

VICTORIA

This February 2019 publication provides woolgrowers in Victoria 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 Victoria's 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 Victoria's 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.

VICTORIA'S WOOL INDUSTRY

Following the introduction of sheep in the early 19th Century into what is now named Victoria, by 1852 the new Colony of Victoria boasted 6.5 million sheep and was exporting 9,112 tonnes of wool.

Today, Victoria is the second largest wool producing state in Australia, currently producing about 23% of all Australian wool. If Victoria was a country, it would be the fourth largest producer in the world behind China, NSW and New Zealand.

Wool production occurs across all regions of Victoria but is concentrated in the North West, Warrnambool and South West, Hume and Bendigo regions.

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 32.8%	70.7 23.2%	62.7 20.6%	54.7 17.9%	9.3 3.0%	7.1 2.3%	305 100%

Source: Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee Nov 2018
* Forecast

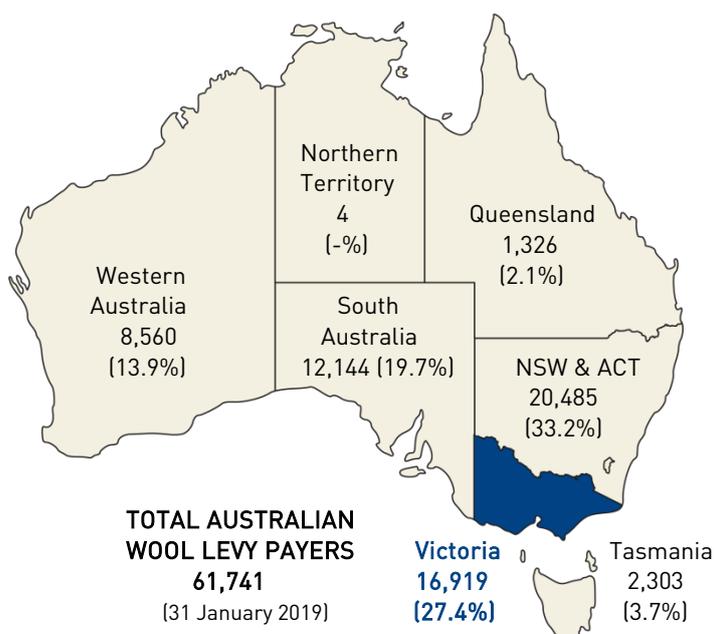
AWTA TEST DATA

	2016/17		2017/18	
	Vic	Australia	Vic	Australia
Greasy weight* (t)	78,145	357,785	84,712	360,017
Yield (%)	66.0	65.1	66.1	64.8
VM (%)	1.9	2.3	2.2	2.5
MFD (µm)	21.9	21.0	22.1	21.0
SS (Nkt)	34.0	34.3	34.8	34.5
SL (mm)	87.6	87.9	86.0	85.8
Mid-break (%)	48.7	48.4	49.3	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.

VICTORIA'S WOOLGROWERS



AWI works on behalf of **61,741** Australian woolgrowers that pay the wool levy and therefore fund the company. More than a quarter (**16,919**) of all wool levy payers are located in Victoria.

At 1 January 2019, there were **12,795** levy payers in Victoria that had paid more than \$100 in levies in the past 3 years and so were eligible to become an AWI shareholder. **4,885** (38%) have become an AWI shareholder and can vote at AWI AGMs.

VICTORIA HIGHLIGHTS

SHEEP HEALTH



Woolgrowers Rick and Jenny Robertson, 'Gracemere', Bairnsdale, regularly monitor their flock's worm burdens.

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 Victoria.

➔ www.paraboss.com.au/news

- **Worm Control Programs** for the winter rainfall and pastoral regions of Victoria are available online on WormBoss.

➔ www.wormboss.com.au

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

➔ www.flyboss.com.au/tools

BREECH STRIKE GENETICS PROJECT

This project demonstrated that breeding for breech strike resistant sheep is an achievable objective. Outcomes included the identification of new breech strike indicator traits to help woolgrowers breed indirectly for breech strike resistance.

➔ www.wool.com/flystrike

BREECH FLYSTRIKE PUBLICATIONS

Publications now available include a 'Managing Breech Flystrike' manual and a 'Planning for a Non Mulesed Merino Enterprise' booklet.

➔ www.wool.com/flystrikelatest

PAIN RELIEF PRODUCTS

Buccalgesic® (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

PEST ANIMALS



Community fencing working bee provide more reliable power to the existing Tallangatta Community Dog Fence.

VICTORIA WILD DOG CONTROL GROUPS

5 groups are currently supported in Victoria, out of a total of 27 nationally. The number of past groups supported in Victoria is 31 out of a total of 184 past groups nationally. AWI supports groups to overcome emergency pest animal challenges and lay secure foundations for sustainable long-term future pest animal control programs.

➔ Funding forms are available at www.wool.com/wilddogs

VICTORIA WILD DOG COORDINATORS

AWI funds two Wild Dog Coordinator positions in Victoria: Brian Dowley and Lucy-anne Cobby in Gippsland (shared position) and Michael Freeman in north-east Victoria. Their role is to assist woolgrowers and other key stakeholders to work together to lessen the impact of livestock predation by wild dogs. Their positions are helping to reduce these attacks and therefore improve on-farm productivity, rural community wellbeing and rural biodiversity.

➔ Brian Dowley 0408 436 600

➔ Lucy-anne Cobby 0488 712 616

➔ Michael Freeman 0477 358 061

PAPP WILD DOG BAIT

An additional baiting option, PAPP, for reducing wild dog and fox numbers is now available to landholders across Victoria. It is designed to allow baiting to still be an option in places where 1080 use is restricted, or for land managers who would prefer not to use 1080. It is available under the names DOGABAIT® and FOXECUTE®.

