- Mark Quartermain, National Wool & Livestock Marketing Manager

## AWN Client Survey

We want to know how we can better service and support you as an AWN client



Scan to participate  
in our client survey  
[awn.net/survey-2112](http://awn.net/survey-2112)

# Wool market report

In indicator terms the greasy wool market has not changed a great deal during the past six months. After rising strongly from the pandemic induced lows of 2020, the market reached a peak in mid-2021 and since then, with two main exceptions, has done little as the shaded area in Figure 1 shows.

The first exception is fine merino premiums, which have remained at elevated levels, matched by large discounts for broader merino and crossbred wool. The second exception has been the eruption in premiums for RWS accredited wool both here in Australia and in South Africa.

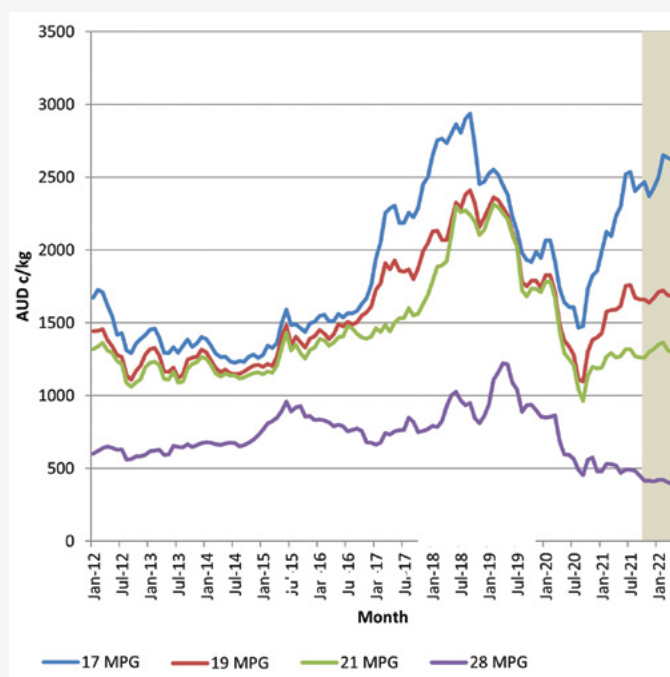
In addition discounts for vegetable matter (VM) have been substantial for broader merino wool, on the back of high VM coming from good seasonal conditions in many regions during the past two years. In the past month VM levels have risen in the finer merino micron categories, with discounts adjusting accordingly.

While merino prices have ranged from median to very high levels (although in US dollar terms broad merino prices are tracking in low deciles which impacts South American wool growers in particular), crossbred prices have continued to languish. The low crossbred prices are encouraging prime lamb farmers to consider shedding and non-wool breeds such as Australian Whites.

With wool prices tracking along “sideways” in recent quarters, problems around the world continue to manifest such as logistics in international shipping and now internally within China an ongoing problem. International shipping remains expensive and less reliable than pre-pandemic and has a knock on effect to exporter trading capital.

Energy prices, which were already high in China, soared on the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. While this helped some man-made fibre prices it also increased the cost of processing and fed into inflation, which is in large part due to the logistics issues mentioned above.

Figure 1: Eastern AWEX MPGs

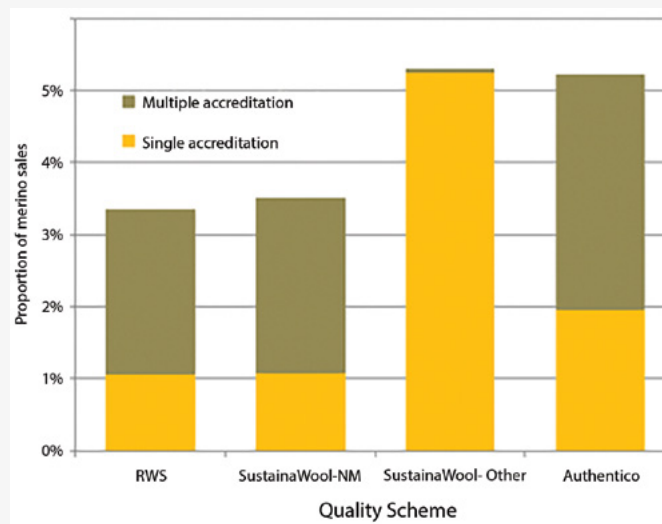


## RWS

Premiums for wool accredited to quality systems, in particular RWS, have been the big addition to the greasy wool market both here and in South Africa this season. Volumes however remain small in Australia as Figure 2 shows. In Figure 2 the proportion of Australian merino auction sales volume is shown for RWS, SustainaWool (non-mulesed and other) as well as Authentico. In addition the proportion is broken down for each quality system to show the proportion of wool which was accredited only to that system and those lots accredited to multiple systems.

