

TASMANIA

This February 2019 publication provides woolgrowers in Tasmania with some of the results of AWI investment in **on-farm R&D and extension** that are benefiting woolgrowers in the state. It also provides **contact information**, for Tasmanian woolgrowers who want to get involved.

ABOUT AWI

Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) is a not-for-profit enterprise that conducts **research and development (R&D)** and **marketing** on behalf of Australian woolgrowers. AWI works along the worldwide supply chain for Australian wool – from woolgrowers to designers, manufacturers and retailers.

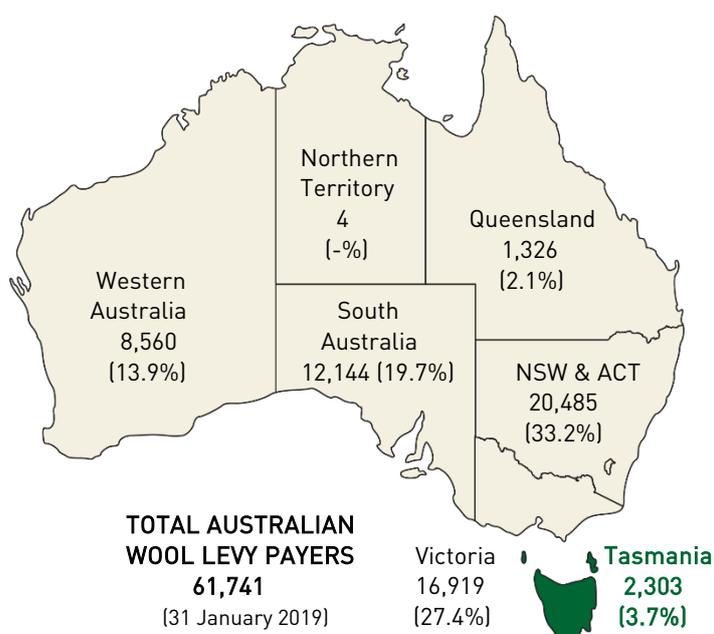
Research and development (R&D):

AWI invests in both on-farm R&D and off-farm R&D. This publication highlights some **on-farm R&D** investments that are benefiting Tasmanian woolgrowers.

Marketing:

Through its extensive networks spanning the international textile and fashion industries, AWI and its marketing arm The Woolmark Company highlight the premium, natural qualities of Australian wool, to increase global demand for the fibre – for the benefit of all Australian woolgrowers.

TASMANIA'S WOOLGROWERS



AWI works on behalf of **61,741** Australian woolgrowers that pay the wool levy and therefore fund the company. 3.7% (**2,303**) of all wool levy payers are located in Tasmania.

At 1 January 2019, there were **1,725** levy payers in Tasmania that had paid more than \$100 in levies in the past 3 years and so were eligible to become an AWI shareholder. **607** (35%) have become an AWI shareholder and can vote at AWI AGMs.

TASMANIA'S WOOL INDUSTRY

Sheep farmers were among the first free settlers in Tasmania, arriving from Britain in the 1820s. Sheep imports with highly regarded pedigrees – such as the Merino sheep brought from Saxony by Eliza Furlong – formed the foundation of the state's valuable wool industry.

Sheep and wool production continue to return a significant proportion of the state's agricultural income. In recent years, Tasmania has even edged ahead of Queensland in terms of numbers of sheep shorn and wool production.

While Tasmania currently produces just 3% of all Australian wool, its Merino wools are renowned across the world.

SHEEP NUMBERS SHORN

million	NSW	Vic	WA	SA	Tas	Qld	Total
2016/17	27.4	16.0	15.1	11.2	2.5	2.1	74.3
2017/18	28.3	17.2	14.8	11.9	2.4	2.2	76.8
2018/19*	25.0	16.8	14.5	11.1	2.5	1.9	71.7

Source: Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Nov 2018
* Forecast

SHORN WOOL PRODUCTION

mkg	NSW	Vic	WA	SA	Tas	Qld	Total
2016/17	126.0	67.4	71.1	57.9	9.2	8.5	340
2017/18	125.7	73.5	65.1	59.5	9.3	8.3	341
2018/19*	100.0	70.7	62.7	54.7	9.3	7.1	305
	32.8%	23.2%	20.6%	17.9%	3.0%	2.3%	100%

Source: Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Nov 2018
* Forecast

AWTA TEST DATA

	2016/17		2017/18	
	Tas	Australia	Tas	Australia
Greasy weight* (t)	10,067	357,785	10,192	360,017
Yield (%)	70.4	65.1	70.5	64.8
VM (%)	0.7	2.3	1.0	2.5
MFD (µm)	21.7	21.0	21.8	21.0
SS (Nkt)	34.5	34.3	35.9	34.5
SL (mm)	88.9	87.9	88.2	85.8
Mid-break (%)	50.9	48.4	45.0	50.8

Source: Australian Wool Testing Authority (AWTA) *WSA

AWI gratefully acknowledges the funds provided by the Australian Government to support the research and development activities detailed in this publication.