➔ www.wool.com/wilddogs

RHDV1 K5 RABBIT BIOCONTROL

A strain of rabbit calicivirus (RHDV1 K5) new to Australia was released in March 2017 at 128 locations across Victoria. There has been a 37% observed reduction in rabbit numbers following its release within the state.

➔ www.wool.com/rabbits

GENETICS



The Merino Lifetime Productivity field day was held at the Balmoral site at Harrow in February 2018.



This 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, including Balmoral in Victoria.

➔ www.wool.com/MLP

MERINO SUPERIOR SIRES

This initiative identifies the genetic component of diversity in sire breeding performance in the Merino flock by evaluating their progeny. There are 9 sites across Australia including two in Victoria: Balmoral (Harrow) and North East Victoria (Seymour).

➔ www.merinosuperiorsires.com.au

MERINO BLOODLINE PERFORMANCE

This project enables woolgrowers to compare 73 commonly used Merino bloodlines from 25 wether trials over the past ten years. AWI has assisted with the economic analysis of the results from the Elmore Field Days Ewe Productivity Trials.

➔ www.merinobloodlines.com.au

➔ www.elmorefielddays.com.au/about

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, MERINOSELECT, Visual Sheep Scores, RamSelect, workshops, sheep classers and saleyards.

➔ www.wool.com/publications

VICTORIA HIGHLIGHTS

REPRODUCTION



Sean McDougall of 'Rosevale' at **Tatyoan** in the western region of Victoria benefited from doing a 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. At January 2019, there were 17 active groups in Victoria (92 participants), with 60 other groups recently completed.

➔ Phone RIST on 1800 883 343

ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS

Picking Performer Ewes

This workshop available in Victoria 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 Victoria 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 Victoria 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.

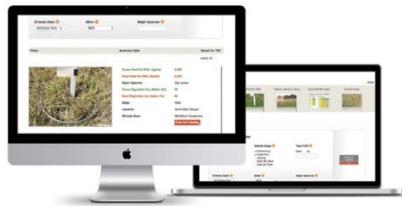
➔ BestWool/BestLamb (back page)

LAMBING DENSITY AND MOB SIZE

Research conducted at 85 sites across Australia, including 20 sites in Victoria, shows that reducing the mob size of twin-bearing ewes that are in 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



The online Feed On Offer photo gallery contains images with nutritional information from across **Victoria**.

FEED ON OFFER ONLINE LIBRARY

A web-based photo library of Feed On Offer (FOO) standards contains 650 images to enable producers to estimate the FOO and nutritive value of grazed pastures, by comparing their own pastures to reference photos in the online library.

➔ www.wool.com/foolibrary

EVERGRAZE

The EverGraze website presents regionally specific information about farming systems based on **perennials**, for producers across the high rainfall zone of southern Australia. Packaged information covers five regions including South West Victoria (Lower); North East Victoria and South West Victoria (Upper); and East Gippsland.

➔ www.evergraze.com.au

GRAIN & GRAZE

The Grain & Graze website provides information, tools and calculators for **mixed farm enterprises** (grain and livestock) in Victoria. 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

WEED MANAGEMENT MANUALS

A range of weed management guidelines, including a new 66-page best practice management manual for silverleaf nightshade, are available.

➔ www.wool.com/weeds

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.

➔ www.wool.com/environment

HARVESTING



Wool handling trainer Sophie Huf of **Hawkesdale** competing in the finals of last year's 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 365 days across Victoria resulting in 1,013 trained.
- **wool handler in-shed training** was delivered for 178 days across Victoria resulting in 526 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

VICTORIA SHEARING COMPETITIONS

AWI provides support to local shearing competitions in Victoria affiliated with Sports Shear Australia. 12 were supported in the 2017/18 year, including the Victorian 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

VICTORIA HIGHLIGHTS

THE NEXT GEN



Anthony Close from **Culla** in Victoria was awarded the 2019 Nuffield Scholarship supported by AWI.

PRACTICAL HANDS-ON TRAINING

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

- **National Merino Challenge** encourages new entrants into the wool industry by helping students across Victoria and the rest of Australia develop their industry knowledge, skills and networks. ➔ 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 Victoria including Elmore, Elphinstone and St Arnaud.
- **Young woolgrower initiatives** supported by AWI in Victoria include: Young Stud Masters Muster at the Australian Sheep & Wool Show, Farm Business Boot Camps and the Young Farming Champions program.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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

- **Breeding Leadership course:** two participants from Victoria in 2018: Sam Crawford of Dunkeld and Oliver Vidor of Derrinallum.
- **Horizon Scholarship:** Katherine Bain of Stockyard Hill (2016); Amy Carpenter of Gazette (2014).
- **Nuffield Farming Scholarship:** Anthony Close of Culla in 2019 and Scott Nicholson of Stawell in 2018.
- **Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture:** Dr Clare Anstead, a lecturer in parasitology at the University of Melbourne in 2017.

➔ www.wool.com/leadership

MAKING MORE FROM SHEEP

This is a best practice package of information and tools for sheep producers.

➔ www.makingmorefromsheep.com.au

MARKET INTEL



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

- **Daily Wool Market Reports** are available via SMS to Victorian 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



Vision from a camera on a wireless network, deployed at Tony Butler's property at Newstead.

- **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 **Victoria**.

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 Victoria
- **AWI Helpline** 1800 070 099
- **Woolgrower representative groups:** National, Victorian and regional



AWI GROWER NETWORK IN VICTORIA

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

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

Coordinator: Lyndon Kubeil
lyndon.kubeil@decodev.vic.gov.au
(03) 5761 1649

www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/bestwool-bestlamb