A little over 3% of merino wool sold in Australia was accredited to RWS, with a similar proportion to non-mulesed SustainaWool. Authentico accounted for 5% of merino sales. The limited proportion of single accredited lots has made calculation of premiums (where they exist) for quality schemes difficult to do with certainty.

Figure 2: Selected quality scheme proportion of merino sales in Australia



Source: AWEX, ICS

The International Wool Textile Organisation (IWTO) has published selected quality system volumes for last season (2020-21) from the major southern hemisphere exporters and the USA (see Table 1). This gives a view on the world supply of accredited wool, albeit from last season. RWS is the system operating in all of the countries, and the table gives a great insight how farmers in other countries are approaching RWS. South Africa has the highest proportion of RWS wool with 23.5% in 2020-21 (it is tracking around 29% for the current season), Uruguay and Argentina came in around 10-11%, New Zealand has a very small proportion (remembering the New Zealand merino clip is small) with Australia at 1.4% of total production (it is running at 3.5% for the current season to date).



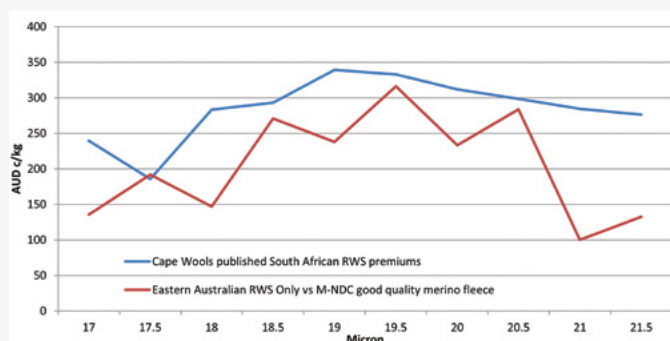
Table 1: Quality system volumes for 2020-21 from the major southern hemisphere exporters and the USA

Source: IWTO 2020-21	RWS	ZQ	SustainaWool	Authentico (registered growers)	Authentico (certified)
Argentina	9.9%				
Australia	1.4%		5.0%	2.3%	0.2%
New Zealand	0.4%				
South Africa	23.5%				
Uruguay	11.2%				
USA	0.2%				
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>

*Proportion of annual country greasy wool production*

Figure 3 shows median premiums (current season to date) for good quality merino fleece in Australia and those published for South Africa by Cape Wools, ranging from 17 to 21.5 micron in Australian cents per clean kg. These premium have been large, ranging from 150 to 300 cents. They have overshadowed premiums paid for non-mulesed wool without a quality scheme accreditation and wool sold accredited to other quality schemes.

Figure 3: Season to date premiums for RWS in Australia and South Africa



### Micron premiums and discounts

A defining feature of the merino market in 2022 has been the extreme price differences between the micron categories. Table 2 shows a percentile analysis of the micron prices from 14 to 23 micron all referred back to 19 micron for the past two decades. The current (April 2022) premium and discount for each micron is shown along with its rank. Fine micron premiums are very close to 20 year highs while the broader micron discounts are all in the bottom decile (wide). This table clearly shows the micron price curve to be unsustainably steep. It is very likely the micron premiums and discounts will narrow in the coming season.

Table 2: Merino combing fleece in AUD terms percentage basis to fixed micron of 19 20-year look back percentiles across micron categories

Percentile	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
1%	6%	1%	3%	3%	1%	0%	-22%	-27%	-29%	-34%
10%	20%	14%	10%	7%	3%	0%	-17%	-22%	-24%	-27%
20%	27%	24%	17%	9%	4%	0%	-13%	-19%	-22%	-25%
30%	35%	32%	23%	13%	5%	0%	-11%	-16%	-19%	-22%
40%	46%	40%	30%	16%	7%	0%	-10%	-14%	-17%	-20%
50%	56%	48%	34%	19%	8%	0%	-9%	-12%	-14%	-17%
60%	80%	59%	39%	22%	10%	0%	-5%	-8%	-10%	-13%
70%	122%	70%	47%	25%	12%	0%	-4%	-5%	-6%	-9%
80%	191%	84%	54%	31%	14%	0%	-3%	-4%	-5%	-7%
90%	385%	108%	64%	38%	19%	0%	-2%	-2%	-3%	-4%
100%	4686%	318%	139%	65%	33%	0%	3%	3%	4%	4%
<b>Average</b>	<b>187%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>-9%</b>	<b>-12%</b>	<b>-14%</b>	<b>-16%</b>
Current	271%	121%	79%	55%	26%	0%	-17%	-25%	-25%	-30%
Rank	86%	94%	97%	99%	99%	0%	9%	3%	7%	4%