TASMANIAN HIGHLIGHTS

SHEEP HEALTH



Simon Foster of **Campbell Town** regularly monitors his flock's worm burdens to help decide when to drench.

paraboss

ParaBoss is a suite of three web-based products – LiceBoss, WormBoss and FlyBoss – containing detailed management information to help sheep producers manage lice, worm and blowfly risks for their sheep.

➡ www.paraboss.com.au

- **Monthly State Outlooks** detail the current prevalence of sheep parasites across Tasmania.

➡ www.paraboss.com.au/news

- **Worm Control Program** for Tasmania is available online on WormBoss, including a drench decision guide and list of professional service providers.

➡ www.wormboss.com.au

- **Flystrike Decision Support Tool** on FlyBoss is tailored for your location within Tasmania.

➡ www.flyboss.com.au/tools

BREECH STRIKE GENETICS PROJECT

This project demonstrated that breeding for breech strike resistant sheep is a feasible and achievable objective although much more difficult for fine wool Merinos. Outcomes from this work included the identification of new breech strike indicator traits such as dags, breech wrinkle and breech cover for woolgrowers to use to breed indirectly for breech strike resistance.

➡ www.wool.com/flystrike

BREECH FLYSTRIKE PUBLICATIONS

Publications now available include a 'Managing Breech Flystrike' manual, a 'Planning for a Non Mulesed Merino Enterprise' booklet, pain relief FAQs, and slides from 15 presentations at the Breech Flystrike RD&E Technical Update held in July.

➡ www.wool.com/flystrikelatest

PEST ANIMALS



A rabbit eating oats laced with the RHDV1 K5 strain of rabbit calicivirus which has been released in **Tasmania**.

RHDV1 K5 RABBIT BIOCONTROL

A strain of rabbit calicivirus (RHDV1 K5) new to Australia was released in March 2017 at 382 locations across the country, including Tasmania. There has been a 38% observed reduction in rabbit numbers nationally following its release, based on data from 191 participating sites. The aim is to reduce rabbits' negative impact on agricultural production and native ecosystems.

➡ www.wool.com/rabbits

BIOCONTROL: WILD DOGS AND FOXES

Although wild dogs and foxes are not considered present in Tasmania, AWI's investments in their control on the mainland of Australia would be very useful for application in Tasmania if the need ever arose. For instance, an alternative to 1080 baits, called PAPP, has been made available, under the name FOXECUTE® for foxes and DOGABAIT® for wild dogs.

➡ www.wool.com/wilddogs

PAIN RELIEF PRODUCTS

Buccalgescic® (pre-operative gel administered inside cheek), Tri-Solfen® (post-operative topical application) and Metacam® (pre-operative injection) are registered pain relief products.

➡ www.wool.com/flystrike

FOOTROT

Building on previous AWI investment that helped design effective vaccines that can eradicate individual strains of virulent footrot diagnosed on individual properties, AWI is currently funding R&D into a multivalent vaccine. A Farmer Footrot Tool is also available which helps enable footrot-affected producers to understand the financial cost of the disease on their farm and to evaluate the cost effectiveness of different strategies to control or eradicate the disease.

➡ www.wool.com/footrot

GENETICS



A sheep classing workshop at **Ross**, run by AWI and hosted by the Stud Merino Breeders Association of Tasmania.



This 10-year project aims to better understand how current selection approaches relate to lifetime performance and to learn more about the genetics and economic interactions, across a diverse range of Merino types delivering high quality wool, lambs and meat through life. The project runs at five sire evaluation sites located across Australia, in diverse climates with genetically diverse ewe bases.

➡ www.wool.com/MLP

MERINO SUPERIOR SIRE

This initiative identifies the genetic component of diversity in sire breeding performance in the Merino flock by evaluating their progeny. There are 10 sites across Australia including one run by the Tasmanian Central Test Sire Evaluation Assoc. Inc, where the last evaluation took place in 2013-15.

