



# AUSTRALIAN SUPERFINE WOOL GROWERS' ASSOCIATION INC

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## ASWGA Ararat Barunah Regional Report

### March 2008

Well, once again it is fast approaching that time of year when our fate is often decided. Will the opening rains arrive early thus averting the need for costly supplementary feeding, or could those rain bearing fronts remain elusive?

To date the summer has proven to be quite mild with only a handful of days reaching extreme temperatures. The dry feed is fast disappearing and we find ourselves spending more time pulling that familiar feed cart. Grain and fodder levels have been replenished after becoming seriously depleted during the previous years, however the high costs and sometimes lack of supply can prove restrictive.

In general the condition of stock is good but numbers are low. It seems that those with the ability to take advantage of historically high grain prices are perusing that endeavour.

The strength in the wool market during the past few months despite the unfavourable exchange rate has been positive. It may be fair to say that the old scenario of supply and demand is at play. A quick glance through the sale catalogue and the effect of the past season on the clip is quite evident. With the majority of lots carrying poor tensile strength there seems to be a limited supply of well-grown sound types suitable for the Italian market. This is proving beneficial to those members who were fortunate enough to be able to produce such a product.

The efforts of our members toward pursuing excellence are to be commended. Once again the Horsham Wool Factory presented

an excellent line up. With figures of 12.0 micron, a staple length of 64 mm and strength of 40 newtons/kilotex the top bale achieved 1PP certification. Well done to all involved.

Recently our Region was invited to participate in a Superfine Wool Handling Training Program, of which a number of our members attended. The course, which was administered by the N.S.W. Riverina Institute of TAFE – Primary Industries Centre was spread over three days and comprised of numerous speakers covering various topics related to the production of Superfine Wool. The group was presented with a basic overview of fibre measurement and given an understanding on interpreting the figures. The use of the objective data, together with visual appraisal was then combined to give a final overview.



Following on from this, practical demonstrations on skirting techniques were undertaken. The variance within an individual fleece was shown and discussed then solutions were given. The importance

of such 'hands on' exercises cannot be stressed enough.

A pleasant social evening encompassed fine food and conversation, and then two guest speakers entertained all present. Mr Charles Defegely, a local primary producer and agricultural consultant expressed his views toward operating a successful sheep farming enterprise, and our own Mr Kevin Dunn gave a brief insight into the superfine wool industry and the runnings of the ASWGA.

A highlight of the course was a visit to the CSIRO Textile and Fibre Technology Centre, which is situated at Geelong. Here the processing phase was demonstrated, beginning at the greasy wool stage, following the process all the way through to the finished garment.

All participants had an enjoyable and informative time.

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