### Forward market

Forward markets in the past couple of quarters have basically followed the lead of the auction market, which is normal. Figure 4 shows the eastern 19 MPG from 1998 to the end of April 2022, along with the weekly 12 month forward quote for the week at the time. Generally the forward price tracks the auction (spot) price, only varying when the forward market judges that the risk to prices warrants a different forward level to the auction. Usually this assessment of risk is conservative in favour of the bidders (buyers). The 2020 pandemic dip in (commodity) prices caught everyone (buyers and sellers) by surprise, in which case the futures market worked well in protecting prices from the steep fall in price.

In the current forward market, 19 and 21 micron forward bids are being quoted close to auction levels with discounts widening as the fibre diameter falls below 19 micron. This is despite all of the logistics issues present in the market.

Figure 4: Auction and 12 month forward price



### Crystal ball

Merino micron premiums and discounts are at extreme levels so it seems unlikely they will stay at such levels for another year. Smaller premiums and discounts seem more than likely.

There are a range of storm clouds on the economic front showing for the coming season.

Higher inflation is leading to increases in interest rates, with the prospect of slower economic growth in 2022-23. Traditionally apparel fibre prices are correlated to economic growth in the major economies, so at the least this seems to point to a cap on the greasy wool market rising markedly from current levels.

In China there is a serious property crunch going on as the Chinese administration tries to curb excessive investment in real estate and buildings. It seems likely that this downturn in the property sector allied with the ongoing zero COVID policy in China will slow the Chinese economy. The perceived wisdom is that China absorbs about half of the Australia wool clip domestically. This view will be tested if the Chinese economy slows as expected.

Overall there appears to be more reasons to think wool prices will not rise and may fall in the coming season, however the lesson of the past two years is that the world is a complex place and correctly forecasting economics is a fraught exercise.



Rawnsley Park, Flinders Ranges, SA. Image captured by AWN Wool & Sheep Specialist, Jared Phillips

