

# Lexton growers sell world's finest bale

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*Trade Mark of Excellence*

LEXTON'S Sandlant family last week sold the world's finest bale of wool at auction for the second consecutive year when their 91 kilograms of 11.2 micron wool was bought for 200,000 cents a kilogram greasy in Melbourne.

Landmark Jackson of Geelong sold the bale on July 6 when sole bidder G. Schneider Australia buyer Mark Symes bid the "call price" of 200,000 cents a kilogram or A\$182,000.

Landmark Jackson Geelong superfine wool specialist Ted Wilson said the bale was the finest ever to go to auction anywhere in the world. It's wool had an average staple length of 66 millimetres, with a yield of 73 per cent and tensile strength of 43 Newtons/kilotex. The wool was typed as ASF1E or choice style.

Last week's sale broke the 2010 finest auction bale record set by the Sandlants when they sold 100 kilograms of 11.4 micron wool with a tensile strength of 36 Newtons/kt for 170,000 cents a kilogram.

Pamela Sandlant said producing the 2011 bale was a team effort with her husband and clip classer, Robert, their son and shearer Bradley, his wife Melissa and their shed manager Mathew Richards. Mrs Sandlant said a key factor in producing the bale was the genetics of their shedded Merino wethers – bred by Rowensville rams out of Pyrenees Park ewes – but good management and careful section of suitable fleeces also played a part. She said the wool in the record bale was luxurious.

"It was fine and soft and fabulous, just beautiful."

Robert Sandlant and Mr Wilson said the price paid by G. Schneider Australia for Italian processor Loro Piana was not indicative of a recovery in ultrafine market prices, despite exceeding the 2010 record bale price.

"There is always a lot of interest in the finest bale on offer," Mr Wilson said.

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micron into fine suiting material. G. Schneider Australia continued to give fantastic support to the industry, but for wool growers the more people bidding at auction the better, he said. Mr Wilson hoped China could become a new market for ultrafine wool suiting.

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Mr Wilson was concerned about the lack of a "profitable level of demand" for paddock grown ultrafine wool with the number of growers falling as they left the industry or used broader wool genetics in their flocks.



With the record-priced 11.2 micron bale, from left, G. Schneider Australia Mark Syme; Brad Sandlant; Landmark auctioneer Simon Arbuckle; Landmark Jackson superfine specialist Ted Wilson; Pyrenees Park owner Rob Sandlant

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