➡ www.merinosuperiorsires.com.au

MERINO BLOODLINE PERFORMANCE

This project enables woolgrowers to compare 73 commonly used Merino bloodlines from 25 wether trials (including one in Tasmania) over the past ten years to identify performance differences.

➡ www.merinobloodlines.com.au

SHEEP SELECTION TOOLS BOOKLET

This 20-page booklet provides a summary of a wide range of industry tools available to woolgrowers to help achieve their breeding goals. Topics covered include sheep shows, wether trials, flock ewe competitions, Merino Sire Evaluation (and the MLP project), MERINOSELECT, Visual Sheep Scores, RamSelect, workshops, sheep classers and advisors and saleyards.

➡ www.wool.com/publications

TASMANIAN HIGHLIGHTS

REPRODUCTION



Scott Colvin of **Blackwood Creek** at the base of the Great Western Tiers benefited from doing an LTEM course.

LIFETIME EWE MANAGEMENT COURSE

This course provides hands-on, on-farm training over a year, for small groups of producers (about 5-7) in the management and nutrition of breeding ewes to maximise reproduction rates and lamb and ewe survival. The average participant reports a 10% increase in weaning rates and 30% reduction in ewe mortality. Nationally, more than 4,500 producers have undertaken the course, through 790 groups. There are currently four active groups in Tasmania.

➔ Phone RIST on 1800 883 343

ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS

Picking Performer Ewes

This workshop available in Tasmania for woolgrowers with commercial self-replacing Merino flocks places importance on the total lifetime productivity potential of the ewes.

RAMping Up Repro

This workshop available in Tasmania is designed to give woolgrowers the skills to improve ram health, performance and longevity in their sheep breeding enterprises.

Winning With Weaners

This workshop available in Tasmania is designed to give woolgrowers the skills to lift the lifetime performance of their young Merino sheep and achieve 95% weaner survival to one year of age.

➔ Sheep Connect Tasmania (see back page)

LAMBING DENSITY AND MOB SIZE

Research into lambing density conducted at 85 sites across Australia shows that reducing the mob size of twin-bearing ewes that are in a reasonable condition at lambing will improve lamb survival. However, their stocking rate has little or no effect on lamb survival.

➔ www.wool.com/mobsize

FEEDBASE



Richard Gardner from **Tunbridge** is one of the Tasmanian case studies available on the EverGraze website.

EVERGRAZE

The EverGraze website presents information about farming systems based on **perennials**, to increase profitability of livestock enterprises and at the same time reduce ground water recharge and soil loss by water and wind in the high rainfall zone of southern Australia. The information includes four case studies from Tasmania.

➔ www.evergraze.com.au

GRAIN & GRAZE

The Grain & Graze website provides information, tools and calculators for **mixed farm enterprises** (grain and livestock). It covers the overall management and mix of the feedbase, grazing cereals to boost winter feed supply, the use of pastures and fodders, and pasture cropping.

➔ www.grainandgraze3.com.au

GROWER SPOTLIGHT

This project showcases **environmental land management** undertaken by Australian woolgrowers. Case studies are on display for retailers and consumers to gain an insight into land stewardship.

➔ www.woolmark.com/education/provenance

LAND, WATER & WOOL

The national Land, Water & Wool project developed more than 60 research-based practical information products on **natural resource management** R&D, including fact sheets, case studies, technical manuals and guidelines. They include managing climate variability, river management and water quality, native vegetation and biodiversity, and sustainable grazing on saline lands.

➔ www.wool.com/environment

TIMERITE®

The TIMERITE® package provides a reliable and effective option for control of **redlegged earth mites** in Tasmania.

➔ www.wool.com/timerite

HARVESTING



Wool handling trainer Mel Morris of **Cressy** competing in the finals of the World Championships.

SHED TRAINING

Shearer and wool handler training

AWI funds training for learner to professional shearers, and novice to professional wool handlers. In the past two years, through AWI-funded programs:

- **shearer in-shed training** was delivered for 94 days across Tasmania resulting in 242 trained
- **wool handler in-shed training** was delivered for 95 days across Tasmania resulting in 226 trained.

In addition, **novice schools** and **workshops, online** training, and training in the **Shear-Jitsu technique** – the new way to perform the catch and drag – were undertaken.

➔ AWI Shearing Industry Development Coordinator, Jim Murray, 0427 460 007

Training resources

AWI has produced a series of training videos to help advance the skills of novice, improver and professional shearers and wool handlers – to promote better techniques and improve clip preparation practices in the industry.