# Risk management

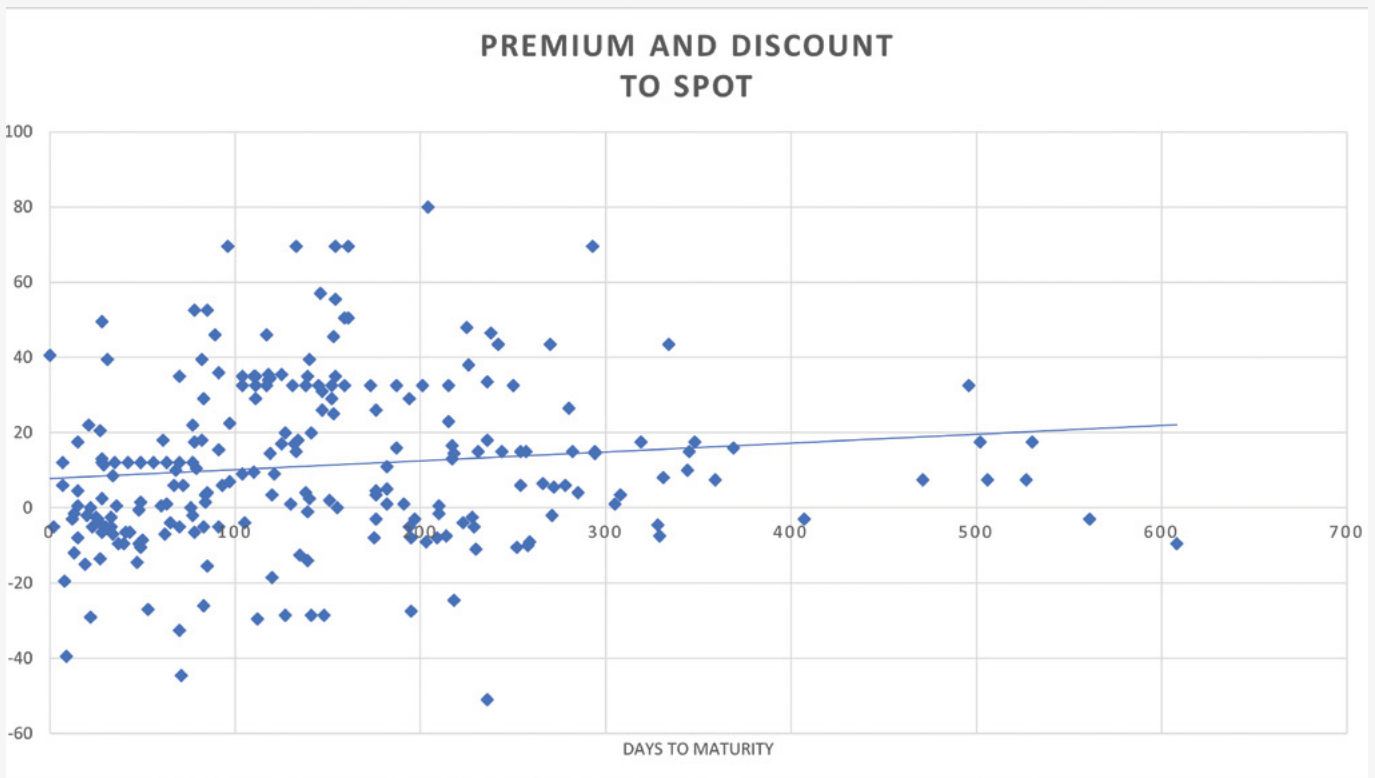
The importance of risk management and forward markets and therefore their benefit to producers has been consistently debated. One advantage that is rarely questioned is the value of an indication of what is likely ahead. The other, and possibly more important advantage, is the ability of forward markets to deliver a degree of certainty of price outcomes in these changeable times.

Challenges along the pipeline have come thick and fast. Starting at the farmgate with series of abnormal climate tests, continuing with higher fuel prices, input costs, logistic problems, and pandemic upheavals. For the Australian Exporter this has meant a blowout not only the funding cycle (time of purchase to time of payment for consignment) but also the freight rates. The bargaining power dynamics have been upended due to COVID disruptions.

For the five years prior to 2020, the forward market's curve was stubbornly in backwardation - forward prices at a discount to spot. The curve then moved firstly to a flatter structure and now (as illustrated in Chart 1) to a premium - forward prices higher than spot prices.

While the timing coincides with the onset of the pandemic, the current outcome is more likely driven by the increased risk that the pipeline has had to deal with and the overall price structure that sees this positive curve. The modest premiums that the forward market is currently delivering are restricted to the fine and medium microns (19.0 - 21.0 mpg) which the market perceives as fair value for both buyer and seller. The percentile chart below shows the 17.0-micron price levels currently are sitting above their 90th percentile. Buyers offering forward prices on the finer

Chart 1 - 19.0 MPG forward price trades relative to spot 19.0 MPG (Jun 20 - May 22)



micron are looking for a discount to the historically high prices.

This is further illustrated in Chart 3 where if we look at the outright prices for 17.0 and 19.0 microns and the basis (difference in price between the two). The basis is at unprecedented levels therefore driving processors wishing to hedge some of their forward sales towards the seemingly better value option of the broader 19.0 micron. For fine wool growers the decision is a little harder. Whilst forward selling at cash for 19.0 might look attractive, a 17.0 grower taking on basis risk of more than 900 cents is problematic. If the grower was able to lock in a forward price of

say 2450, then this would still be in the top 15% of prices over the last 12 years. It is a discount to the current cash of 2650 but should the market fall, there is high probability that the grower will be in a relatively better position than hedging the 19.0 forward and seeing the 17.0 – 19.0 basis narrow dramatically.

