



AUSTRALIAN SUPERFINE WOOL GROWERS' ASSOCIATION INC

ABN: 41 338 467 905

Victorian Wool Centre, 691 Geelong Road, Brooklyn Vic 3025

Telephone: 03 9318 0399

e-mail: aswga@woolindustries.org

Facsimile: 03 9318 0877

ASWGA Hamilton Regional Report

July 2009

In the south west of Victoria we experienced a normal cold winter but with below average rainfall, this continued through to spring where the rain was limited. We did receive enough in most areas to give us a reasonable spring, although there was certainly no abundance of feed as we often have in the region. In the second week of December, we had a large rain event through Victoria, where we received over 3 inches of rain in general. For the following six weeks no rain at all fell, followed by an extreme heat wave, which resulted in above average temperatures, and 5 days above 40 degrees in a row, reaching a maximum of 46 degrees. Extreme fire danger throughout Victoria resulted in some devastating bush fires, one in our region, but thankfully no members were affected. Following the heat wave, we had no rain recorded in February with quite windy conditions and a lot of raised dust, which will result in a lower yield in the wool clip in some areas.

Two ram sales were conducted in our region this year, on October 20th the Mibus family of 'Glenara' sold 45 rams at an average of \$840, with a top price of \$3200 which sold to the Barber family of 'Coliban Park' near Bendigo, who are ASWGA members from the Ararat region.

On the 9th of February Sierra Park held their on-property ram sale which resulted in 30 pure Saxon rams being sold for an average of \$700, selling to a top price of \$1800 to John and Heather McIntyre. Congratulations to the Crawford family on the way they presented their rams and another successful sale.



In October we were also saddened with the passing of one of our founding members and a life member of the ASWGA, Merv Mibus. He was a well respected member of the superfine wool growing community for many years and his funeral was attended by over 400 people from all areas of the industry, plus many family and friends.

The Hamilton region has had a great variation in conditions in the last 12 months, with members reporting a failed spring, therefore a poor summer/autumn period with very dry dusty conditions, and in other areas members have been more fortunate. They are having average to above average seasons and in recent months, reports of good rains. In some cases the country is on the verge of getting very wet, with quite a bit of water laying in the paddocks. Also good pasture growth resulting from a reasonably mild winter so far, and not too many frosts.

In the second week of March we had a week of thunderstorms around Hamilton. These resulted in very good falls in some areas of up to 100mm, whilst nothing in other areas recorded. South of the Grampians received

generally good falls and an early autumn break, and good pasture response, which has meant that the area between Hamilton and Dunkeld and further south having a very good start to 2009.



We held a regional meeting on the 10th of March in Hamilton with general discussion on the proposed QA scheme for ASWGA members, the current wool market and the whole world financial situation. We all hope that this improves sooner rather than later.

Also we spoke about the future of mulesing as an essential practice for many superfine members in our region, due to summer rainfall and high humidity, both forming a deadly combination for flystrike in merino sheep.

We also hope to host a dinner in our region in the coming year if we can attract enough interest and a guest speaker.

Generally the Hamilton region has experienced an average summer/autumn period and most members will produce a good wool clip, with good bulk and tensile strength with hopefully not too much effect on yield and we hope for an improved market.

On July 6th we held our annual meeting with a dinner, and this was attended by our federal president Kevin Dunn and his wife Margaret. Kevin reported to us his findings of an extensive overseas tour to our mill members and many other superfine industry related operations. Unfortunately there are not too many positives at the moment, but we all hope for improved conditions for all sectors of the industry in the near future.

We once again thank Kevin and Margaret for their commitment to all superfine grower members and their time and effort extended to us all is greatly appreciated in these especially difficult times.