➔ www.wool.com/trainingresources
Also available on a free USB from the AWI Helpline on 1800 070 099

TASMANIAN SHEARING COMPETITIONS

AWI provides support to local shearing competitions in Tasmania affiliated with Sports Shear Australia. Five were supported in the 2017/18 year, including the Tasmania State Championships. The aim of the support is to promote excellence in the wool harvesting industry, encourage young people to join the industry, and encourage continued development of techniques in shearing and woolhandling.

➔ www.wool.com/competitionsupport

TASMANIAN HIGHLIGHTS

THE NEXT GEN



The **Tasmanian teams** won the tertiary and secondary school team awards at AWI's 2018 National Merino Challenge.

PRACTICAL HANDS-ON TRAINING

Young woolgrowers from Tasmania take part in practical hands-on training initiatives:

- **National Merino Challenge** is a two-day event that encourages new entrants into the wool industry by helping students across Tasmania and the rest of Australia develop their industry knowledge, skills and networks. It involves presentations and demonstrations from industry professionals.
➡ www.awinmc.com.au
- **Sheep classing workshops** are delivered to provide practical advice on increasing flock production. AWI has run them at several locations in Tasmania including Ross.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Tasmanian woolgrowers recently supported in leadership courses and scholarship opportunities include:

- **Breeding Leadership course:** John Chester from Campbell Town participated in 2018.
- **Australian Rural Leadership Foundation:** AWI-supported graduate: Helen Geard, Tea Tree.
- **Nuffield Farming Scholarship:** AWI-supported graduate: James Walker of Carrick.

Other opportunities include the Horizon Scholarship and the Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture.

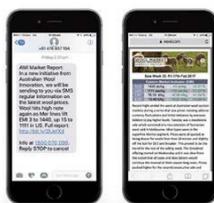
➡ www.wool.com/leadership

MAKING MORE FROM SHEEP

This is a best practice package of information and tools for sheep producers. Ideal for young people starting out in the wool industry, the 12 modules contain useful information about the 'must dos' of managing a successful wool enterprise.

➡ www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au

MARKET INTEL



AWI is sending wool prices and market intelligence direct to **Tasmanian woolgrowers' mobile phones**.

- **Daily Wool Market Reports** are available via SMS to Tasmanian woolgrowers' mobile phones.
- **Weekly Wool Market Reports and Prices** are available each Friday via SMS, email and at Wool.com.
- **Monthly Market Intelligence Reports** are available as part of AWI's monthly e-newsletter for woolgrowers.
- **Wool pricing updates and reports** are available quarterly in AWI's *Beyond the Bale* magazine.
- **Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Reports** are available three times each year.
- **AWI and MLA's joint Wool and Sheepmeat Surveys** of producers are conducted three times each year.
➡ www.wool.com/marketintelligence

AUTOMATION



Low-cost microwave technology can improve farm connectivity in Tasmania.

- **Smart sheep tags**, capable of tracking real-time location of sheep, are being trialled on-farm by AWI.
➡ www.wool.com/smarttags
- **Products and systems for more effective wireless connections** across farm properties are being investigated by AWI.
- **Australian eChallenge Wool Innovation** program is finding technology solutions for the everyday problems woolgrowers face, such as farm connectivity.

INFORMATION



Beyond the Bale, AWI's quarterly magazine for wool levy payers, is posted direct to woolgrowers across **Tasmania**.

Woolgrowers can keep up to date via regular communications from AWI:

- **Beyond the Bale** quarterly magazine
➡ www.wool.com/btb
- **The Yarn** weekly podcast
➡ www.wool.com/podcast
- **Woolgrower monthly e-newsletter**
➡ www.wool.com/subscribe
- **The Broader View**
➡ www.wool.com/publications

Other communication channels include:

- **Wool.com** website
- **Social media:** @woolinnovation Twitter, @beyondthebale Instagram
- **Events:** AWI attends many sheep and wool field days and events in Tasmania.
- **AWI Helpline** 1800 070 099
- **Woolgrower representative groups:** National and Tasmanian



AWI GROWER NETWORK IN TASMANIA

Sheep Connect Tasmania is the AWI-supported extension network in Tasmania that provides opportunities for woolgrowers to get involved in practical programs that focus on making positive changes to on-farm production and management.

All Tasmanian woolgrowers are encouraged to get involved. Contact the network coordinator or refer to the website.

Coordinator: James Tyson
sheepconnect_tas@wool.com.au
www.sheepconnecttas.com.au
Twitter: @sheepconnect