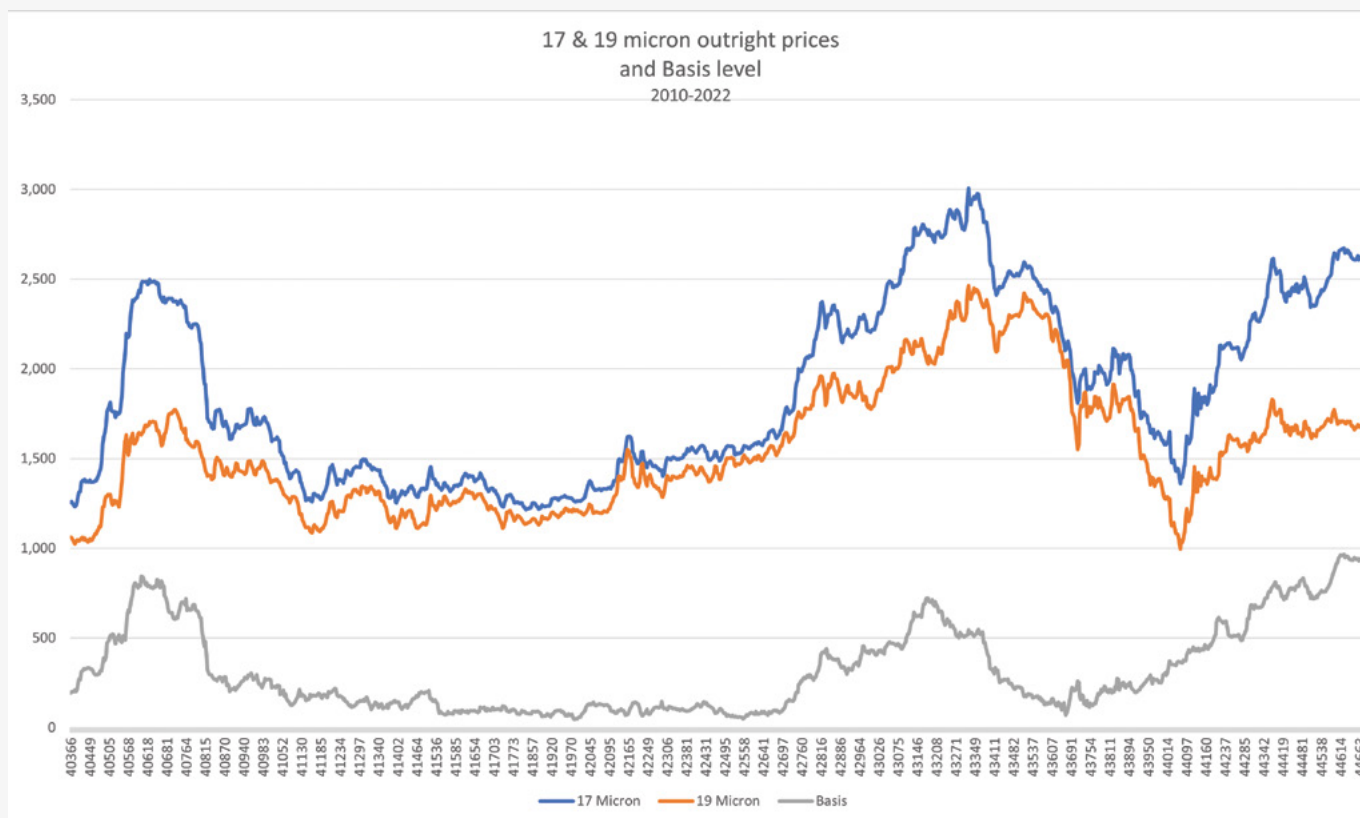
Article and charts supplied by Southern Aurora Markets

For more information on risk management and forward markets, speak to your AWN representative.

Chart 2: Percentile Chart: Jan 2010 to May 2022

	17	18	18.5	19	19.5	20	21	22	28	30	EMI
<b>Close</b>	<b>2650</b>	<b>2161.5</b>	<b>1943</b>	<b>1716</b>	<b>1548.5</b>	<b>1419.5</b>	<b>1342.5</b>	<b>1326</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>1401</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>95%</b>	<b>2745</b>	<b>2422</b>	<b>2341</b>	<b>2291</b>	<b>2268</b>	<b>2250</b>	<b>2227</b>	<b>2204</b>	<b>999</b>	<b>855</b>	<b>1947</b>
<b>90%</b>	<b>2514</b>	<b>2313</b>	<b>2201</b>	<b>2102</b>	<b>2040</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1936</b>	<b>1903</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>1810</b>
<b>85%</b>	<b>2441</b>	<b>2170</b>	<b>2050</b>	<b>1914</b>	<b>1813</b>	<b>1768</b>	<b>1739</b>	<b>1713</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>1594</b>
<b>80%</b>	<b>2374</b>	<b>2121</b>	<b>1938</b>	<b>1809</b>	<b>1735</b>	<b>1637</b>	<b>1559</b>	<b>1493</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>1527</b>
<b>75%</b>	<b>2280</b>	<b>2071</b>	<b>1887</b>	<b>1748</b>	<b>1652</b>	<b>1550</b>	<b>1477</b>	<b>1431</b>	<b>813</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>1440</b>
<b>70%</b>	<b>2170</b>	<b>1987</b>	<b>1849</b>	<b>1686</b>	<b>1545</b>	<b>1461</b>	<b>1413</b>	<b>1383</b>	<b>782</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>1365</b>
<b>65%</b>	<b>2057</b>	<b>1899</b>	<b>1790</b>	<b>1638</b>	<b>1506</b>	<b>1422</b>	<b>1376</b>	<b>1352</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>637</b>	<b>1325</b>
<b>60%</b>	<b>1897</b>	<b>1809</b>	<b>1689</b>	<b>1585</b>	<b>1479</b>	<b>1392</b>	<b>1342</b>	<b>1315</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>1300</b>
<b>55%</b>	<b>1758</b>	<b>1611</b>	<b>1546</b>	<b>1512</b>	<b>1453</b>	<b>1372</b>	<b>1318</b>	<b>1292</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>1280</b>
<b>50%</b>	<b>1667</b>	<b>1557</b>	<b>1498</b>	<b>1461</b>	<b>1413</b>	<b>1350</b>	<b>1302</b>	<b>1266</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>592</b>	<b>1247</b>
<b>40%</b>	<b>1537</b>	<b>1481</b>	<b>1439</b>	<b>1386</b>	<b>1347</b>	<b>1296</b>	<b>1256</b>	<b>1227</b>	<b>646</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>1176</b>
<b>30%</b>	<b>1436</b>	<b>1355</b>	<b>1323</b>	<b>1288</b>	<b>1257</b>	<b>1222</b>	<b>1199</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>1101</b>
<b>20%</b>	<b>1344</b>	<b>1273</b>	<b>1245</b>	<b>1205</b>	<b>1175</b>	<b>1157</b>	<b>1144</b>	<b>1131</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>1043</b>
<b>10%</b>	<b>1276</b>	<b>1204</b>	<b>1166</b>	<b>1135</b>	<b>1102</b>	<b>1074</b>	<b>1063</b>	<b>1038</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>991</b>

Chart 3: 17 & 19 micron outright prices and basis level 2010 -2022



# Regional reports



## Queensland

The Summer monsoon for Queensland resulted in mainly storm influences in areas North of Longreach. Consequently, many remain in drought conditions. Julia Creek, Hughenden, Richmond, and Winton are still understocked with sheep and cattle. Decent falls were recorded, and pasture returned, a grasshopper plague caused extensive damage.

In stark contrast, rainfall has been the best in most areas for 30 years in the South and some parts of Southwestern QLD areas. Barcardine, Blackall, Tambo, Charleville, Mitchel, St. George and Dirranbandi have received monsoonal influences. Cunnamulla, Thargomindah, Wyandra and Quilpie are very patchy.

The Southern Downs, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Inglewood, Goondiwindi and Wallan-

garra received flooding not experienced since the early 1990s.

Stock numbers, mainly cattle in Northern Queensland, are limited due to larger than usual purchases in New South Wales, with an abundance of pasture. Dry sheep have also been sold to meat processors or wether growers in the South.

Lambing has been excellent in Southern Queensland, with wool clips improving due to the season. We may receive Winter rain over the Central and Northern areas. However, it will need to be substantial or more damage to the pasture will occur.

The Autumn Monsoon arrived for many of the drought areas North of Longreach from Hughenden to the East and South. Areas receiving from 50mls to 240mls from Sunday 23rd April to Monday 24th April. Far Northwest, Richmond and Julia Creek sadly missed out on most.

### Warren Zernike

AWN Wool Technical Manager 0407 169 698

### Greg Hunt

AWN Wool & Sheep Specialist 0429 129 072

### Stephen Maunder

AWN Agent 0409 001 107



## Northern NSW

I have lived at Uralla for 22 years, and there have only been four years where we have had over 1000 mm of rain in the calendar year. Last year we had 1161 mm, the most in those 22 years by over 100 mm. Hence we have had a great season, but not a happy season for sheep as they don't like things too wet and are having lots of

worm problems. So many people are trying Barba Vax to see if that will help control the worms. I am expecting a little lighter cut this coming year. The overall clip will be a little finer and carrying more vegetable fault.

We have just been through a season where the fine wool market has held on very well. The 17-micron indicator varying between 2400 and just over 2600, and we are seeing one of the biggest micron premiums for some time, with some super/ultra-fine clients cutting over \$100 per head.

From the Upper Hunter to the Queensland border, our whole area is having the best season ever and even to the west, so a very purple patch for our region.

### Harold Manttan

AWN Regional Manager - Northern NSW/QLD 0418 253 976



## Central and Western NSW

The majority of areas within the Central & Western region of New South Wales have experienced a summer and early autumn that can only be described as excellent as far as rainfall is concerned. It should be noted however that not entirely everyone has experienced these conditions, however rainfall just prior and after Easter has put smiles back on a lot of people's faces in those areas that had missed out during March and early April.

Excellent spring lambings, as well as early reports of very good autumn lambings,

has seen an increase in sheep numbers across the region. The result of the large amount of rainfall received unfortunately comes animal health issues that have had to be contended with. Young sheep especially have struggled during recent months with a large increase in the instances of worm infestation and flystrike.

As a result of the good season, woolclips shorn during late Summer and early Autumn are carrying a higher vegetable matter percentage and are slightly broader in the micron. An increase in cut per head has been evident across all areas of the region.

Those producers in the grain growing areas of the region have been busy preparing to plant their winter crop, dodging rain events in an effort to get the crop in the ground. A continuation of the rainfall will see another bumper crop which will be no doubt be very welcome after those very lean years, only a few short years ago.

### Brett Cooper

AWN Regional Manager - Central & Western NSW 0407 136 129



## Southern NSW

Amazing to think we've rolled into our third wet Autumn in a row. Confidence is still riding high as we farewell an unusual cooler and wetter summer and await favourable cooler months. The Southern Tablelands remain particularly good with abundant, green conditions. The further east, record reports of rain in the summer months cased livestock management a real headache enduring constant battles with fly and feet problems.

While the season is still good in the west, the dumping of rain hasn't been witnessed in the eastern areas. Gunning, Vass bounces into good autumn, but the rainfall has been more irregular and lighter in some areas. Further west, the countryside has dried off. Constant easterly winds harassed areas in the Southwest Slopes like Jugiong, and Gundagai, coupled with a drier February and March, saw the countryside desperate for rain. Fortunately, that arrived in early April. Hopefully, as milder temperatures arrive, more rain will come and assist pasture growth before winter rolls in. The Monaro has had a great summer and looks ok, leading into what is expected to be another cold winter.

Fly, worm and wet conditions have plagued producers over the last six months. This has impacted young sheep in and around the Southern NSW area, which may have production issues in the future when these sheep mature.

### Mark Taylor

AWN Regional Marketing Manager - Southern NSW 0448 211 151



## Victoria

Victoria experienced patchy seasonal conditions with wet summer rains and continued humidity that caused immense pressure on growers.

Wet conditions and heavy rain has been experienced in Eastern parts of the state. In the Western Districts, dry conditions with cracks in the ground are something clients haven't seen in a long time.

Overall, strong lambing percentages for the early autumn lambing period and con-

tinual wet weather through later May/June put some pressure on survival.

The wool market has held positive signs with the odd correction only to rebuild again, and with China reopening, a strong future for the merino market as long as we can keep strong retail confidence around the world.

Many positive forward marketing opportunities through direct orders and our ZQ programs give our customer base an edge in the market.

We welcome Tamara Pabst to the southern team. Tamara has joined us over the past five months and is doing a tremendous job in her new role.

A special thanks to our loyal client base, who continue to support us in our day-to-day business.

### Kelvin Shelley

AWN State Manager VIC 0427 055 622



## Tasmania

In what is a complete turnaround to the trend over recent years, the East Coast has enjoyed an excellent autumn, whilst the Midlands and Derwent Valley remain very dry.

The state has received easterly pattern rains that have favoured the East Coast and Upper Fingal Valley with consistent beneficial rainfall over recent months. The dominating easterlies have not been able to stretch very far inland, and so far, the

Midlands and Highland areas, which rely on a westerly pattern for rainfall, have missed out. Even the West Coast rain forecasts are reported to be extremely dry.

Although it has been relatively mild, Ross did record a -2.7°C frost in recent weeks, so the opportunity for growth is certainly closing in with the upcoming winter season.

Pre lamb ewe shearing has commenced with a general trend of slightly lighter cuts and finer microns whilst stock remain in very sound condition.

The lack of available shearers (and shed staff) remains of concern, with most ewes in the state to be shorn prior to lambing in August/September, which will prove challenging.

### Brett Cox

AWN Regional Manager – Launceston 0499 772 517



## South Australia

We have the normal pre-season-opening rains expected at the time of writing. The wool market has been relatively buoyant considering the dangerous geopolitical situation globally and the continuing effects of the pandemic on economies, consumers, and freight and logistics. The fine wool premium has strengthened, with 16.6 micron MPG 1590 (2876) cents clean above the 21 micron MPG (1286). Our

AWN wool clients have dominated the SA leading prices in the Stock Journal. Buoyant meat prices have also continued for crossbred wool producers, and the pressure on shearing contractors to service their and our clients has been immense.

The SA team have been pleased to be back at Field Days to engage face to face with our clients and colleagues in this environment. Field days are important events for regions both economically and socially. Our bi-annual field day program includes Lucindale, Paskeville, Wudinna, Karoonda, and Broken Hill Agfair. The SA team of Peter, Rob, Jared, and I thank our clients as we have worked together in challenging times. Jared is now based in Jamestown, servicing YP, Mid North, NE Pastoral/Broken Hill, and the Eyre Peninsula.

### Rod Miller

AWN State Manager – SA 0428 256 495



## Western Australia

The cropping season finished off almost perfect for most of WA and recorded its largest harvest. Clients commented that it was the best year on record. Other areas are also well above the long term average. However this is seeing a significant increase in, input costs for the coming season. Various clients opting to hold onto older ewes to breed up numbers and taking risks in marginal areas to put in a crop.

The summer was very hot and dry, culminating in the largest fires seen in the Wheatbelt for years with the stubble load from the harvest. This meant growers

could carry stock over the summer with minimal feeding and ample water in dams from the wet springs. Early lambing scanning numbers are looking good with breeding ewes in good condition. Good rainfalls across the central Wheatbelt in the lead up to Easter, more confidence with the cropping programmes, and ewes will be lambing on green pastures. Cut per head is looking good for the upcoming shearing season, although it will likely be slightly broader than the average with good feed throughout. West of the Albany highway is missing out. Hopefully, will change as we move through the season.

Cattle and sheep values hold firm despite issues with COVID and killing capacity as we move out of complete lockdown. Things are looking very positive for another good season throughout the state.

### Greg Tilbrook

AWN Wool Manager - WA 0407 303 721

# News around the network



Successful Auction of 'The Gums' in Charam Victoria



Vendors and purchasers both happy with the result of "The Gums" auction



Rodney Kemp (Kurralong Park Merino Stud) and John Croake (Wool & Sheep Specialist NSW) at the New England Merino Field Days in January



AWN team at the Smithton saleyards in Tasmania. The team have been selling from the Smithton saleyards since October 2021



Campbelltown Show classing event supported by AWN



Charity bale for the Michael Manion Wool Industry Foundation (MMWIF) on the Sydney Showfloor. Cassie Baile (AWN Wool Technical Officer/Auctioneer Southern NSW) (pictured left) auctioned the bale with the successful bidder, Stuart Bailey, from Techwool Trading (pictured right)



Fleece to Fashion Awards at Deegaree Wool Shed in Uralla NSW. L-to-R John Colley (Managing Director), Cassie Baile (Wool Technical Officer/Auctioneer - Southern NSW), Harold Manttan (Regional Manager - Northern NSW/QLD), Mary Carter (Marketing Coordinator) and John Maher (Non-Executive Director). Image credit Damien Gosson



Peter Brice, Director at the Michael Manion Wool Industry Foundation (MMWIF), pictured with Cassie Baile (Wool Technical Officer/Auctioneer - Southern NSW), who auctioned the 15.4micron bale that made \$2,450 in May. All proceeds from the bale were donated to MMWIF



Mules Free Farming Event at Wallaloo Park Victoria, featured various speakers and was proudly supported by AWN



Winning collection of the AWN sponsored Innovation Award, at the Fleece to Fashion Awards. Congratulations to the designer from Whitehouse Institute of Design, Melbourne, Catherine Lesmana. Image credit Damien Gosson



AWN table at Fleece to Fashion Awards at Deegaree Wool Shed in Uralla, NSW. Image credit Damien Gosson



*Track to Arcoona homestead SA, captured by Rod Miller*

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